

Complex rehabilitation of Parkinson's disease at the Dead Sea for fourteen days – an observational study

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Rationale:

Environmental therapy is a new idea in treating Parkinsonian patients. The basis of the treatment is the constant high pressure climate of the dead sea. The combination of neuropsychiatric treatment with physiotherapy and natural factors of the dead sea area is a promising condition to increase mobility as well as psychosocial status.

Patients and Methods:

15 Parkinsonian patients underwent an environmental therapy at the dead sea for fourteen days (Dead Sea Medical Center, Jordanien). The environmental therapy was supplemented with various physiotherapeutic and psychosocial measures. The Unified Parkinson Disease Rating Scale (UPDRS) was used to evaluate the status of the disease in the beginning and at the end of the therapy, at pre-examinations and at follow-up-examinations.

Results:

Before the beginning of the therapy the course of the disease was mildly progressive. The UPDRS improved significantly and with clinically relevance by the therapy (about 30% reduction of disease-specific impairments). This improvement was detectable in all 3 subscores (mental, Activity of Daily Living ADL and motor). The positive effects remained almost completely within the first three months after the therapy and diminished to a tendentious order of magnitude after further four to five months.

Conclusions:

As a whole the environmental therapy at the dead sea for fourteen days supplemented with various physiotherapeutic and psychosocial measures resulted in a clear improvement of the status of the disease at Parkinsonian patients. The positive effects applied not only to the mental domain but also to the ADL and the motor domain. The relevance of the climate factors within the whole package of measures and events, as well as positive effects of the acute reduction of symptoms on the long-term prognosis of Parkinson's disease, remain speculations at the moment.

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