

Morton`s Neuroma: Treatment with Extracorporeal Shock Wave Therapy

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Morton's Neuroma is a common pathology of the forefoot. It is characterized by plantar forefoot pain, neuralgia affecting spaces of the toes, burning sensation that increases with digital pressure in between the toes, and a solid node in the proximal space of the toes is evident on the ultrasonographic exam. The conservative treatment is usually successful, however, when it fails, the surgical removal of the tumor can be indicated. While surgery has proven effective, it comes with the risks and complications associated with surgery and necessitates a prolonged recovery.

We reviewed the records of 20 patients presenting with Morton's Neuroma between July 2003 and September 2005. All patients answered a questionnaire regarding satisfaction, pain, restriction of footwear and activity.

All patients (20) had tried conservative treatment for a minimum of 6 months without success. Eleven patients (13 feet) were treated with ESWT (1,500 pulses at 0.3 mJ/mm²), on an Orthima-Direx device (electrohydraulic), from directly plantar to the Morton's Neuroma. The mean follow-up was 15.9 (5 - 30) months. Of the total, 61.4%(8 feet) were satisfied and 38.3%(5 feet) were dissatisfied with the outcome, 4 of which underwent surgical treatment. Of the 9 patients (10 feet) submitted to surgical approach through a dorsal incision, 90% (9 feet) were satisfied. The mean follow-up was 16.8 (5-29) months in this group. One patient complained of paraesthesia on the toe 6 months after surgery.

ESWT can be considered an option in the treatment of painful Morton`s Neuroma. It does not have complications associated with surgery.