E-Poster

EP-972

Extracorporeal Shock Wave Therapy for Localized Upper Extremity Lymphedema Secondary to Breast Cancer

Topic: Miscellaneous

Sandra Vázquez Gallego, Ivania Figueroa, Sandra Sole Ripoll

Rehabilitation, Hospital Clinic de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain

BACKGROUND

Extracorporeal shock wave (ESW) therapy is a well-known and effective method for the conservative treatment of multiple musculoskeletal disorders. However, evidence for lymphedema related to breast cancer is limited.

We present a study of 15 patients with a history of breast cancer who, after various treatments including surgery, axillary lymphadenectomy, and chemoradiotherapy, developed localized lymphedema in the upper extremity and were referred to the Rehabilitation Service. The patients did not tolerate decongestive therapy, the gold standard treatment, so ESW therapy was proposed as an alternative.

METHODS

Based on the literature, ESW therapy was proposed once a week for 12 sessions. We applied radial ESW at 2 bar pressure, 11 Hz frequency, and 4500 pulses per session. The main parameters evaluated were circumference and volume difference before and after treatment. We also assessed functionality and quality of life using the DASH and ULL-27 questionnaires, which are specific to upper extremity lymphedema.

RESULTS

Patients reported symptom improvement on the ULL-27 and DASH questionnaires. Furthermore, all patients observed a decrease in the volume of the affected limb of approximately 4% to 8% at the end of treatment. This improvement was maintained at three and six months.

CONCLUSION

Lymphedema poses a challenge for any rehabilitation service. As a noninvasive, novel, and effective method, ESW is a promising treatment modality for localized lymphedema.

Statement of Disclosures

None

Corresponding Author:
Sandra Vázquez Gallego
Rehabilitation, Hospital Clinic de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain
Email: svazquezg@clinic.cat

Doi: 10.5606/archisprm.2026.EP-972