Successful Treatment of Myofascial Pain Syndrome (MPS) With Surgical Cauterization of Temporalis Muscle Trigger Points: A Case Report Showing a Novel Technique

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Objectives: For patients suffering from Myofascial Pain Syndrome affecting muscles of mastication, traditional trigger point therapy treatment regimens can prove inconvenient due to the short duration of pain relief after each injection and expensive due to repeated visits which are often not covered by insurance. We present a case of a patient treated using an alternative technique that could develop into an additional modality for treated MPS patients who are refractory to conservative treatment.

Experimental Methods: The patient's trigger points were identified and marked by palpating the affected muscle in search of points that referred pain beyond the border of that muscle. Then, rather than injecting them with Botulinum toxin type A, we surgically cauterized each trigger point using a Bovie electrosurgical unit to a setting of 15-20 Watts for 5 seconds. The patient's pain levels were measured before each treatment as well as 2-3 weeks afterwards using the visual analog scale (VAS) to analyze the change as treatment progressed.

Results: This technique provided up to 24 months of adequate pain relief, with decreased overall VAS pain severity after each subsequent treatment session, suggesting that it may be useful in offering longer-term pain relief compared to standard trigger point injection therapy.

Conclusion: While trigger point injection therapy for Myofascial Pain Syndrome is a well-described technique with acceptable pain relief expected for a period of 8-12 weeks, electrosurgical cauterization of temporalis muscle trigger points after failed conservative therapy may be useful in extending the duration of pain relief between treatment sessions.