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Retrospective case series on patients with chronic spinal pain treated with dextrose prolotherapy.

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Abstract

OBJECTIVES: To determine the clinical benefits of dextrose prolotherapy in patients with chronic spinal pain.

DESIGN: Retrospective case series.

SETTING/LOCATION: During the first 2 years at an outpatient prolotherapy clinic.

SUBJECTS: One hundred and seventy-seven (177) consecutive patients with a history of chronic spinal pain completed prolotherapy treatment and were followed for a period ranging from 2 months to 2.5 years.

INTERVENTIONS: Patients were treated with a proliferant solution containing 20% dextrose and 0.75% xylocaine. One half milliliter (0.5 mL) of proliferant was injected into the facet capsules of the cervical, thoracic, and lumbar spine, or combinations of the three areas. The iliolumbar and dorsal sacroiliac ligaments were also injected in patient with low back pain. Injections were typically done on a weekly basis for up to 3 weeks. A set of three injections was repeated in 1 month's time if needed.

OUTCOME MEASURES: Level of pain, and improvement in activities of daily living were measured on a five-point scale. Improvement in ability to work was also assessed.

RESULTS: Ninety-one percent (91.0%) of patients reported reduction in level of pain; 84.8% of patients reported improvement in activities of daily living, and 84.3% reported an improvement in ability to work. Women required on average, three more injections than men. Cervical spine response rates were lower than thoracic or lumbar spine. No complications from treatment were noted.

CONCLUSIONS: Dextrose prolotherapy appears to be a safe and effective method for treating chronic spinal pain that merits further investigation. Future studies need to consider differences in gender response rates.

MeSH Terms, Substances

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