Deafness References

SUDDEN SENSORINEURAL DEAFNESS: TREATMENT WITH HYPERBARIC OXYGEN THERAPY AFTER FAILURE OF A TEN DAY COURSE OF "CLASSICAL" DRUG THERAPY

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INTRODUCTION:

The optimal treatment of Idiopathic Sudden Sensorineural Deafness (ISSD) is not well defined. This is partly due to the fact that there can be no causal therapy for a disease of which the cause is not known. The therapeutic outcome of several proposed drug treatment regimes is in the same range as the spontaneous recovery rate, which can be as high as 65%.

METHODS:

During the last two years, 26 patients have been treated with Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) following a strict stepwise therapeutic protocol. All patients were treated initially with high-dose intravenous steroids, associated with hypervolemic haemodilution, if indicated. Only upon failure of this treatment after 10 treatment days, were patients additionally treated with HBOT (daily sessions at 2.5 ATA for 90 minutes).

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS:

After a mean of 11 HBOT sessions (9-30), we observed an average hearing gain of 43% (±23%), that persisted up to a 3-month follow-up. This compares favourably with reports in the literature, and is consistent with a previous study by one of us (Desloovere, 1988). Because of the lack of randomised prospective studies, this preliminary uncontrolled study will now be extended and randomised versus placebo, to include a valid control group.

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