

Letter to the Editor: The Pundit Speaks

By Randolph M. Howes, M.D., Ph.D.

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“Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy Yields Great News for Alzheimer’s Patient”

In January of 2019, Dr. Paul Harch, Clinical Professor and Director of Hyperbaric Medicine at LSU Health New Orleans School of Medicine, and Dr. Edward Fogarty, Chairman of Radiology at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine, report the first PET scan-documented case of improvement in brain metabolism in Alzheimer's disease in a patient treated with hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT). Great news because a new case is diagnosed every 70 seconds! The authors report the case of a 58-year-old female who had experienced five years of cognitive decline, which began accelerating rapidly. Single photon emission computed tomography (SPECT) suggested Alzheimer's disease. The diagnosis was confirmed by positron emission tomography (PET) brain imaging. The patient underwent a total of 40 HBOT treatments -- five days a week over 66 days. Each treatment consisted of 1.15 atmosphere absolute/50 minutes total treatment time. After 21 treatments, the patient reported increased energy and level of activity, better mood and ability to perform daily living activities as well as work crossword puzzles. After 40 treatments, she reported increased memory and concentration, sleep, conversation, appetite, ability to use the computer, more good days (5/7) than bad days, resolved anxiety, and decreased disorientation and frustration. Tremor, deep knee bend, tandem gait, and motor speed were also improved. Repeat PET imaging one-month post-HBOT showed global 6.5-38% improvement in brain metabolism. Dr. Harch said, “We demonstrated the largest improvement in brain metabolism of any therapy for Alzheimer's disease. HBOT in this patient may be the first treatment not only to halt, but temporarily reverse disease progression in Alzheimer's disease.” The physicians report that two months post-HBOT, the patient felt a recurrence in her symptoms. She was retreated over the next 20 months with 56 HBOTs (total 96) at the same dose, supplemental oxygen, and medications with stability of her symptoms and Folstein Mini-Mental Status exam. The first successful HBOT-treated case of Alzheimer's disease was published in 2001. According to the National Institutes of Health, "Alzheimer's disease is an irreversible, progressive brain disorder that slowly destroys memory and thinking skills and, eventually, the ability to carry out the simplest tasks. It is the most common cause of dementia in older adults. Alzheimer's disease is currently ranked as the sixth leading cause of death in the United States, but recent estimates indicate that the disorder may rank third, just behind heart disease and cancer, as a cause of death for older people." An 5.5 million have Alzheimer's disease. Could a cure really be here?

In the America that I love, researchers found positive results. Please check out my books (www.amazon.com), "*Alzheimer's Disease: Forget Antioxidants and Supplements,*" and "*Exercise and Reactive Oxygen Species: Likely the only health miracle out there.*"

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