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“Motor rehabilitation of spinal cord dysfunction by means of whole body vibration”

John G. Gianutsos, PhD

Liisa C. Oakes, BA

Vincent Siasoco, MD

Stacy Appelblatt, MS, PT

Juliana Hamel, MS, PT

Joan T. Gold, MD

(NYU School of Medicine, New York, NY)

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Objective: To explore (1) the efficacy of whole body vibration (WBV) in inducing reflex standing and, specifically, (2) the progress of persons with spinal cord dysfunction of 3 differing etiologies. **Design:** Case series. **Setting:** Rehabilitation center in a metropolitan area. **Patients:** Persons with spinal paralysis of various etiology who were otherwise unable to stand without the use of long-leg braces locked at the knee. Case 1: a 21-year-old man who underwent laminectomy at T2–9 for resection of an intramedullary tumor. Case 2: a 12-year-old boy presented with quadriplegia secondary to transverse myelitis. Case 3: a 24-year-old man with C5 American Spinal Injury Association class A tetraplegia for 5 years secondary to a fall. **Interventions:** WBV to produce rapid, mechanically delivered repetitive stretches to the lower extremities, thereby resulting in involuntary muscle contraction. **Main Outcome Measures:** Standing time with and without WBV, degree of volitional movement, trunk, and body control, ability to transfer, and carry over to voluntary standing and walking. **Results:** All 3 patients were able to stand with minimal assistance and to increase progressively the length of standing time. Eventually, 2 were able to walk independently using various ambulatory aids. **Conclusions:** WBV represents a promising modality for use in the rehabilitation of persons with motor dysfunction of spinal origin. In our sample, WBV successfully induced reflex standing in all 3 patients and standing was followed by ambulation in 2 cases. **Key Words:** Rehabilitation; Spinal cord dysfunction; Motor function.