

Long-term effectiveness of combined unilateral Sphenopalatine and Occipital nerve stimulation in patients with refractory chronic cluster headache



Andreani, JC, Bruera, OCJ, Bashkansky, D Lisicki, M; Piedimonte FC

Introduction

We present the results of a prolonged follow-up of refractory chronic cluster headache patients receiving combined invasive occipital and sphenopalatine ganglion neuromodulation.

Patients & Methods

Seven patients suffering from refractory CCH (3f / 4m) underwent implantation of electrodes for sphenopalatine ganglion (SPG) and greater occipital nerve (GON) stimulation.

Results

Mean follow-up was $8,13 \pm 1,9$ years. Six out of the seven patients (86%) experienced good-to-excellent initial pain relief, and achieved an almost complete remission of symptoms later on. Mean HIT-6 values decreased to the 'Little or no impact' severity level (Fig 1) already during the first control after surgery, and persisted similarly low during subsequent visits. Alike results were observed in the VAS. The total number of attacks also decreased significantly from $44,7 \pm 19,6$ to $13,2 \pm 7,4$ per month. Electrode migration requiring a re-intervention was observed in two patients at 12 days and at 3 months after surgery, regaining the initial benefit in one case. One patient passed away during follow-up due to an unrelated cause.

