

INTERFERENTIAL CURRENT

A description of Interferential Current (IFC)

Interferential Current (IFC) can be described as a form of medium frequency electrical current applied by electrode pads to the skin for the therapeutic purpose of alleviating pain. This works by two independent currents interfering with each other under the skin, in the middle of where 4 electrodes meet. IFC results in little to no skin irritation and current dosages can be easily adjusted to treat painful areas in superficial and deep areas. Its ability to reach deep tissue is more than any other form of electrical current available today.



How it elevates pain

There are two theories on how IFC helps to relieve pain. One theory sees IFC as stimulating the tissue, so the body feels this instead of the pain. The other theory sees IFC stimulation triggering the body to use its natural painkillers to lessen the pain.

Common conditions, impairments and functional limitations treated with the intervention.

IFC can be used for:

- Improved circulation which can help increase ROM, decrease edema and decrease muscle spasm
- Ligament sprains, muscle strains and spasms often respond very well to this treatment.
- Symptomatic relief and management of post surgical and post traumatic acute and chronic pain.
 - Chronic pain patients, for reducing pain, edema and muscle spasms associated with acute and chronic soft tissue injury and inflammation.
 - Persons recovering from surgery, sprain and strain may be prescribed IFC as a part of their rehabilitation plan.

What the patient/client can expect to feel or experience

Some patients have described the treatment as a mild "pins & needles" sensation.

Safety, precautions and contraindications associated with the intervention

Individuals with a pacemaker, impaired circulation or sensation, and cancer should not receive electrical stimulation. Patients who are pregnant should consult with their medical physician before using IFC.

From whom a patient could seek additional information

You can always talk to your doctor or physical therapist for more information on IFC. Or you can read more about IFC in medical journals such as: <http://www.rehabpub.com>



References

1. <http://www.texas-medical.com/info/IFinfo.htm>
2. <http://www.rehabpub.com/features/82004/3.asp>
3. "Electrotherapy, Evidence Based Practice", 11th Edition, Sheila Kitchen, WB Saunders Company, 1996. Page # 288-298