4 Neuropathic Pain Treatment Options Worth Looking Into

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Understanding Your Neuropathic Pain Treatment Options

Neuropathic pain is pain associated with the body's nerves and sensory system. It happens when nerves in the sensory system are somehow impacted by a disease or an injury, making it difficult to transmit proper sensory signals to our brain to receive and interpret.

This breakdown in communication between our brain and body's nerve signals can lead to painful sensations, such as burning, prickling, stabbing, tingling, aching and the feeling of pins and needles. You may also lose feeling in the affected area and have numbness.

Neuropathic pain is usually chronic, meaning it lasts for more than three months. Injuries to the brain and spinal cord can cause neuropathic pain, as well as other injuries that do nerve damage. It becomes chronic pain because, even though the initial injury may have healed, the nerves are still not communicating properly. This creates further long-term pain.

Other than injury, several different medical conditions may cause neuropathic pain, such as diabetes, carpal tunnel syndrome and multiple sclerosis.

How your pain will be treated will depend greatly on its cause. While there are some general medications and treatments that help with neuropathic pain, your medical team may have a more specific plan to address your condition.

1. Medication for Neuropathic Pain

The first line of treatment for those suffering from neuropathic pain is with the use of medications.

Antidepressants

Specific categories of antidepressants have been shown to help with nerve pain. Tricyclic antidepressants, serotonin, norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors and extended-release antidepressants are often used to relieve pain and symptoms associated with neuropathic pain.

Antiepileptic Medications

Medicine originally used for epilepsy is also now being used to treat pain. These medications include gabapentin and pregabalin.

Pain Relievers

Medications used to relieve pain can also be used for neuropathic pain. Over-the-counter medicine can be helpful

for mild to moderate symptoms. Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) are often recommended to ease inflammation and pain. Prescription pain relief can be discussed with your doctor if needed for more severe pain.

2. Physiotherapy

Many conditions can benefit from physiotherapy, an exercise program or a gentle stretching routine.

One of the most common causes of nerve pain is sciatica. This is a painful condition where the pain, numbness and other nerve symptoms stem from your lower back and run down your leg into your foot. The most common cause is a herniated, or ruptured disc, but any injury or disease that affects the sciatic nerve can cause sciatica.

Good posture, stretching, physiotherapy and appropriate exercise can all help with sciatic nerve pain.

Physiotherapy can also be useful for those with multiple sclerosis to address muscle weakness and balance, which will help with your pain levels. It is also recommended for many other conditions, and injuries.

3. Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation

Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) is a small machine with electrodes that are placed onto the affected area of your body. It then delivers slight pulses to your skin, which help disrupt the pain signals that the nerves are sending and receiving.

You can control the level of intensity so that it won't hurt. The TENS should give you pain relief during use, and since many are portable, you can get up and enjoy some activities with less pain!

4. Surgery

Having an operation is sometimes necessary to relieve your pain symptoms. What type of procedure, the risks involved and at what stage surgery would be considered are all dependent on your particular condition and case.

Carpel tunnel syndrome is one disorder that has a surgical treatment for severe cases. Carpel tunnel syndrome is a condition where the median nerve, which runs into the hand, is compressed in the wrist. This causes a lot of pain, numbness and even difficulty using your hand. A simple operation can be done to release the pressure on the nerve.

Another operation that can be done to help with neuropathic pain stemming from the spine is putting in a spinal cord stimulator. This device is like an internal TENS machine that focuses on the affected nerves and relieves pain.

Other procedures to correct issues in your spine, or elsewhere, can be done to help treat your neuropathic pain.

Other Neuropathic Pain Treatment Options

It is important to note that the above treatments are not an exclusive list! There are more neuropathic pain treatment options to explore, both within traditional medicine and alternative.

A key factor in controlling your neuropathic pain from diseases like diabetes is to try and control the disease itself. That might be easier said than done in many cases. However, it is an important step in fighting against it.

Injections, like steroids, can be useful in some conditions, as can topical creams and patches.

Some people find that acupuncture benefits them, along with lifestyle changes, meditation and therapy. These can help deal with the difficulties that living with pain can cause, and help to break the cycle of insomnia, pain and stress. This is crucial to limiting your pain to a more manageable level and to having a happier life.

No matter what is causing your neuropathic pain, know that there are a variety of neuropathic pain treatment options out there for you to try. By working with your medical team, you are sure to find something that is helpful to you.