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Organization: Woodway Doctor's Clinic
Location: Lynnwood, WA
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Indications: pain

Case description:

Response of Seventeen Patients to Treatment by Microcurrent Therapy

Seventeen patients were treated in November for various conditions with the Alpha-Stim unit. Conditions included headaches, neck pain, back pain, low back pain, sacroiliac pain, leg pain, groin pain, neck swelling, shoulder pain with decreased ROM, Bell's palsy, and toothache. The treatments were tolerated well by all but one patient. No adverse side effects were noted beyond minor transient discomfort and dizziness, both of which subsided with decrease in current intensity.

Pain, inflammation and decreased range of motion (ROM) were treated on patients as they presented in our office. There was no selection or inclusion criteria; all were treated by one therapist trained in the use of the Alpha-Stim unit according to the published recommendations for each condition. For those conditions not specifically described in the literature, the principle of bracketing the pain with the probes for 10-second intervals was observed.

A total or almost total relief of the condition was described as excellent. Relief by more than half but with residual condition remaining was described as good. Noticeable relief was described as fair. No noticeable effect was described as none. Any worsening of the condition or development of side effects persisting despite use of the machine on the lowest setting was described as not tolerated.

In assessing the patients' overall results, the results of therapy on each separate condition were considered. Of interest is that mixed results (excellent and good) were obtained from only one patient. Each patient seemed to respond with similar success for each condition.

Only one patient had mixed results (excellent relief from a headache, good relief from a long-standing swelling in the left posterior triangle of the neck of uncertain origin). Seven out of 17 patients had excellent results. Three had good results. Four had fair results. No one had no effect. One patient found any sensation of electricity intolerable, even at settings insensible to most people.

Two patients are worthy of note, one having been electrocuted a year before and the other having massive scarring from a burn accident years before. Both experienced only fair relief from conditions which were not at the time of treatment particularly intense (back pain at less than 5:10 and not intense enough to prevent sleep).

Overall, pain relief was remarkable, usually rapid and dramatic. In the only joint pain case, a previously restricted ROM (50-60% of normal) was restored to 80% normal after one treatment and 100% normal after the second. That patient had been previously unresponsive to ultrasound, diathermy, passive gymnastics and manipulation. The instant relief of a toothache in a patient scheduled for a root canal was also impressive. Most impressive, however, was the total restoration to normal of a Bell's palsy patient within a week by three times daily application of the electrodes at 100 Hz to the putative area of the lesion (point of exit of the facial nerve from the skull).