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**NAGLO POBOLJŠANJE BRZINE PROVODLJIVOSTI MOTORNIH ŽIVACA U BOLESNIKA OD ŠEĆERNE BOLESTI NAKON TERAPIJE ANTIDIJABETICIMA**

**RAPID IMPROVEMENT IN MOTOR NERVE CONDUCTION VELOCITY IN DIABETIC SUBJECTS AFTER ANTIDIABETIC THERAPY**

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*Ključne riječi: dijabetička neuropatija, brzina provodljivosti motornih živaca, gluko-regulacija, naglo poboljšanje.*

*Key words: Diabetic neuropathy, motor nerve conduction velocity, glucose regulation, rapid improvement.*

**SAŽETAK**

Brzina provodljivosti motornih živaca procijenjena je u medijanskom, ulnarnom i peronealnom živcu u 20 bolesnika s insulin-neovisnim dijabetes mellitusom u nekontroliranom stanju, te ponovno nakon kontrole hiperglikemije dijetom i terapijom antidijabeticima. Dijabetička je kontrola u svim slučajevima postignuta u tjedan dana. Vrijednosti živčane provodljivosti porasle su za sva tri živca, a vrijednosti za ulnarni i peronealni živac bile su statistički značajne.

**SUMMARY**

Motor nerve conduction velocity was estimated in the median, ulnar and peroneal nerves in 20 patients with non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus in the uncontrolled state and again after control of hyperglycemia with diet and antidiabetic drug therapy. The diabetic control was obtained within a week in all cases. There was an increase in nerve conduction values for all the three nerves, those for the ulnar and peroneal being statistically significant.

**UVOD**

U šećernoj je bolesti poznat poremećaj neurološke funkcije kojim su najčešće zahvaćeni periferni živci. U

**INTRODUCTION**

Impairment of neurological function is well known in diabetes, the peripheral nerves being most commonly

Primljeno: 10. prosinca 1982.

Received: December 10, 1982.



eksperimentalnom je dijabetesu opisano usporenje živčane provodljivosti (1, 2). Dobro je znana činjenica da se čak i u dijabetičkih bolesnika bez subjektivnih ili objektivnih neuropatskih obilježja može otkriti smanjena brzina živčane provodljivosti (3). Pokazano je da razine hiperglikemije koreliraju s usporenjem motorno-živčane provodljivosti (4). Nekolicini je istraživača uspjelo pokazati poboljšanje električke funkcije nakon kontrole dijabetičkog stanja (5, 6, 7, 8). U svim je ovim studijama poboljšanje promatrano u razdoblju od nekoliko tjedana ili mjeseci. U našoj su studiji ispitivane promjene brzine provodljivosti motornih živaca nakon jednodnevnog liječenja dijetom i antidijabeticima.

#### BOLESNICI I METODE

Studijom je obuhvaćeno 20 insulin neovisnih bolesnika od šećerne bolesti primljenih u Centar za istraživanje šećerne bolesti u Madrasu, od kojih je sedmero imalo subjektivne ili objektivne dokaze neuropatije. Trajanje dijabetesa prikazano je na Tablici 1.

affected. Slowing of nerve conduction has been described in experimental diabetes (1, 2). It is a well recognized fact that even in diabetic patients who have no subjective or objective features of neuropathy, a decrease in nerve conduction velocity can be detected (3). Levels of fasting hyperglycemia have been shown to correlate well with slowing of motor nerve conduction (4). Several workers have demonstrated an improvement in electrical function after control of the diabetic state (5, 6, 7, 8). In all these studies the improvement has been observed over a period of several weeks or months. In the present study, the changes in motor nerve conduction velocity (MNCV) after treatment with diet and antidiabetic drugs for one week, have been assessed.

#### PATIENTS AND METHODS

Twenty non-insulin dependent diabetic patients admitted to the Diabetes Research Centre, Madras, took part in the study. Seven of them had subjective or objective evidence of neuropathy. The duration of diabetes is shown in Table 1.

Tablica 1 — Table 1

Trajanje šećerne bolesti u 20 ispitanih  
osoba  
Duration of diabetes in the 20 subjects  
studied

Trajanje šećerne bolesti Duration of diabetes	Broj ispitanika Number of subjects
< 1 godina — year	7
1— 5 godina — year	2
5—10 godina — year	7
> 10 godina — year	4

Početa su se ispitivanja sastojala od (a) procjene glukoze u plazmi natašte i 1,5 h postprandijalno, gdje je glukoza u plazmi određivana ortotoluidinskom metodom (9) i (b) mjerenja brzine provodljivosti motornih živaca.

