

Chronic recurring pain is triggered by the nervous system and affects both the body and mind. Pain without relief can affect one's ability to sleep, eat, work, and result in significant depression, irritability and anxiety. The cause of chronic pain varies from injuries, long term illnesses, fibromyalgia, multiple sclerosis, trauma and cancer to inflammatory diseases such as arthritis, to name a few.

The treatment of pain involves a broad spectrum that includes medications, physical medicine, acupuncture, hypnotherapy, biofeedback and other more esoteric forms of treatment. Dr. Alex Alexander, a pain management specialist, poignantly describes a partnership approach to treatment. "Whatever the treatment, it must be tailored to each individual patient, graduated in intensity, and goal-oriented with consideration of the patient's needs and desires..." It is most helpful to have a



*All's Well*  
Health for Body, Mind, Spirit

by Moira Fitzpatrick, PhD, ND

## Hope for Healing Chronic Pain

holistic specialist coordinating the treatment of your pain.

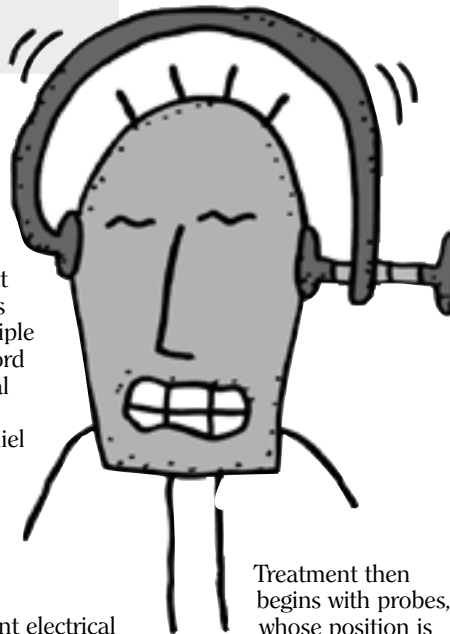
In addition to the more traditional treatments for pain, there are some new techniques that offer significant benefits in pain management as well as contribute to treating the underlying condition and offer hope for health restoration.

One of those approaches includes the use of an Alpha Stim device, which can be used to treat specific areas of pain and also can be used as cranial electrotherapy stimulation (CES). CES is

being used to treat such conditions as fibromyalgia, multiple sclerosis, spinal cord injuries, and global reflex sympathetic dystrophy. Dr. Daniel Kirsch designed the Alpha Stim device and is an international authority on electromedicine.

The microcurrent electrical therapy component is used to treat specific pain such as back pain, carpal tunnel, arthritis, TMJ, migraine headaches, cancer pain,

sprains, strains, and muscle spasms. All treatment begins with a comprehensive history and pain evaluation. The discomfort is analyzed in terms of location, intensity and positions that exacerbate the pain. The device is set at a low frequency and the highest comfortable current.



Treatment then begins with probes, whose position is changed at 10 second intervals. The idea is to treat the hurt area in a big X beyond the area of pain and then to begin to hone in on

the specific area of discomfort.

The current, which is felt slightly, is directed through the problem area in three dimensions at various angles. A treatment lasts between five and 10 minutes.

One patient recently treated is a gymnast, who had significant left wrist pain. She was treated with the probes around the chronic injury and then to integrate the treatment, we made use of CES. This involves the use of ear clip electrodes through which a small amount of current, usually less than one milliamperere passes. Brain imaging has shown that CES affects the entire brain. It is hypothesized that the microcurrent waveform activates nerves cells that produce neurotransmitters.

Additionally, CES calms the patient by inducing an alpha state. An alpha state is a calm, relaxed focused state, where the brain rapidly makes connections. The brain is registering the new state, both the sensations and perception that is free from pain. The placement of ear clips on each ear also provides bilateral stimulation. This gymnast's wrist improved significantly and she was able

to successfully compete for the rest of the season.

Migraine and tension headaches can successfully be treated using a combination of microcurrent, hypnotherapy and cranial electrotherapy. One patient came into the office with head pain at 10/10, the highest pain in the subjective scale. We applied the microcurrent probes and then used a hypnotherapy technique to replace the area of discomfort with an experience of cool relaxation and when the pain was gone, integrated the treatment with CES. While the patient was in this alpha state, she was taught a technique to prevent future migraines and the new mind-body experience of cool, calm, relaxation was anchored in or reinforced. This patient left the session with no pain and feeling calm, relaxed and significantly lighter.

CES can be used to treat individuals diagnosed with fibromyalgia. Typically, individuals purchase their own alpha stim device and use it daily for an hour. I augment this maintenance treatment with an integration of hypnotherapy and CES.

One patient describes the

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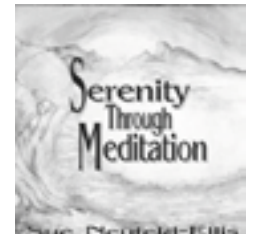
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