Diode Laser In Cervical Myofascial Pain: A Double-Blind Study Versus Placebo

F. Ceccherelli, L. Altafini, G. Lo Castro, A. Avila, F. Ambrosio, and G. P. Giron  Institute of Anesthesiology and Intensive Care, University of Padua, and the Associazione Italiana per la Ricerca e, l'Aggiornamento Scientif co, Padua, Italy

Summary. We present a double-blind trial in which a pulsed infrared beam was compared with a placebo in the treatment of myofascial pain in the cervical region. The patients were submitted to 12 sessions on alternate days to a total energy dose of 5 J each. At each session, the four most painful muscular trigger points and five bilateral homometameric acupuncture points were irradiated. Those in the placebo group submitted to the same number of sessions following an identical procedure, the only difference being that the laser apparatus was non-operational. Pain was monitored using the Italian version of the McGill pain questionnaire and the Scott-Huskisson visual analogue scale. The results show a pain attenuation in the treated group and a statistically significant difference between the two groups of patients, both at the end of therapy and at the 3-month followup examination.

The Clinical Journal of Pain 5:301-304