

Abstract

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Omega-3 fatty acids for neuropathic pain: case series.

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OBJECTIVE: The aim of this case series study was to investigate and report on patients with neuropathic pain who responded to treatment with omega-3 fatty acids.

METHODS: Five patients with different underlying diagnoses including cervical radiculopathy, thoracic outlet syndrome, fibromyalgia, carpal tunnel syndrome, burn injury were treated with high oral doses of omega 3 fish oil (varying from 2400-7200 mg/day of EPA-DHA). Outcome measures were obtained pretreatment and posttreatment. These included validated surveys (short-form McGill Pain questionnaire, DN4 neuropathic pain scale, Pain Detect Questionnaire), objective clinical tools (Jamar grip strength, Lafayette dynamometry, tender point algometry) and EMG Nerve Conduction studies.

RESULTS: These patients had clinically significant pain reduction, improved function as documented with both subjective and objective outcome measures up to as much as 19 months after treatment initiation. No serious adverse effects were reported.

CONCLUSIONS: This first-ever reported case series suggests that omega-3 fatty acids may be of benefit in the management of patients with neuropathic pain. Further investigations with randomized controlled trials in a more specific neuropathic pain population would be warranted.

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