

Neural Therapy

By Dr. Jeremy Kaslow, MD

Neural Therapy was originally developed in 1925 in Germany by the Huneke brothers who were medical doctors. It involves the injection of Procaine (also known as Novocain), a common local anesthetic, into various but very specific areas. Neural Therapy is based on the theory that trauma can produce long-standing disturbances in the electrochemical function of tissues. The types of tissues affected by trauma include scars, nerves or a cluster of nerves called ganglions. A correctly administered Neural Therapy injection can often instantly and lastingly resolve chronic longstanding illness and chronic pain.

Although an estimated 35% of all West German physicians use Neural Therapy to some extent and in the rest of the Western World it has become one of the most widely used modalities in the treatment of chronic pain, most physicians in the United States are unfamiliar with Neural Therapy. Here in the United States, "trigger point injections" are commonly used for pain based on the work of Janet Travell, M.D. It is not widely known but Dr. Travell learned about trigger points while studying in Germany and then returned home to write the reference book widely used in the United States on Trigger Point injections. However, Trigger Point injections are just one type of Neural Therapy. Neural Therapy is also often very effective for other medical illnesses such as allergies, chronic bowel problems, kidney disease, prostate and female problems, infertility, tinnitus (ringing in the ears), and many other conditions.

How did Neural Therapy start?

The basis for Neural Therapy started with the use of cocaine as a local anesthetic in the late 1800's by the great scientists, Pavlov and Sigmund Freud. In 1906, the German surgeon, Spiess, discovered that wounds and inflammatory processes subsided more quickly and with fewer complications after injection with the newly discovered Novocain (procaine), which did not possess the addicting qualities of cocaine.

The famous French surgeon, Leriche, performed the first nerve block into the stellate ganglion in 1925 for the treatment of chronic intractable arm pain. He described the injection of Novocain as the surgeon's "bloodless knife." Ganglion blocks are now commonly used for the treatment of neck, shoulder, arm, leg, and low back pain. In addition, Procaine can be used directly in the nerves of the autonomic nervous system, peripheral nerves, scars, glands, acupuncture points, trigger points, and other tissues. Even intravenous Lidocaine has treated chronic somatic pain, including cancer pain.

Modern Neural Therapy owes its discovery to an accident in 1925, observed and interpreted by two physicians, Ferdinand and Walter Huneke. They had for years attempted in vain to help their sister, who often suffered severe migraine attacks. During one particularly violent attack, Ferdinand injected his sister intravenously with what he thought was a remedy for rheumatism. While he was still administering the injection, the blinding migraine headache simply vanished, together with the flashing sensation in front of her eyes, dizziness, nausea and depression. Her

headaches never recurred! After witnessing this miraculous recovery, Ferdinand and Walter realized their sister's intravenous injection actually contained Procaine. After much further experimentation, it became clear that it was Procaine alone that had produced the startling cure, and therefore Procaine could also be used as a treatment remedy, as well as a local anesthetic.

How does Neural Therapy work at a site of disturbance?

A German neurophysiologist, Albert Fleckenstein, demonstrated that the cells in scar tissue have a different membrane potential from normal body cells, functioning much like a 1.5 volt battery implanted into the body. Whenever a cell has lost its normal membrane potential, ion pumps in the cell wall stop working. This means that abnormal minerals and toxic substances accumulate inside the cell. As a result, the cell loses the ability to heal itself and resume normal functioning. Procaine acts on the cell wall to allow the ion pumps to resume normal action and restore the membrane potential. This is how Procaine and other agents used in Neural Therapy correct the bioelectric disturbance at a specific site or nerve ganglion. By re-establishing the normal electrical condition of cells and nerves, the disturbed functions are also restored to normality, and the patient returns to health as far as this is anatomically still possible. The amazing part of Neural Therapy is that the site being treated can be very far away for the tissue in the body that is not functioning properly. For example, a scar on the chin can affect the low back. This is possible because of the vast network of nerves called the Autonomic Nervous System.

What is the Autonomic Nervous System?

The nerves of your autonomic system provide a vast network of electrical circuits, having a total length of twelve times the circumference of the earth, and connecting every one of your 40 trillion cells to form a living whole human organism. This autonomic (or neurovegetative) system controls the vital processes everywhere in your body. It regulates your breathing, circulation, body temperature, digestion, metabolism, hormone formation and distribution. It causes your heart to beat and your lungs to breathe automatically, even when you are asleep. It does in fact control all of the numerous automatic processes without which you could not live. In other words virtually every cell in your body is connected not only to each other through the autonomic nervous system but is also in large part controlled by your autonomic nervous system.

As Fleckenstein showed, scar tissue can create an abnormal electric signal. In turn this signal is transmitted throughout the rest of your body via the autonomic nervous system. Procaine delivered by direct injection to scars or through other nerves that travel into deeper scars through tiny tubules in the cellular matrix to these areas of bioelectrical disturbance for treatment. As a result, Procaine is capable of eliminating autonomic regulatory dysfunctions. Since the autonomic nervous system is the master controller of the body, Neural Therapy can have a profound impact on your condition and your ability to heal.

