

update on How Arach causes pain

Posted by DocSarah - 15 Nov 2005 15:42

Hi Kim and everyone.

I see the section of my long Arachnoiditis article on how it causes pain has received a lot of hits.

I thought I'd share with you some insight given me recently by a neurosurgeon. He reckons that dull aching pain is caused by stretching of the dural sac and that electric shock pain (shooting) is likely to be due to nerve stretching (which won't necessarily show up on MRI because the patient is lying flat and the nerve stretching happens more on standing/moving)

Any comments?

Regards,

DocSarah

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Re:update on How Arach causes pain

Posted by Kim - 15 Nov 2005 22:13

Hi Doc

😊

This shooting pain I get can happen any time resting or moving. In fact I would say it happens more when I am resting or sitting. It doesn't follow a pattern I can identify. The girls just laugh and say 'attention seeking behaviour' when I go Whoa S**t what was that? Trouble is when you are driving along 🚗 the motorway at 70 miles per hour, and you get a spasm like that, they get worried:ohmy: 😊

Trouble is Doc, when you live on your own and you get these spasms and there is no-one there to see, how can that be 'attention seeking behaviour'?

It's like the good old myth that if your leg gives way - then that is 'inappropriate behaviour' because there is no physiological reason for it to happen! But Doc it happens!

Prof Porter had it happen to him and he did not have an explanation, but no-one says he has a psychosocial illness. 😊

We need an understanding and an explanation. We might not be able to stop it happening to us or be medicated for it, but if we could just get some recognition for what is happening to us.

Remember Itches and Twitches? That article was as a direct response to what people were saying on the helpline.

☺

If I had a spasm when in the MRI Scan wouldn't that ruin the scan itself? Of course that would be my fault as well, wouldn't it? ☺

Sorry Doc, there are no easy answers but I hope more questions!

Luv 'n Luk

Kim

(Nemesis)

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Re:update on How Arach causes pain

Posted by DocSarah - 25 Nov 2005 17:23

Hi Kim,

yes, those spasms sure are a pain in no uncertain terms! And anyone who suggests they are 'put on' should try having one. I have them at night mostly but they do appear in the day at odd times (usually highly inconvenient! ☺
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I guess if they get to be regular, then it might be worth trying Baclofen or Tizanidine (I use diazepam when they are bad, but it's not a good idea on a regular basis and to be honest, it only damps down an all-night attack it doesn't stop it dead)

Hope this helps,

Luv

GD

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Re:update on How Arach causes pain

Posted by mitsuyo_sprague - 26 Nov 2005 03:01

Hi DocSarah and Kim,

I am confused, again.... I feel so ignorant, but... So, the shooting pain I get is actually muscle spasm? How is a shooting pain different from an electric shock type pain? To me, they are not that different (maybe the same?). I feel small electric current pretty much all the time in my feet, but they are not like "shock" but more like "spark". Then I get a shooting or electric shock type pain from time to time, and it could be in my toes, legs, or lately in my fingers. My toes usually get a "shock" that startles me. Legs usually get "shooting". My fingers get "squeezing", and this one lasts the longest.

My feet have been under this intense itching attack lately. It started on top of my feet, then "spreading" to the sides of feet, and now also down to the bottom of my feet. It really drives me crazy. I put lots of lotion on my feet and legs every day, and driness doesn't seem to be the cause of itching. But I may as well be mixed up between the "spark" and "itching". Any comment?

DocSarah, I did read the article and almost all other articles you have written. It's almost like everything I have experienced in terms of symptoms are there! It's so great to have these articles readily available to us. And I am thankful for all your responses to my questions as I am very frustrated with all my doctors who won't tell me or do much.

Thanks, both DocSarah and Kim, for all you do for those with Arachnoiditis.

Mitsuyo

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Re:update on How Arach causes pain

Posted by DocSarah - 26 Nov 2005 10:17

Hi Mitsuyo,

it is difficult to disentangle the different sensations. It may help just to think of the nerve messages as 'scrambled' so what should register as light touch can be painful, or intensely itchy, or cause electric shock sensation. You might also find you get pain in a numb area which doesn't seem to make logical sense, but this is a common feature of neuropathic pain. It can be very difficult to describe to people but tends to be burning

Muscle spasm can cause sharp or squeezing pain but is unlikely to cause the electric shock you describe. That sounds more like neuropathic (nerve-related) pain.

Most people with AA have a mixture of neuropathic symptoms and a background of musculoskeletal problems.

Hope this helps,

Regards,

DocSarah

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Re:update on How Arach causes pain

Posted by mitsuyo_sprague - 26 Nov 2005 16:31

Hi DocSarah,

I can't thank you enough for all your responses to my inquiries and also your great patience with my lack of comprehension as I feel like I repeat similar questions in different ways. Even if I asked my own doctors, they just wouldn't get into details, simply ignore or even deny what I say. As Kim said, if we are given an explanation and recognition for what we experience, that itself gives us some relief even if we can't get rid of the problem.

About muscle spasm: I thought it was more like a long-lasting intense tightness or stiffness of the muscle (I guess pain comes with it) as opposed to a momentary "shooting" pain. But I guess there are chronic and acute versions of spasm??? My upper back, particularly between the shoulder blades, and neck area are always tight and often painful. But for my lower back and legs, it's mostly pain that I feel. My rheumatologist prescribed Baclofen for me back in September, but I wasn't sure why I needed it. Well, my legs feel heavy and weak, and I think my back and legs are "stiff". Is it possible that the spasm is so chronic that I don't even notice it??? She gave me Neurontin as well as Tramadol, but I couldn't stand their side effects. I started on Baclofen 10 mg, but

as you said in an article, perhaps I should try again starting with 5mg??? I feel like I should give Lyrica a try too. I am kind of scared because I am very sensitive to many medications.

Thanks. And with warm regards,

Mitsuyo

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