

SPG Block For Migraine Sufferers

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Introduction

The Sphenopalatine Ganglion (SPG) is a group of nerve cells linked to the trigeminal nerve, the main nerve involved with headaches and migraines. Recent advances with interventional radiology have found if numbing medications are applied to block the SPG, it has led to decrease head and migraine pain substantially.

Migraines

A migraine is a neurological disease with extremely incapacitating symptom. Typically migraines are severe, throbbing and recurring head pain. They can be very debilitating. Common symptoms of migraines include: nausea, vomiting, dizziness, visual disturbances, and extreme sensitivity to light, sound, touch, and smell, and tingling or numbness in extremities or face. While most migraine sufferers experience attacks once or twice a month, more than 4 million people experience chronic daily migraines, with at least 15 days a month.

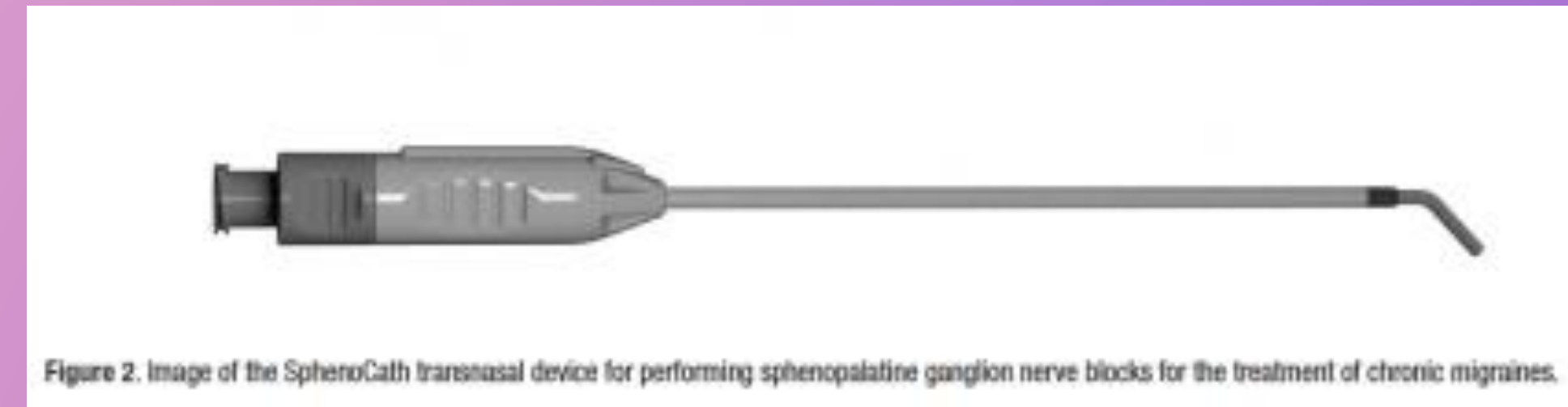


Figure 2. Image of the SphenoCath transnasal device for performing sphenopalatine ganglion nerve blocks for the treatment of chronic migraines.

