

Emerging Trends in the Diagnosis and Management of Chronic Orofacial Pain

Chronic orofacial pain (COFP) is relatively common with approximately 7% of the general population reporting such symptoms which concomitantly occur with other somatic symptoms that cannot be adequately explained by known organic pathology. While the etiology of COFP is far from certain, there is compatible evidence of central nervous system sensitization and neural reorganization in the brain, brainstem and spinal cord. The trigeminal pain system presents many sites for potential neural dysregulation. The trigeminal brainstem sensory nuclear complex is an important site for craniofacial nociceptive transmission and may be a key region of neuroplasticity and central sensitization. There is a growing body of literature that identifies morphological abnormalities in the brains of individuals with chronic pain conditions such as chronic oro-facial pain, migraine, chronic back pain, chronic tension type headache and irritable bowel syndrome. This course is designed to update the clinician with deployable contemporary diagnostic and treatment algorithms in our ongoing efforts to responsibly manage orofacial pain.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

At the completion of the course, participants should have the knowledge and ability to meet the following:

1. Explain the complex, multidimensional, and individual nature of pain.
2. Describe the current theories and the science regarding pain and pain management.
3. Recognize and use validated and reliable tools for the measurement of pain and associated symptoms.
4. Describe factors that can interfere with or facilitate effective pain management strategies.
5. Given appropriate information, develop and strategically describe the implementation of an evidence based pain management strategy.