



BODYWORK

Degenerative Neuromuscular Disease Treatment

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Our modern medical system offers many effective treatments for injuries, infections and life-threatening diseases. Survival rates have improved for patients with heart disease and cancer. Yet, medicine offers few viable answers for patients with degenerative neuromuscular conditions such as multiple sclerosis (MS), Lou Gehrig's disease (ALS) and Parkinson's. This means that patients with these conditions and their families are frequently seeking complementary and alternative practitioners that may offer hope for improvement. It's not very common, however, even for acupuncturists and other CAM professionals to be able to consistently help such patients recover.

Patients with degenerative neuromuscular disease - abbreviated (DNMD) - present with paralyzed, spastic, weakened or wasting limbs and muscles. There often is pain and loss of body functions, including speech. For example, MS can be tragic, with many young bodies becoming rapidly spastic and dysfunctional, often leading to early death. I personally witnessed a good friend of mine (with whom I used to share vigorous martial arts and *tai chi* workouts) decline and die within one year after being diagnosed with ALS. This happened in spite of all the medical and alternative healing treatments he received during that year.

The etiology of these conditions is poorly understood. It appears they are likely to be caused by some combination of deep unresolved emotional imbalances and build up of neurotoxins and/or pathogens from the environment. Increased susceptibility to harmful electromagnetic fields also might be a factor.

Microcurrent electro-acupuncture (MEA) offers a bright ray of hope and frequently positive results for patients with DNMD. The key is providing both systemic and symptomatic treatment protocols. Results are best when therapy is offered as part of a multi-disciplinary approach that also addresses nutritional and medical needs. This article focuses on systemic MEA therapies that we have found very useful for a wide range of degenerative conditions.

Here is an overview of the electro-acupuncture methods we have found useful for DNMD.

Systemic Treatments

The mode of action of systemic treatments is regulation of neurological, hormonal, circulatory and subtle energy systems of the body. This is based on the recognition that the distressing symptoms of DNMD originate in long-term imbalances in these systems. When these systems are balanced and supplemented, patients almost always report increase in their overall energy levels and feelings of enhanced emotional well-being. Two to four of the following techniques are used in each therapy session.

Autonomic regulation therapy: Treats seven to eight sets of back *shu* points with biphasic

microcurrent. At each level of the spine, apply a series of therapeutic microcurrent frequencies and a color of light that positively resonates with the corresponding organ system. For example, treat the bilateral back *shu* points of the liver with green light and a sequence of ramping frequencies. Therapeutic colors can be selected by reference to Five-Element correspondences or the work of Dinshah or Mandel.¹

Governing vessel treatment (du mai): Treating multiple sets of *du* points with frequency sequences and light.²

Conception vessel treatment (ren mai): Similar to the previous treatment for the front of the body.

Auricular therapy: Using a micro-macro technique³ to connect dysfunctional or painful body areas with corresponding ear points. Treating sets of systemic tune-up points in the ear with microcurrent.⁴ Treating neuromuscular reflex points on the back of the ear.

Odonton treatments: Using an intra-oral probe to stimulate microsystem gum areas in the mouth that help regulate various organ systems.

PNE balancing: Treating imbalanced chakras with polarized microcurrent and appropriate colors of light to help correct psycho-emotional and hormonal disturbances.⁵ What came first, the chicken or the egg? Do emotional and mind-body imbalances distort the spin of the chakras, leading to DNMD, or does the stress of having DNMD cause the chakras to go off? Or both? Regardless of the answer, treating the patient's chakras from a place of awareness and loving support can significantly help their healing process.

Scalp electro-acupuncture: Putting the patient's bare feet on a brass grounding plate and using probe with red or infra-red light and microcurrent to stimulate scalp acupoints. In this case, a circuit is set up between the scalp points and the feet, which often has very beneficial effects on the entire nervous system.

Symptomatic Treatments

There are many excellent electromedical treatments that directly work on muscles, fascia and the nervous system to prevent wasting and atrophy, relieve pain, improve range of motion and stimulate blood and energy circulation. We usually can see positive responses to these techniques during the treatment session, in some cases surprisingly rapidly. A case that comes to mind was a post-stroke male patient in a wheelchair who had not been able to move his left hand for many years. A single application of probes and Russian stimulation pad treatments allowed him to move his wrist and flex his fingers for the first time.

Microcurrent probe treatments: Circling the Dragon, local-distal meridian treatments, trigger-point release.

Interferential: Using sets of four electro-pads in mixed frequency patterns to deeply facilitate neuromuscular movement and macro-circulation. When possible, kinetic therapy using microcurrent pads with simultaneous exercise provides faster progress.

Russian stimulation: A protocol developed by the Russian Olympic team in the 1980s for passive

muscle strengthening. We have found that it also works well in many cases for patients with neuromuscular deficits.

Because of the tremendous benefits of these MEA techniques for DNMD, an associate and I have started a project to produce a series of seminars and training DVDs to make the benefits of these techniques available to interested health care professionals.

References

1. For a useful chart of organ-color correspondences, see my article in the *Acupuncture Today* archives at www.acupuncturetoday.com/mpacms/at/article.php?id=31415.
2. Microcurrent and color light therapy is administered using the Acutron Mentor color light probe system.
3. For details on the auricular micro-macro method, see my previous article in the *Acupuncture Today* archives at: www.acupuncturetoday.com/mpacms/at/column.php?c_id=162.
4. A chart of auricular tune-up points appears in the same previous article.
5. An article on PNE therapy appears in the *Acupuncture Today* archives at: www.acupuncturetoday.com/mpacms/at/article.php?id=29058.

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