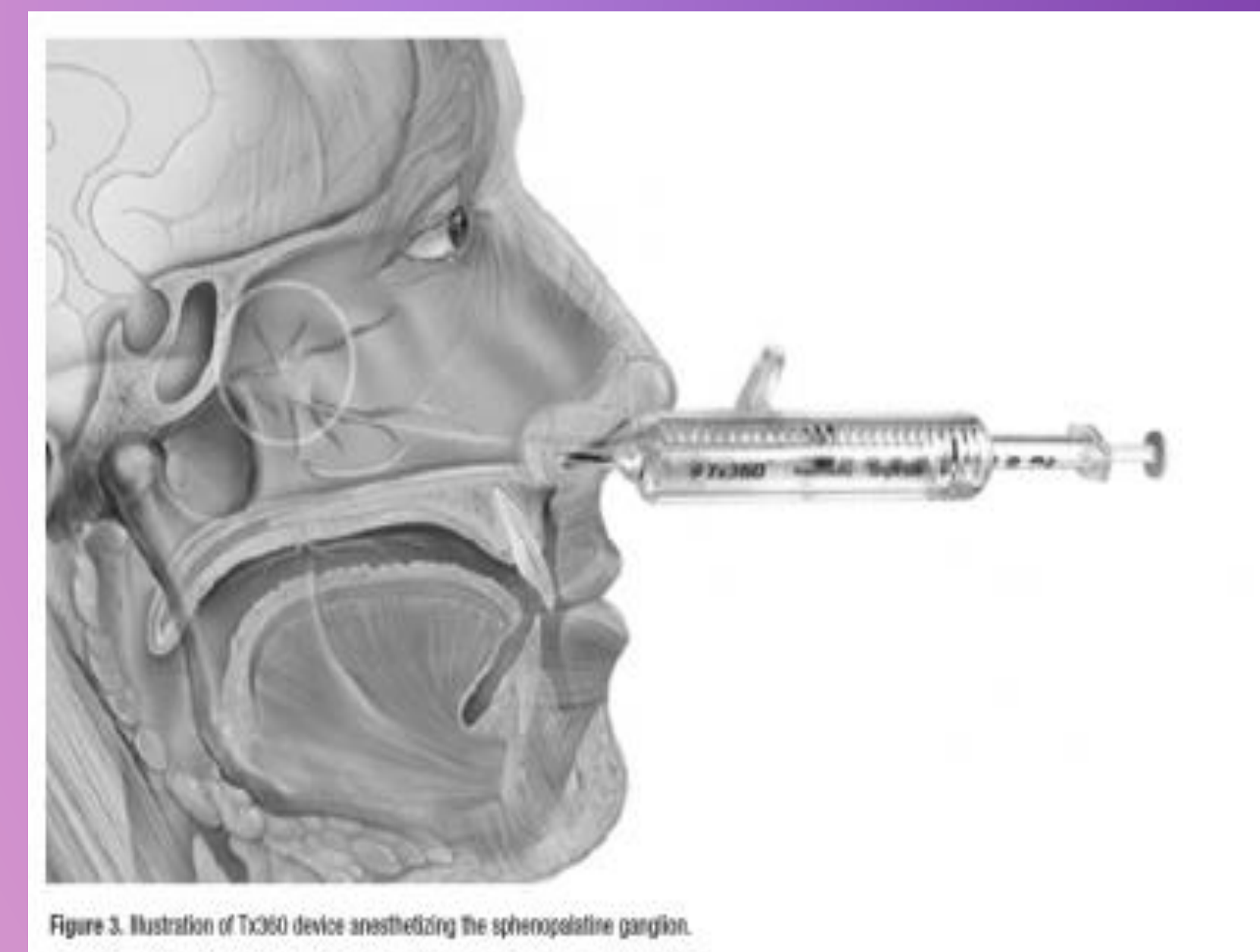


Figure 3. Illustration of T300 device anesthetizing the sphenopalatine ganglion.

Treatment

The most common methods of blocking the SPG include using local anesthetics, such as lidocaine 2% to 4% or .5% bupivacaine. Transnasal, transoral, and lateral infratemporal are the approaches to deliver the anesthetic, with transnasal being the least invasive and best tolerated by patients. By placing a catheter into a nasal passage using fluoroscopy, a physician can precisely deliver numbing medication directly to the sphenopalatine ganglion.



The procedure is quick, usually done in five to ten minutes. Tearing and a brief temperature change may be noted after administration. The patient is then observed for another fifteen or twenty minutes and then discharged to resume normal activities.

Side Effects

A patient may experience temporary effects including numbness of throat (from swallowing a small amount of anesthetic), low blood pressure, or nausea not lasting more than a few hours.

Results

Studies have shown people with an average pain score of 8.25, after SPG block treatment was cut in half the next day. Thirty days after, patients reported an average score of 5.25. And in this study 88% of patients reported less or no migraine medication for ongoing relief.

References

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