U svih je bolesnika uvedena dijeta i kombinacija glibenklamida i fenformina. Glukoza u plazmi natašte i postprandijalno određivana je svakog drugog dana. U petoro bolesnika, glukoza u krvi nije dovedena pod kontrolu niti nakon 4 dana dijete i oralne terapije lijekovima, te je u tih osoba uvedena dodatna mala doza insulina kako bi se postigla dijabetička kontrola. Brzina provodljivosti motornih živaca mjerena je ponovno tjedan dana nakon početka studije.

Za usporedbu, brzina provodljivosti motornih živaca procijenjena je u tridesetoro zdravih nedijabetičkih osoba iste dobi i spola, ispitivanih pod jednakim uvjetima.

#### TESTOVI ŽIVCANE PROVODLJIVOSTI

Studije živčane provodljivosti provedene su na Odjelu za neurologiju, Stanley Medical College u Madrasu, uz primjenu instrumenata 'Medelec model MS 7'. Strujni je impuls trajao 0,3 milisekunda. Učestalost stimulansa iznosila je 1/sek. U svim je slučajevima korišten digitalni pokazivač prosjeka, te je uzet zabilježen kompjuterizirani prosječni signal. Pazili smo da kožni otpor bude ispod 5 kilooma. Tjelesna je temperatura uvijek bila 98,4 °F.

Za testiranje su odabrani slijedeći živci: desni medijalni, desni ularni i desni peronealni živac. U svim je ovim živcima mjerena brzina motorne provodljivosti.

Za procjenu brzine motorne provodljivosti medijalnog živca, registrirajuće elektrode za praćenje smještene su

The initial studies consisted of (a) fasting and 1.5 hour postprandial plasma glucose estimations, the plasma glucose being estimated by the Ortho-toluidine method (9) and (b) measurement of MNCV.

All the subjects were placed on diet and a combination of glibenclamide and phenformin. Fasting and postprandial plasma glucose estimations were carried out every other day. In 5 patients blood sugar was not brought under control after 4 days of diet and oral drug therapy. These subjects were given in addition a small dose of insulin to obtain diabetic control. The MNCV were once again determined a week after commencement of the study.

For comparison, the MNCV was estimated in thirty healthy nondiabetic individuals matched for age and sex, and studied under identical conditions.

#### NERVE CONDUCTION TESTS

The nerve conduction studies were carried out in the Department of Neurology, Stanley Medical College, Madras.

A 'Medelec model MS 7' machine was used. The duration of the current was 0.3 milli sec. The frequency of the stimuli was 1 per second. In all the cases, a digital averager was used and the computerized averaged signal was taken. Care was taken to see that the skin resistance was below 5 KOhm. The body temperature was always 98.4 °F.

The nerves chosen for the tests were the right median, right ulnar and the right peroneal. Motor conduction velocity (MCV) was measured in all these nerves.

For estimating the median nerve MCV, the recording electrodes were placed over the abductor pollicis bre-

preko mišića abductor pollicis brevis, a stimulansi su davani u zapešću i iznad lakta. Kod ulnarnog živca, elektrode za praćenje smještene su preko mišića abductor digiti minimi, uz stimulaciju u zapešću i iznad lakta. Za peronealni su živac stimulansi aplicirani u gležnju i vratu fibule, dok su elektrode za praćenje postavljene preko mišića extensor digitorum brevis.

U statističkoj je analizi primijenjen Studentov t-test.

## REZULTATI

Na Tablici 2. prikazane su vrijednosti šećera u krvi u nekontroliranom stanju, te ponovno nakon jednotjedne terapije dijetom i lijekovima. Zabilježen je značajan pad šećera u krvi u tom razdoblju. Glukoza u plazmi natašte snizila se s  $11,9 \pm 1,2$  mmol/l na  $7,1 \pm 0,6$  mmol/l ( $P < 0,001$ ), dok su postprandijalne vrijednosti opale s  $21,2 \pm 1,3$  mmol/l na  $10,4 \pm 0,2$  mmol/l ( $P < 0,001$ ).

Tablica 3. prikazuje brzinu provodljivosti motornih živaca u dijabetičkih bolesnika u usporedbi s nedijabetičkim kontrolnim osobama. Srednja je brzina provodljivosti motornih

vis muscle and stimuli were given at the wrist and above the elbow. In the case of the ulnar nerve, the recording electrodes were placed over the abductor digiti minimi and stimulation was done at the wrist and above the elbow. For the peroneal nerve, the stimuli were applied at the ankle and the neck of the fibula and the recording electrodes were placed over the extensor digitorum brevis muscle.

The Student's t-test was used for statistical analysis.

## RESULTS

Table 2 shows the blood sugar values in the uncontrolled state and again after one week of diet and drug therapy. There was a significant fall in blood sugar within this period. The fasting plasma glucose decreased from  $11.9 \pm 1.2$  mmol/l to  $7.1 \pm 0.6$  mmol/l ( $P < 0.001$ ) while the postprandial values came down from  $21.2 \pm 1.3$  mmol/l to  $10.4 \pm 0.2$  mmol/l ( $P < 0.001$ ).