In 1940, Ferdinand Huneke observed the first "lightning reaction" or the "Huneke phenomenon," discovering that a scar can produce an "interference field." A patient presented to him with a severely painful frozen right shoulder that had been refractory to all kinds of therapies. Huneke injected the shoulder joint directly with Procaine without obtaining any pain relief. However, within several days of the shoulder injection, the patient developed severe itching in a scar in her left lower leg where she had surgery years prior and just before developing the painful shoulder. When she returned, Huneke injected Procaine into the itchy scar in her left leg. Almost immediately she obtained full and painless range of motion in her right shoulder joint. The shoulder problem never recurred. The left leg scar injection had apparently "cured" her shoulder problem. This was the first observation of what Neural Therapy is capable.

What causes interference fields?

Infections.

Emotional trauma.

Physical Trauma from any type of surgery, accidents, deep cuts, biopsies, childbirth, dental procedures, vaccinations, burns, tattoos, etc.

You then may wonder how a scar or infection becomes activated to become an interference field. General stress from illness, malnutrition, emotional stress, food allergies, pregnancy, etc. seems to convert an inactive interference field to one that creates a disturbance.

Why does Neural Therapy work?

I used to believe that if you get all the nutrients you need, avoid everything that makes you worse (allergens, alcohol, etc.), and detoxify or get rid of anything that is preventing you from getting well (mercury, yeast, abusive relationships), your body will heal itself. These were the three ingredients of attaining health. However, for some individuals even when everything has been done in these three areas, something seems to be interfering with getting well. It turns out to be interference fields from scars, trauma, etc. that are disturbing the instructions of the autonomic nervous system to heal the body. Emotional imprints are also considerations, but for the purposes of our discussion, we'll focus on physical interference fields.

To understand this more fully, one has to understand that the autonomic nervous system is made up of two divisions. One division is the sympathetic nervous system that is activated by stress. It speeds up your heart rate, makes you burn sugar more rapidly, tenses your muscles, and in general increases your ability to "fight or flight." The other division of the autonomic nervous system is the parasympathetic nervous system. Its job is to promote healing, digestion, repair etc. It slows your heart rate down, increases mucus and digestion, etc.

A key feature of the sympathetic nervous system is that it links all of the cells of the body together, regulates the contraction and expansion of blood vessels, regulates the activity of the connective tissue necessary for regenerating body systems, and it regulates the voltage (membrane potential) across the cell wall in every cell in the body. While either the

parasympathetic or sympathetic nervous system could be overly dominant and lead to symptoms, most people are stuck in an overly reactive sympathetic state. In other words, the healing mechanism is impaired or "interfered with."

Will Neural Therapy replace all other therapies?

No, it will not. Some health problems have to be treated with surgery (ie trauma, etc.) and most health problems are helped with proper nutritional therapy as well as homeopathic and herbal treatments. But if your autonomic nervous system is not fully functional, these other therapies may not work as expected. The autonomic nervous system is the master controller of all body functions, including nutritional / biochemical activities. Personalized nutritional programs allow healing only to the point at which the nervous system will allow. Thus, when your interference fields have been addressed with Neural Therapy, the results seem to be longer lasting and more complete.

Neural Therapy is just another modality available to you. Combining it with a personalized nutritional/metabolic/detoxification program is one of the most powerful healing tools available.

How many Neural Therapy treatments are typically necessary?

Sometimes one treatment will resolve the problem. More often, only a partial improvement follows each treatment. Three to six treatments are the average number to achieve lasting resolution of a chronic condition. What Neural Therapy does for many of my patients is to open the door to allow the other healing modalities we use to do their job. Less often do I see the dramatic miraculous response that the Huneke brothers described. Rather it is a gradual resolution of the dysfunction and a return to optimal health.

When is Neural Therapy Used in our Practice?

Neural Therapy is considered as a treatment option when a patient can identify an event that occurred just before they became sick, and especially so when the event was some type of physical trauma, illness or emotional event. The patient will often say they have not been the same since. It is also considered when a patient has failed to respond to other commonly successful treatment regimes, when there is no "appropriate" trauma to explain the current symptoms to a specific joint or body location, when there is discrepancy between objective and subjective findings, when "bizarre" or unusual symptoms persist or when there is pain on one side of the body only (e.g., single arm and/or leg pain). To aid in the removal of heavy metals from the body. Neural Therapy has been reported to correct other medical conditions besides pain - metabolic problems like diabetes or iron overload, chronic infections, nerve injuries, emotional traumas, etc.

Why is Neural Therapy is not more widely known in the United States?

In the United States, "trigger-point injections" and "nerve blocks" are used all the time. These treatments are part of Neural Therapy and were introduced to American doctors by Dr. Janet Travel, MD in the 1940's after she studied Neural Therapy in Germany. But the other applications of Neural Therapy, such as treating reactive scars, are not well known by most doctors in this country, though they are well accepted by physicians in Europe, South America and many other countries and have been used for decades.

Summary.

Because of the inner connectedness of every cell through the sympathetic nervous system, no matter how seemingly distant from each other, it is truthful to say that any illness indicates that the living organism as a whole has lost its ability to regulate itself in a completely healthful way. An organ (heart, gallbladder, eye, joint etc.) never becomes diseased in isolation, but always as a symptom of the whole individual. Neural therapy removes any interferences, that may be preventing your body from normal healing activity.