

HBOT speeds up post-stroke recovery

A study conducted in Israel has shown that hyperbaric oxygen therapy can help stroke victims recover even month or years after the incident.

HealthDay News website reports that researchers in Israel have harnessed the same type of therapy that helps scuba divers recover from the bends to spur recovery in stroke survivors.

The treatment, known as hyperbaric oxygen therapy, involves breathing pure oxygen in a monoplace or a multiplace pressurized chamber, which helps rejuvenate damaged brain cells, called neurons. The researchers said that oxygen levels in the body are increased tenfold with this therapy.

Dramatic improvements

As reported on HealthDay News, the 59 patients in the study showed differing levels of recovery, but some improvements were dramatic. One example is a 61-year-old woman who could not bathe, dress or climb stairs without help after suffering a stroke a year earlier and was able to not only bathe and dress on her own after hyperbaric oxygen therapy, but also was able to shop and cook independently.

Researchers report of another participant, a 62-year-old woman who had had a stroke 14 months prior to the study and regained lost language and reading skills and was able to walk, climb stairs and eat on her own after it. Even before the stroke, she needed help with all of these activities.

Leading cause of disability

According to HealthDay News Stroke from either a clot or a bleed in the brain can result in problems with mobility, inability to read and speak, and the loss of ability to complete some of the most basic tasks of daily life, such as bathing, dressing and walking. As reported, it is the leading cause of disability among adults in the United States.

Physical, speech and occupational therapy can help with recovery in the early weeks and months after a stroke, but many patients still don't fully recover their abilities. Hyperbaric oxygen therapy is currently approved in the United States for decompression sickness (the bends), wound healing, carbon monoxide poisoning, skin grafts and thermal burns, among other applications, said the study's author, Dr. Shai Efrati, a faculty member at Tel Aviv's Sackler School of Medicine, whose findings are published in the journal PLoS ONE.

Read more about why this study is unique by following the linked title under references.

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References:

Gardner, Amanda. [Oxygen Therapy Spurs Recovery in Some Stroke Patients.](#) HealthDay. Jan 23, 2013. Published online on U.S.News HEALTH.