

Got Therastim?

Centennial—If you ever went to a chiropractic office besides ours, chances are you experienced ultrasound, heat packs, acupuncture or electrical stimulation as well as chiropractic and neuromuscular massage therapy. The chiropractic school I went to was adamantly opposed to the use of physiotherapies—I didn't even take the physiotherapy class until I had been in practice for 4 years! My school's philosophy was the adjustment should handle all problems. In the real world, I found that NOT to be the case every time.

After taking physiotherapy, I began offering electric stim because I saw there WAS a place for it. I looked around and wanted to get the most bang for the buck because I didn't feel that patients needed a lot of therapies that would ultimately be very expensive aspirins.

The therapy I settled on was called Therastim and was developed by a former pharmacist from Littleton. If you are a patient who has experienced our unit, then you probably remember it's a unique therapy. It's NOT designed to block pain signals to the brain, which is how MOST electric therapies work (notably TENS units—which are those dinky battery-powered units for your home that your doctor can prescribe.)

Therastim is like administering an electric massage all the way down to the surface of the bone. The electrical charge is drawn to the injured tissue, which also has an electric charge. And because it is an *active* therapy, it's necessary for the patient to work the body part into

the direction of pain. This draws the electricity to the injury. With the proper electrode placement, the patient is VERY happy to have found "the spots."

In effect, the electrical charge from the machine neutralizes the body's charge. This halts the inflammation cycle—*without a drug*. The wonderful thing about Therastim is there is no way to get burned, unlike some electric therapies or ultrasound.

I find Therastim to be the MOST helpful for joint injuries like knees, ankles, shoulders. But it can be great for the low back and neck. When a patient who trained for running races tripped in a hole and sprained her ankle (grade II), she was off of crutches after 3 Therastim treatments and 2 or 3 adjustments. (*To her benefit, she was already a patient so her spine was in decent shape.*) It was funny because her doctor at Kaiser who was monitoring her dismissed it as just pain relief. Isn't that the point??

I don't find it a necessary portion of people's care plans, as the ABC method typically handles most of the complaints that Therastim could handle. But as you'll read with Matt's story on page 4, sometimes a person needs a little boost through unwinding. And in those cases, it's a fabulous asset. It can also be helpful to speed a person along a little quicker when in lots of pain. And a patient doesn't have to be a chiropractic patient to receive it. But a free consultation IS a prerequisite and the chiropractic state board requires an exam for all patients treated by a chiropractor.

Yours in Health, Dr. Erica