

A pilot study in general practice assessing the efficacy of 830 nm, 300 mW Low Power Laser Therapy in the management of chronic neck pain

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Objective: This pilot study was undertaken to test techniques of application of laser, appropriate outcome measures and to determine effect sizes, in order to facilitate the performance of a larger clinical trial of laser therapy in chronic neck pain. **Methods:** We conducted a double-blind, randomized, placebocontrolled pilot study of 20 patients, 10 in each group, with chronic neck pain. Tender points elicited by palpation were treated twice a week, for up to 30 min, for 7 weeks. The outcome measures used were a 10cm Visual Analogue Scale [VAS] for pain, a Self-Reported Improvement in pain [SRI], measured by a VAS, Short-Form 36 Quality-of-Life questionnaire [SF-36], Northwick Park Neck Pain Questionnaire [NPNPQ] taken at baseline, at the end of 7 weeks treatment and at 12 weeks from baseline. **Results:** We found a positive, pain-relieving effect in the treated group compared with those given placebo using the VAS.