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Treatment of carpal tunnel syndrome with alpha-lipoic acid.

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Abstract

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) is the most common peripheral mononeuropathy; its symptoms and functional limitations significantly penalize the daily activities and quality of life of many people. While surgery is reserved to most severe cases, the earlier stages of disease may be controlled by a pharmacological treatment aimed to "neuroprotection", i.e. to limiting and correcting the nerve damage. Our study was aimed to compare the efficacy of a fixed association of alpha-lipoic acid (ALA) 600 mg/die and gamma-linolenic acid (GLA) 360 mg/die, and a multivitamin B preparation (Vit B6 150 mg, Vit B1 100 mg, Vit B12 500 microg daily) for 90 days in 112 subjects with moderately severe CTS. Demographic, case-history and treatment efficacy data were collected; the Boston questionnaire was administered and the patients were evaluated by Hi-Ob scale and electro-myography. A significant reduction in both symptoms scores and functional impairment (Boston questionnaire) was observed in ALA/GLA group, while the multivitamin group experienced a slight improvement of symptoms and a deterioration of functional scores. Electromyography showed a statistically significant improvement with ALA/GLA, but not with the multivitamin product. The Hi-Ob scale showed significant efficacy of ALA/GLA in improving symptoms and functional impairment, while in the multivitamin group the improvement was significant, but less marked than in the ALA/GLA group. In conclusion, the fixed association of ALA and GLA proved to be a useful tool and may be proposed for controlling symptoms and improving the evolution of CTS, especially in the earlier stages of disease.

Comment in

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