Patient reports of coccydynia treatment effectiveness

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www.coccyx.org
Data source

- www.coccyx.org running since 1999
- Personal experiences up to end of 2017:
  - 2,210 in English, 130 in other languages
- Most give information about treatment, time since treatment, and outcome
- Use English language reports to examine outcomes of different treatments
Disadvantages of this study

- Volunteers – bias from ‘Cries for help’
- Mixed causes and stages
- No verification
- No consistency of reporting
- Often have to estimate success percentage
- Variation in procedures
- Encouragement by therapists for patients to report ..
Results from a study like this will not give accurate estimates of treatment success rates.

So why do it?
Disadvantages of medical trials

- Not ‘real world’ outcomes
- Academic publication bias
- Not all treatments studied
Data recorded for each patient

- Treatments, if any
- Months since start of each treatment
- Effectiveness (0-100%) of each treatment at the time of reporting
Numbers of reports

- 2,210 experiences in English
- 1,241 experiences with usable information
- 1,735 reports of treatment
- 726 reports 1 year or more after treatment
Categories of treatment

- Manipulation of coccyx, internal or external
- Corticosteroid injection into joint, including MUA
- Coccygectomy, partial or complete
- Exercises (not general exercise)
- Nerve block, chemical or radiofrequency heating
- Others
# Numbers of treatments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All</th>
<th>1 year or more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manipulation</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corticosteroid injection</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surgery</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercises</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nerve block</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1735</td>
<td>726</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Coccygectomy

1 year or more after treatment, mean 53 months
136 patients
Mean effectiveness 54%
Manipulation of coccyx

1 year or more after treatment, mean 24 months
128 patients
Mean effectiveness 32%
For coccygectomy and manipulation, this study provides no new insights.

Success rates in this study are about half those found in clinical trials.
Injection of corticosteroids

1 year or more after treatment, mean 24 months
248 patients
Mean effectiveness 2%

“A five-year prospective trial… cured about 85%.”

“A success was defined as an asymptomatic patient at the three-month review.”


“Five years of conservative treatment…successful in 78% of patients”

“1 year follow-up…maximum of 3 injections”
Exercises

1 year or more after treatment, mean 27 months
26 patients
Mean effectiveness 46%
Exercises to treat coccydynia

From Dr Rajveer Singh (physiotherapist, India):

- Exercises play an important role in recovery from coccydynia.
- In simple cases, specific exercises are prescribed to strengthen muscles and ligaments around the coccyx, normally after internal manipulation.
- The exercises are different depending on whether there is anterior or posterior subluxation.
- In more complicated cases there is no general protocol.
Nerve block

1 year or more after treatment, mean 31 months
128 patients
Mean effectiveness 32%
Nerve block (2)

2 years or more after treatment, mean 46 months
14 patients
Mean effectiveness 0%
Other treatments – reports at any time since treatment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>No effect</th>
<th>Partial effect</th>
<th>Cure</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ganglion Impar injection</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>39</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prolotherapy</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychological (Sarno)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
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</table>
A Headache in the Pelvis: 
A new understanding and treatment for chronic pelvic pain syndromes

David Wise, Ph.D.  Rodney Anderson, M.D.

“This is the book to read before you contemplate surgery, drugs or resign yourself to continue to suffer with chronic pelvic pain. Return to health is possible.”

Erik Peper, Ph.D.
Professor and Director
Institute for Holistic Healing Studies
California State University, San Francisco
Past President, Biofeedback Society of America

WITH A NEW PREFACE FROM THE AUTHOR
The New York Times Bestseller
HEALING BACK PAIN
THE MIND-BODY CONNECTION

JOHN E. SARNO, MD
author of Mind Over Back Pain and The Mindbody Prescription

WITHOUT DRUGS • WITHOUT SURGERY
WITHOUT EXERCISE
BACK PAIN CAN BE STOPPED FOREVER
Implications of the study

- Corticosteroids and nerve blocks do not provide long-term relief for the great majority of patients.
- Manipulation and exercises appear to be the most effective conservative treatments.
Questions

- What criteria should be used to choose between treatments?
- What exercises are most effective for particular conditions?
- Should some patients be treated with psychological methods?
- How can doctors be made aware of effective treatments?
Thanks for listening