

# HOW AND WHY DOES EMBRIOLOGY WORKS IN THE WAY IT DOES

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## Introduction

In the osteopathic tradition, somatic dysfunction (SD) is diagnosed and treated in order to restore the physiological conditions of a very large area involving different structures.

The "Glossary of Osteopathic Terminology" defines SD as "Impaired or altered function of related components of the somatic (body framework) system: skeletal, arthrodial and myofascial structures, and their related vascular, lymphatic, and neural elements."(1)

The mechanism of onset of SD and its correlation with pathological conditions are still controversial.(2)

According to several authors, the autonomic nervous system is involved, causing a rebalancing between the sympathetic and parasympathetic system(3)(4) and the same applies to the mechanisms of sensitization and interception according to which the antidromic activation of the C fibres would determine an inflammatory state(5).

Inflammatory mechanisms, especially linked to low levels of inflammation that would involve the connective tissue (6) and the cascade of events related to the fluidic mechanisms of water in the tissues, would cause SD.(7)

Finally, the mechanisms related to the therapeutic touch and its effect on the patient's clinical condition and the state of the operator are also involved in the mechanism of onset of SD(8).

Osteopathic manipulative treatment(OMT) can act on these elements which are deeply connected to each other reducing the inflammatory state.(9-12)

## Conclusions

Additional studies need to be carried out, but in the last 20 years research in the osteopathic field has started to provide the consistent evidence that can support and clarify the determinants in the daily osteopathic clinical practice.

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