

The Impact of the Transcendental Meditation Program on Government Payments to Physicians in Quebec

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<https://doi.org/10.4278/0890-1171-10.3.208>[Article information](#) ▾**Abstract****Purpose.**

This study evaluated whether government medical payments in Quebec were affected by the Transcendental Meditation (TM) technique.

Design.

This retrospective study used a pre- and postintervention design in which government payments for physicians' services were reviewed for 3 years before and up to 7 years after subjects started the technique. Payment data were adjusted for aging and year-specific variation (including inflation) using normative data. No separate control group was used; thus it is impossible to determine whether the changes were caused by the TM program or some other factor.

Subjects.

A volunteer group of 677 provincial health insurance enrollees was evaluated. The subjects had chosen to practice the TM technique before they were selected to enter the study. The subjects (348 men, 329 women) had diverse occupations. Their average age was 38 years and ranged from 18 to 71 years at the start of the TM program.

Intervention.

The TM technique of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi is a standardized procedure practiced for 15 to 20 minutes twice daily while sitting comfortably with eyes closed.

Setting.

Province of Quebec, Canada.

Results.

During the 3 years before starting the TM program, the adjusted payments to physicians for treating the subjects did not change significantly. After beginning TM practice, subjects' adjusted expenses declined significantly. The several methods used to assess the rate of decline showed estimates ranging from 5% to 7% annually.

Conclusions.

The results suggest that the TM technique reduces government payments to physicians. However, because of the sampling method used, the generalizability of these results to wider populations could not be evaluated.

Keywords

[Health Care Costs](#), [Meditation](#), [Mind-Body Medicine](#), [Stress Reduction](#)

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