

A pain resource guide for Galesburg, Illinois and an examination of whether greater occipital nerve injections in patients experiencing posterior headaches secondary to greater occipital nerve irritation help alleviate their headaches.

Purpose

- ◆ 1. To compile a list of available resources in the Galesburg, Illinois area which could be utilized for those with chronic pain.
- ◆ 2. To evaluate whether greater occipital nerve injections are an effective therapy for patients experiencing posterior headache secondary to greater occipital nerve irritation.

Methods

- ◆ 1. Different individuals in Galesburg, Illinois and the surrounding area who see patients were interviewed regarding methods used by them to help people manage chronic pain.
- ◆ 2. Individuals > 18 years of age who presented to Dr. Nesselroad's office with headache secondary to greater occipital nerve irritation were offered the option of injections (steroid and local anesthetic in combination) to those occipital nerves to treat their headache. Those agreeing to receive the injections answered a questionnaire before the injection, 20 minutes post-injection, and approximately one week later via return visit or phone call.

Results-Pain Resource Guide

- ◆ OSF family practice does pain management. Patients entering into this sign a contract which states they will obtain pain meds from their designated doctor. No early refills will be given. Any attempt to obtain pain meds from the on-call doctor will terminate the contract and expel the patient from the group practice.

Results-Pain Resource Guide

- ◆ Physical/Occupational therapy is available at both hospitals (OSF St. Mary's and Cottage) for inpatients. Both have home services available. PT/OT is also available at all nursing homes and rehab facilities in the Galesburg, Illinois area.

Results-Pain Resource Guide

- ◆ Genesis Medical Center, located in Davenport IA, has a pain management center. Treatment is comprehensive and they utilize implantable pumps/spinal cord stimulators, surgery recommendations, relaxation management & counseling, injections, PT/OT, medications, and biofeedback.

Results-Pain Resource Guide

- ◆ Dr. Adkins, an anesthesiologist at Cottage Hospital, specializes in pain management. He performs injections, recommends surgery if appropriate, and writes for medications if necessary.

Results-Pain Resource Guide

- ◆ Dr. Harsha Metha, MD, recently received training in acupuncture and she performs this at her office. She treats sciatica, joint pain, and headaches.

Results-Pain Resource Guide

- ◆ George Daniels, one of the local pharmacists, is really interested in herbals and metabolic therapies to help people with pain management, especially as it pertains to weight loss.
- ◆ For example, if a patient has chronic back pain and is overweight, he will offer guidance via supplements and exercise to help with weight loss.

Results-Pain Resource Guide

- ◆ Chiropractors in the Galesburg area manage pain via manipulation of various joints.

Results-Occipital Nerve Injections

- ◆ One patient experienced no relief from the injections.
- ◆ All patients who had experienced a return headache at the seven day follow-up survey stated their rebound or return headaches were of much less severity than the headache for which they originally received the injections.
- ◆ 6/13 smoked, all had missed work at sometime in the past with their headaches, and all had tried OTC meds for their current headache without much relief.

Results-Occipital Nerve Injections

- ◆ Thirteen patients received the greater occipital nerve injections for their headaches.
- ◆ The average pain of the headache upon presentation was an 8 (with 10 being the worst).
- ◆ 11/13 patients had experienced their headaches for > 2 days before presentation to the office.
- ◆ 8/13 patients were headache free at seven days with 12/13 headache free for at least one day. The average was 3.5 days.

Conclusions

- ◆ 1. The Galesburg, Illinois area has a variety of resources for those experiencing chronic pain. These resources appear underutilized secondary to lack of awareness of their existence both by patients and the health care providers they see.
- ◆ 2. Greater occipital nerve injections are an effective treatment modality for those patients experiencing headaches secondary to greater occipital nerve irritation.