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## Cervical Radicular Pain

- I. Know the structure of the cervical intervertebral foramina (Bogduk 2003a).
- II. Know the disposition of the cervical spinal nerves and their roots in the intervertebral foramina, and understand their dural, skeletal, and articular relations (An 1996).
- III. Understand, and be able to explain, how radicular pain and radiculopathy differ from neck pain and somatic referred pain (Merskey and Bogduk 1994; Bogduk 1999, 2002, 2003b).
- IV. Understand the difference between radicular pain and radiculopathy, and understand their respective, different mechanisms (Merskey and Bogduk 1994; Bogduk 1999).
- V. Be able to list systematically the possible causes of cervical radicular pain and of radiculopathy, and be aware of their relative prevalences (Bogduk 1999).
- VI. Appreciate the reliability and validity of history and neurological examination for diagnosis of radiculopathy, but understand their limitations in the diagnosis of cervical radicular pain (Viikara-Juntura 1989; Bogduk 1999, 2002, 2003b).
- VII. Know the indications and validity of medical imaging in the assessment of cervical radicular pain (Bogduk 1999).
- VIII. Understand the lack of validity of electrodiagnostic tests for the investigation of cervical radicular pain (Dvorak 1998; Bogduk 1999).
- IX. Understand the natural history of acute cervical radicular pain and its relevance to management (Bogduk 1999).
- X. Appreciate the lack of any proven or demonstrated physiological basis for commonly used interventions for cervical radicular pain (Bogduk and Mercer 1995).
- XI. Be aware of the cardinal evidence for the efficacy, or lack thereof, of interventions commonly used for acute or chronic cervical radicular pain, such as:
  - A. Drugs
  - B. Exercises
  - C. Manual therapy
  - D. Traction
  - E. Epidural steroid injections
  - F. Transforaminal injections of steroids

(British Association of Physical Medicine 1966; Goldie and Landquist 1970; Purkis 1986; Rowlingson et al. 1986; Shulman 1986; Cicala et al. 1989; Klaber Moffett et al. 1990; Mangar and Thomas 1991; Ferrante et al. 1993; Castagnera et al. 1994; Bush and Hillier 1996; Persson et al. 1997; Bogduk 1999; Slipman et al. 2000; Vallee et al. 2001).
- XII. Be aware of the potential complications of injection therapies for cervical radicular pain (Bogduk 1999; Brouwers et al. 2001; Baker et al. 2002; Rathmell et al. 2004).

- XIII. Understand the indications and efficacy of surgical treatment for cervical radicular pain (Chestnut et al. 1992; Brigham and Tsahakis 1995; Ahlgren and Garfin 1996; Persson et al. 1997; Gore and Sepic 1998; Bogduk 1999).
- A. Ensure the patient has a clear understanding of the reason(s) for any diagnostic test or procedure and the likely benefit to be derived. Where there is no evidence base to indicate likely benefit, the patient should be made aware of this.
- B. Be aware that outcome of any treatment should be assessed by more than one method if appropriate.

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