Table 3 shows the MNCV in the diabetic patients as compared with non-

Tablica 2 — Table 2

Srednje vrijednosti glukoze u plazmi (mmol/l) u 20 insulin neovisnih bolesnika od šećerne bolesti prije i nakon jednotjednog liječenja ( $\pm$  SEM)  
Mean plasma glucose values (mmol/l) in 20 NIDDM patients before and after treatment for one week ( $\pm$  SEM)

Uzorak Sample	Glukoza u plazmi (mmol/l) Plasma glucose (mmol/l)		P vrijednost P value
	Početna Initial	Nakon 1 tjedna After 1 week	
Natašte Fasting	$11.9 \pm 1.2$	$7.0 \pm 0.6$	$< 0.001$
Postprandijalno Postprandial	$21.2 \pm 1.3$	$10.4 \pm 0.2$	$< 0.001$

Rapid improvement in motor nerve conduction velocity in diabetic subject after antidiabetic therapy

Tablica 3 — Table 3

Srednja brzina provodljivosti motornih živaca (m/sek) u 20 nekontroliranih dijabetičkih bolesnika u usporedbi s istom u 30 zdravih nedijabetičkih kontrolnih osoba ( $\pm$  SEM)  
 Mean motor nerve conduction velocity (m/sec) in 20 uncontrolled diabetic patients compared with that of 30 healthy non-diabetic controls ( $\pm$  SEM)

Živac Nerve	Brzina provodljivosti motornih živaca Motor nerve conduction velocity	
	Dijabetičari	Nedijabetičke kontrolne osobe
	Diabetic subjects (N = 20)	Non-diabetic controls (N = 30)
Desni ulnarni Right ulnar	42.4 $\pm$ 1.2	52.6 $\pm$ 1.4
Desni peronealni Right peroneal	36.4 $\pm$ 1.5	49.5 $\pm$ 1.3
Desni medijalni Right median	47.6 $\pm$ 1.6	54. $\pm$ 1.2

živaca u bolesnikâ od šećerne bolesti bila niža od one u kontrolnih osoba.

Na Tablici 4. prikazane su promjene u brzini provodljivosti motornih živaca nakon jednodnevne terapije anti-dijabeticima.

-diabetic controls. The mean MNCV in the diabetic subjects was lower than that of the controls.

Table 4 shows the changes in MNCV after a week of antidiabetic therapy.

Tablica 4 — Table 4

Srednja brzina provodljivosti motornih živaca (m/sek) u 20 insulin neovisnih bolesnika od šećerne bolesti prije i nakon jednodavnog liječenja ( $\pm$  SEM)  
 Mean motor nerve conduction velocity (m/sec) in 20 NIDDM patients before and after treatment for one week ( $\pm$  SEM)

Živac Nerve	Brzina provodljivosti motornih živaca Motor nerve conduction velocity		P vrijednosti P Value
	Početna Initial	Nakon 1 tjedna After 1 week	
	Desni ulnarni Right ulnar	42.4 $\pm$ 1.2	
Desni peronealni Right peroneal	36.1 $\pm$ 1.5	40.8 $\pm$ 1.2	0.05
Desni medijalni Right median	47.6 $\pm$ 1.6	49.2 $\pm$ 1.4	nije značajno not significant

U slučaju ulnarnog i peronealnog živca opažen je značajan porast brzine motorne provodljivosti. Brzina motorne provodljivosti ulnarnog živca povisila se s početne vrijednosti od  $42,4 \pm 1,2$  m/sek na  $46,4 \pm 1,2$  m/sek ( $P < 0,05$ ) nakon liječenja. Za peronealni živac, odgovarajuće su vrijednosti iznosile  $36,4 \pm 1,5$  m/sek i  $40,8 \pm 1,2$  m/sek ( $P < 0,05$ ).

Brzina motorne provodljivosti medijalnog živca povisila se s  $47,6 \pm 1,6$  m/sek prije liječenja na  $9,2 \pm 1,4$  m/sek nakon jednotjednog liječenja, ali to povišenje nije bilo statistički značajno.

Osamnaestoro od 20 ispitivanih bolesnika od šećerne bolesti očitovale je poboljšanje u brzini motorne provodljivosti nakon liječenja. U sedmoro od tih 18 osoba zabilježeno je poboljšanje provodljivosti u sva tri ispitivana živca, daljnjih je sedam osoba pokazalo poboljšanje u dva živca, dok su 4 osobe takvo poboljšanje očitovale u samo jednom živcu. U dvoje se bolesnika smanjila brzina motorne provodljivosti u sva tri živca. U jednoga od tih dvoje bolesnika trajanje je šećerne bolesti iznosilo dvadeset godina, a u drugoga 8 mjeseci.

