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[Percutaneous electrical nerve stimulation of peripheral nerve for the intractable occipital neuralgia].

[Article in Italian]

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Source

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Abstract

Occipital neuralgia is characterized by pain paroxysm occurring within distribution of the greater or lesser occipital nerves. The pain may radiates from the rear head toward the ipso-lateral frontal or retro-orbital regions of head. Though known causes include head injuries, direct occipital nerve trauma, neuroma formation or upper cervical root compression, most people have no demonstrable lesion.

METHOD AND MATERIALS:

A sample of 8 patients (5 females, 3 males) aging 63,5 years on the average with occipital neuralgia has been recruited. The occipital neuralgic pain had presented since 4, 6 years and they had been treated by pharmacological therapy without benefit. Some result has been obtained by blocking of the grand occipital nerve so that the patients seemed to be suitable for subcutaneous peripheral neurostimulation. The pain was evaluated by VAS and SVR scales before treatment (T0) and after three and twelve months (T1, T2).

RESULTS:

During the follow up period 7 patients have been monitored for a whole year while one patient was followed only for 3 months in that some complications have presented. In the other 7 patients pain paroxysms have interrupted and trigger point disappeared with a VAS and SVR reduction of about 71% and 60%, respectively.

CONCLUSIONS:

Our experience demonstrates a sound efficacy of such a technique for patients having occipital neuralgia resistant to pharmacological therapies even if action mechanisms have not yet clearly explained. Some hypothesis exist and we think it might negatively affect the neurogenic inflammation that surely acts in pain maintaining.