

Alcohol injection in the management of paroxysmal trigeminal neuralgia: a report of six cases.

Abstract:

The report revisits the role of alcohol in the treatment of paroxysmal trigeminal neuralgia (PTN). The study included 6 patients, 3 male and 3 female, average age 50 years. In 3 cases PTN involved both the infraorbital and mental nerves; in 2 cases the infraorbital alone while one case had buccal branch involvement. In each case 2mls standard Lignocaine was infiltrated at each site followed by 2mls 60% sterile alcohol. All patients reported swelling postoperatively. One case with mental and infraorbital nerve involvement complained of oral dysaesthesia. Another patient with similar involvement failed to respond and developed trismus. Responders remained pain-free for 9 months on average. While paroxysmal trigeminal neuralgia (PTN) has been recognised for centuries, the aetiology and definitive treatment remain obscure. Since this is a debilitating condition, management should aim at improving the quality of life. Alcohol is available, affordable and offers useful results where medical resources provide limited PTN treatment modalities.