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Comparative Effectiveness of Low Level Laser Therapy and Nerve Gliding Exercises on Patients with Carpal Tunnel Syndrome: a Randomized Clinical Trial

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Abstract : Background and purpose: There is lack of definite evidence indicating an effective treatment for carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS). Low level laser therapy (LLLT) has long been used as one of the conservative treatments for CTS. On contrast, nerve gliding exercises have been introduced recently as a physical modality in treating patients with entrapment neuropathies. The purpse of this study was to compare the effectiveness of combining a wrist splint with either LLLT or nerve gliding exercises in treating CTS patients. **Methods:** 35 patients with mild to moderate CTS were randomized into two groups. Group(I) (18 patients underwent LLLT, and group (II) (17 patients) underwent nerve gliding exercises. All patients received a neutral wrist splint. Outcome measures included visual analogue scale (VAS); hand grip and pinch strength; sensory examiniation; Boston carpal tunnel syndrome questionnaire before and after treatment for xix weeks. **Results :** Statistical analysis revealed significant improvements in VAS, handgrip and pinch strength, and symptom severity and functional status scores after treatment as compared to group (II). **Conclusions:** The combination of LLLT with a wrist splint may be more effective than nerve gliding exercises with a wrist splint.

Keywords : Carpal tunnel syndrome, low level laser therapy, nerve gliding exercise.

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