

P 047. SUCCESSFUL THERAPY OF INSERTIONAL TENDOPATHIES OF THE ELBOW AND HEEL BY A NEW, UNFOCUSED SHOCK WAVE DEVICE - A PROSPECTIVE, RANDOMIZED, BLIND STUDY

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Patients & methods: Since February 1998, 70 patients with a mean age of 50.5(10 years) were treated for heel spur and tennis elbow with a compact, low cost shock wave device, in the Sportmedizinisches Institut.

Inclusion criteria for this study was unsuccessful conservative therapy during the 6 months before referral to our institute.

15 patients of each randomized group underwent a placebo treatment and were examined after 1 and 4 weeks. The extent of pain was specified with a Visual Analogue Scale (VAS) for pain at rest and activity in each examination.

Verum treatments were done with 15 tennis elbow and 25 heel spur patients during up to 3 sessions in weekly intervals with 2000 unfocused shock waves per session. Evaluation was performed immediately before, 1, 4 and 12 weeks after treatment.

Results: Pain rating on the VAS showed no significant decrease within both placebo groups ($p > 0.05$).

Patients of the verum group indicated a considerable pain decrease already after the first treatment ($p < 0.05$), both during daily activities and in the night. This pain level decreased further in the following examinations ($p < 0.001$).

33% of the tennis elbow and 40% of heel spur patients were completely pain-free 1 week after the last treatment. Totally painless tennis elbow patients increased to 53% after 4 weeks. 64% of the heel spur group were completely without pain after 4 weeks.

13.3% of the tennis elbow patients and 16% of the heel spur patients had no pain relief 1 week after the treatment. After 4 weeks, the percentage of tennis elbow patients without pain relief remained stable whereas the percentage of heel spur patients without pain relief decreased to 12%.

Conclusion: Application of unfocused shock waves shows significant pain relieving effects in the treatment of insertional tendopathies. This new therapy can thus be recommended.