

Neural Therapy

Acetylcholine: The Memory Prescription

Neural Therapy has been in wide use in Europe since the 1940's. Since that time it has been taught and practiced safely around the world with great success and minimal negative effects.

It is very effective in treating a wide variety of conditions by using injections into nerve sites, acupuncture points, scars, muscle trigger points and other tissues to relieve pain and dysfunction throughout the body.

Neural Means Nerves

Nerves need to flow freely for optimal body function to occur. The autonomic nervous system unconsciously controls all body functions such as heart rate, digestion, perspiration, breathing, blood flow and just about anything else that occurs without your conscious direction. When nerve flow is interfered with, then the nervous system regulation of connected body parts is compromised. This compromise can result in poor function, pain, disability and disease. *The purpose of neural therapy is to unblock the interference to normal functioning by using very specific injections into the areas of disturbance.* The injections contain sterile homeopathic medicines and/or a local anesthetic such as procaine. The sites of injection are determined by your history of trauma and surgery, location of symptoms, autonomic patterns or through applied kinesiology methods.

Fight, Flight or Freeze

Any stress on the body, whether physical, psychological or toxic, will activate the sympathetic nervous system and create what is referred to as “a fight or flight response”. This could be the result of a car accident, surgery, emotional distress, fear, toxic exposure or any threat or perceived threat to life or of injury. In a natural healing response, once the stress is removed, the nervous system should reset itself. Unfortunately, for many people the modern stresses are so great and continuous, there may be no chance for the body to return itself to normal. *A local area then becomes locked into a constant fight or flight or “freeze” state. This area becomes a disturbance field and can for many years interfere with the normal nervous system regulation in the body.* A very common example of this would be a whiplash injury.

Whiplash Injury

Often a few chiropractic adjustments, acupuncture treatments or physiotherapy will alleviate the symptoms. Frequently, these and other treatments do not help and a person finds themselves in a chronic pain situation. This type of trauma not only damages muscles, ligaments, joints and tendons, it also injures the sympathetic nervous system chain that lies at the front of the neck. Many years after an injury, a doctor skilled in neural therapy can identify the nerve ganglion or site that is holding the charge and normalize it with neural therapy injection. The patient can then begin to experience a healing response.

How Does It Work?

Specific homeopathic preparations, chelating agents, vitamins and/or local anesthetics are used in the injection solution. The homeopathic medicine is specific for the area being treated, whether it is for organ tissue, nerve, muscles and joints or trauma. An injected anesthetic will cause a nerve to be numbed by changing the positive and negative charges on the membrane of the nerve tissue so that no sensation can be passed along such as when your lips become numb after a visit to the dentist. In neural therapy the intention is not to anaesthetize or numb the nerve, but rather to change the membrane potential temporarily, with the expectation that when the anesthetic wears off, the membrane charges and nerve function will return to normal. Think about how your computer occasionally is overloaded with too many programs running and windows open. It begins to malfunction, running slowly and freezing up. Usually the first thing you do is shut everything down and reboot the computer. After that it will work fine again. In the same way *Neural Therapy is like rebooting the “body computer”, the autonomic nervous system, to reset regulation and normalize function.* Homeopathic medicines assist in the local healing response.

Conditions Treated By Neural Therapy

Neural therapy is a nervous system regulation therapy, so just about anything short of cancer and metabolic disease can be positively affected. The more common conditions that benefit from it include: back and neck pain, posttraumatic conditions, chronic pain from whiplash and head injury, joint pain, muscle pain, and athletic injuries. Jaw and head pain, post-surgical pain (including dental), digestive disturbances, sinusitis, hypothyroid, muscle injuries, organ dysfunctions and scar disturbances also benefit from neural therapy.





Integrated Approach to Neural Therapy

In the course of naturopathic treatment, neural therapy is only one part of an integrated treatment program that may address many other areas affecting well being. As one area moves into healing it is important to address the deeper layers as they arise. Old pains may surface, pain may move around. Often there are emotional charges held in the neural focus and the physical release may possibly be accompanied by a memory or emotional response. This is a normal indication of a healing response.

Frequently, therapies such as spinal adjustments or acupuncture that have had limited success can be more effective when applied at the same time as, or after the disturbance fields have been cleared. The effectiveness of psychotherapy can be enhanced. Detoxification may be required to improve autonomic control. Environmental or heavy metal toxins can interfere with the nervous system function and if identified should be cleared. *The naturopathic approach is to treat the body as a whole and to integrate all the systems to optimize a healing response.*

Scars

Scar tissue is a common cause of disturbance fields and any scar whether a small one from a childhood fall, from dental surgery or a major post surgical scar will set up interference. A scar has an electric charge about five times that of normal skin and can disrupt nerve flow. Scars that cross acupuncture meridian channels can block energy to those related organs and body parts.

A scar will hold injured or cut fascia, muscles and skin together, but it is not as flexible as the original tissue, so the underlying tissues cannot move as freely. George Goodheart D.C. uses the following analogy: "If someone pulls down hard on the left side of the shirt you are wearing, it makes it more difficult for you to raise your left arm. Treating your left arm would do little to relieve the decreased range of motion of your arm as long as the tension is exerted on your shirt. Loosening the tension on your shirt hem, however, does effectively produce a marked increase in the range of motion of your left arm because you are getting to the cause of your problem and fixing it." *The treatment of scars with neural therapy, even decades old ones, has consistently been an important factor in increasing mobility, reducing pain and improving movement and function.*

Trigger Points

Frequently a major component of chronic pain is tight, contracted or spastic muscle that is resistant to stretch, massage or mobilization therapies. Muscles are held in contraction by nerve impulses to the local neuro-muscular junctions. The result is that perpetual inappropriate impulses cause a continuous muscle contraction. *By injecting the affected neuro-muscular trigger point, it is possible to break the ongoing pattern of spasm, allowing muscle to release and eventual return to normal function.*

Is the Treatment Painful?

Nobody likes to get needle injections, especially into painful or vulnerable areas. The amount of discomfort depends on the type of treatment that is being done. Injections into nerve points are more uncomfortable than painful. Acupuncture points and subcutaneous injections may prick. Scar treatments may be painful. Trigger point treatments by their nature are injections into already tender areas, and a short painful "twitch" response is actually a good sign. No matter which of these reactions you experience, they last only a moment and any discomfort is gone immediately. As many patients say: "short term pain for long term gain".

What to Expect

It usually requires about six sessions to determine what benefit neural therapy will have. Often there is a one or two day improvement and then the old symptoms return. Sometimes the improvements occur gradually and in conjunction with other therapies. Occasionally emotional blocks are released and strong emotional responses may occur, this is a healthy sign. As we work through a history of compensation, other body parts may re-experience pain and discomfort, again this is a positive sign.

Side or Negative Effects

The negative effects tend to be of a temporary nature and may precede improvements. Mild bruising may occur and may be unavoidable especially with scar and occasionally with trigger point treatments. Occasionally an injected trigger point may hurt for a day, it is relieved with an ice pack. Some temporary numbness may occur that passes quickly. Some patients feel temporarily light headed. Some patients report that they feel worse for a few days, followed by a great relief in symptoms. Each person has his or her own individual response. Report any effects to your doctor.