

## NEWSLETTER

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Ask us about:

New Medications

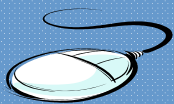
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to treat

Headaches  
And  
Neuropathic  
Pain

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# Comprehensive Pain Management

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## Radiofrequency Nerve Reprogramming

Pain can be a result of many causes, such as trauma, surgery, disease, or even stress. By its very nature, pain involves the nervous system. A painful stimulus travels through the nervous system along peripheral nerves through the spinal cord, eventually reaching the brain where we perceive it as an unpleasant sensation.

Over the past few years our understanding of the central nervous system has improved dramatically. We have learned that by applying various frequencies of radiofrequency waves to specific areas such as the *dorsal root ganglia*, *sympathetic nerves*, and *neuromas*, we can modulate or reprogram a nerve in order to decrease the perception of pain. The radiofrequency waves used are distantly similar to compressed sound waves or gentle microwaves.

While the technology is complex, the idea is simple. A

small radiofrequency current is delivered via a needle to the selected nerve. This not only reduces the disabling sensation of pain but also improves mobility, muscle spasms, blood flow, and healing. The procedure takes about 15 minutes and involves minimal discomfort. It is typically done with



fluoroscopic guidance under local anesthesia with mild sedation. Recent advancements in the technology have made this technique safe and effective.

Excellent results can be achieved for many types of pain. For example, one of the

more common uses of radiofrequency is for arthritis of the spine, called *facet arthropathy*. This pain is typically along the lower back or on the side of the neck and is made worse by bending toward the affected area. By applying radiofrequency waves to the median branch nerve, the arthritic joint pain is eliminated, often for several years at a time.

Other common uses of radiofrequency techniques are to treat neuropathic pain. Neuropathies may result from many causes including HIV, diabetes, chemotherapy, traumatic and vascular disease. In such cases, the dorsal root ganglion is reprogrammed using Pulse Wave RF which usually reduces the pain by 50%. The benefits for this type of patient usually last for 12 months and the treatment can be repeated as needed.

### Conditions Treated

- ◆ HIV neuropathy
- ◆ Occipital Neuralgia
- ◆ Arthritis of the spine
- ◆ Raynauds Disease
- ◆ Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy
- ◆ Peripheral neuropathy
- ◆ Ischemic Pain Wound Healing
- ◆ Leg ulcers
- ◆ Pelvic pain
- ◆ Neuromas
- ◆ Myopathies
- ◆ Pancreatic pain
- ◆ Sciatic Pain
- ◆ Post laminectomy pain

# Easing the Cancer Journey

A cancer diagnosis brings along with it a fear of the pain associated with the disease and it's treatment. Quality of life for cancer patients is extremely important. We are fortunate to have a number of options available to treat cancer pain and the low energy levels associated with cancer treatments.

**New medications:** Lack of energy due to chemotherapy or illness can be managed with *Provigil* and *Lexapro*. Nausea is treated with *Zofran* and *Anzemet*.

**Opiate medications:** New pain medications allow for greater customization to a patient's needs. *Duragesic* reduces stomach problems, *Avinza* allows for once a day dosing, *Dolophin* allows for total pain control for those who do not respond to other pain medications, and *Actiq* provides fast acting relief for episodic pain control.

**Neuroaxial Steroid injections:** When a patient develops severe pain that cannot be controlled by oral medications do not control, then

injections of steroid medications onto the inflamed area provides long lasting pain control.

**Neurolytic blocks:** When total pain control is needed, special injections can be done to put the painful part of the body to sleep, resulting in partial numbness.

**Holistic therapies:** acupuncture, hypnotherapy for pain management, energy healing, nutritional support for maximal health.

## New Medications for Neuropathic Pain

Nerve related pain, described as shooting, electric and burning sensations can often be difficult to treat with traditional pain medications. Recent advances in our understanding of neurophysiology have provided new treatment options.

**Lyrica-** used for many types of nerve pain such as diabetic, HIV, radicular, and post herpetic neuropathies. If you are experiencing tingling and numbness in your arms and legs and/or burning and shooting pain of hands and feet, a significant benefit may be achieved from this medication. Lyrica is similar to the more commonly used drug, Neurontin. However, Lyrica can be more effective in reducing pain without side effects of memory problems, sedation or dizziness.

**Cymbalta-** a new anti-depressant medication approved to treat nerve pain. Cymbalta uniquely inhibits the reuptake of serotonin & norepinephrine within the central nervous system. It is this mechanism that allows Cymbalta to control neuropathic pain in addition to reducing the depression that is common with chronic pain.

**Risperdal & Seroquel-** are medications that are used to help with chronic pain and anxiety at higher neuronal processing centers. Risperdal and Seroquel have shown to be very effective for patients who are unable to function due to their pain or cannot sleep because of increased pain during the night time. These medications are especially useful in patients who do not respond to other sleep aids.



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