## RASPRAVA

Procjena brzine provodljivosti motornih živaca omogućava kvantitativnu evaluaciju funkcije perifernih živaca. Konceptija poboljšanja živčane provodljivosti nakon dijabetičke kontrole nije nipošto nova. Ward i sur. (5) opisuju značajno poboljšanje brzine motorne provodljivosti u medijalnom živcu nakon šestjednog razdoblja kontrole šećera u krvi postignute dijetom i oralnom terapijom. U jednoj drugoj nedavnoj studiji, u kojoj je za postizanje glukoregulacije primijenjen sustav za kontinuiranu subkutnu infuziju insulina, poboljšanje

In the case of the ulnar and peroneal nerves, there was a significant increase in MCV. The ulnar nerve MCV increased from an initial value of  $42.4 \pm 1.2$  m/sec to  $46.4 \pm 1.2$  m/sec ( $P < 0.05$ ) after treatment. For the peroneal nerve, the corresponding values were  $36.4 \pm 1.5$  m/sec and  $40.8 \pm 1.2$  m/sec ( $P < 0.05$ ).

The median nerve MCV increased from  $47.6 \pm 1.6$  m/sec before treatment to  $49.2 \pm 1.4$  m/sec after treatment for 1 week, but the increase was not statistically significant.

Of the 20 diabetic patients studied, 18 showed an improvement in MCV after treatment. Of these eighteen subjects, 7 showed an improvement in conduction in all three nerves studied, another 7 showed improvement in two nerves and 4 in one nerve alone. In two patients there was a decrease in MCV in all the three nerves. In the latter two patients, the duration of diabetes was twelve years in one, and 8 months in the other.

## DISCUSSION

Estimation of motor nerve conduction velocity provides a quantitative evaluation of peripheral nerve function. The concept of improvement in nerve conduction following diabetic control is not a new one. Ward et al (5) have described significant improvement in motor conduction velocity in the median nerve after a period of six weeks of blood sugar control achieved by diet and oral drug therapy. In another recent study in which a continuous subcutaneous insulin infusion system was used to obtain gluco-regulation, improvement in nerve conduction was noted after six weeks of therapy (6).

The present study is significant in that the increase in values for motor nerve conduction velocity occurred

je živčane provodljivosti primijećeno nakon šest tjedana terapije (6).

Ovdje prikazana studija značajna je po tome što je porast brzine provodljivosti motornih živaca uslijedio u razdoblju od sedam dana, uz isključivu promjenu konvencionalnih metoda liječenja.

Predlagano je nekoliko patogenetskih mehanizama kako bi se objasnilo poremećaje živčane provodljivosti u šećernoj bolesti. Glikozilacija bi proteinâ živčanog tkiva mogla biti odgovornim faktorom (6), a uključena je i povišena aktivnost poliolskog puta (10). U eksperimentalnom je dijabetesu objavljen poremećaj ugradnje acetata i glukoze u lipide živaca (11, 12). Neki istraživači smatraju da je u dijabetičkoj neuropatiji prije svega zahvaćen akson (13, 14). Sidenius i Jakobsen navode pretpostavku o djelovanju retrogradnog aksonalnog protoka glukoproteinâ na sniženje brzine provodljivosti (15). U štakora sa streptozotocinom izazvanim dijabetesom, opaženo je proširenje Ranvierovih čvorova (16).

Poboljšanje električke funkcije zabilježeno u ovoj studiji znači da je većina biokemijskih i patoloških poremećaja perifernih živaca reverzibilna, čak u vrlo kratkom vremenskom razdoblju, što podcrtava vrijednost brze kontrole šećerne bolesti da bi se smanjilo oštećenje živčanog sustava.

within a period of seven days using only conventional methods of treatment.

Several pathogenetic mechanisms have been proposed to explain the impairment of nerve conduction in diabetes. Glycosylation of the proteins of nervous tissue could be the responsible factor (6). Increased polyol pathway activity has also been implicated (10). In experimental diabetes, impaired incorporation of acetate and glucose into nerve lipids has been reported (11, 12). Some workers feel that the axon is primarily affected in diabetic neuropathy (13, 14). Sidenius and Jakobsen postulate a role for decrease in retrograde axonal flux of glucoproteins (15). Widening of the nodes of Ranvier has been observed in streptozotocin-diabetic rats (16).

Improvement in electrical function noted in the present study implies that even within a very short period most of the biochemical and pathological derangements in the peripheral nerves can be reversed. This underscores the value of rapid control of diabetes in reducing damage to the nervous system.

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