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Effectiveness of Intermittent Cervical Traction with and without Neural Mobilization in Discogenic Cervical Radiculopathy

Introduction: Cervical Radiculopathy (CR) associated pain and disability leads to functional limitation and loss of productivity in the working-age population. Many previous studies have explored the individual effects of Neural mobilization (NM) and Intermittent Cervical Traction (ICT) in CR. However, the simultaneous application of ICT with NM using standard methods has not been explored.

Objective: In this study, we analyzed the effectiveness of mechanical ICT with and without simultaneous NM application in unilateral discogenic CR.

Methods: In this registered clinical trial (CTRI/2020/02/023268), CR patients were alternatively allocated to a treatment group (n=12) that received NM simultaneously with ICT and a control group (n=12) received ICT only for six consecutive sessions. Visual Analog Scale (VAS), Neck Disability Index (NDI), and Range of motion (ROM) were assessed at baseline, immediately, and at short-term.

Results: Both the groups revealed statistically significant improvement for VASneck and VASarm immediately and at short-term, and for NDI at short term. Extension and Ipsilateral rotation ROM improved significantly in treatment and control groups, respectively.

Conclusion: Radicular pain can be improved with simultaneous application of ICT with NM, while ICT alone can improve cervical ROM. However, the level of disability can be improved with both interventions.