



Historical Aspects of Development of Osteopathy in Cranial Field

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Introduction. Founded in 1874, osteopathy occupies an increasingly important place in the modern medical world. Special interest is paid to the development of osteopathy in the cranial field. At the beginning of the 20th century, a model based on the theory of cranial vertebrae was proposed for the treatment of the craniosacral system.

Aim, materials and methods. Charlotte Weaver, D. O. after 25 years of research published a number of articles in 1936–1938, in which she proved that cranial bones are indeed modified vertebrae, based upon vast embryological section material.

Results. A profound study of embryology permitted Charlotte Weaver to establish certain regularities in the formation of the skull bones and their articulations, and provide a particular viewpoint of the physiology of their function in the context of the body as a whole. She distinguishes 3 cranial vertebrae with the following cranial vertebrae centers: dorsum selae (the center of the first cranial vertebra), basis sphenoidalis (postsphenoid) (the center of the second cranial vertebra), sella turcica (the center of the third cranial vertebra), pre-sphenoid, 1 and 2 – discs between cranial vertebrae. She also proposed techniques of testing and the correction of the dysfunctions of the craniosacral system.

Conclusions.

1. In osteopathy, the understanding of the process of body structures formation as a whole allows for a more detailed scrutiny of the mechanism of the rise of cranial dysfunctions, and permits to develop new approaches to their correction.
2. Doctor Weaver's substantial research with a time span of 25 years makes it possible to ascertain that lesions can occur on the level of articulations of the skull bones.
3. Although the theory of cranial vertebrae has not been supported in studies using modern research methods, the effectiveness of cranial dysfunction correction techniques offered by doctor Weaver requires special attention from the part of osteopathic physicians.