

Why should we change our mind about novel treatments in spinal cord injury?

Abstract

Spinal cord injury has plenty of victims all around the world, and, despite of the hundreds of researches in this field, no definite cure is found for it. Parallel to all these researches there are hopeful individuals looking forward for the breaking news “researchers found the treatment for spinal cord injury!”, and this is the only wish for all patients suffering from SCI complications. Hereby, this article is to say to have rationale expectations from these newly formed treatments, and accept that, these may not be helpful for some victims yet.

Keywords: Spinal Cord Injury, Treatment, Expectation

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Abbreviations: SCI, Spinal cord injury

Introduction

Spinal cord injury (SCI) is a morbid condition that researchers are trying to find the best treatment for it, and unfortunately, this is not reached yet. The current treatments could be generally classified into surgical and medical treatments. Surgical ones have goals to either decompress the spinal cord or stabilize the spine, and, medical ones are to amplify natural repair mechanisms.

The important note, here, is to classify the spinal cord injury itself to complete and partial lesions. Complete lesions are the ones that no spinal cord-related activity, is found below the level of injury, either in sensory, motor, and autonomic functions. Partial lesions, on the other hand, show some activity related to injured cord.¹

It is not able to say that most, if not all, treatments available for spinal cord lesions are to resuscitate the partially injured cords, and both surgical and medical treatments showed success in this field. Newly formed treatments, also, showed to be beneficial in treating incomplete spinal cord injuries, including several types of cell therapy and different growth factors.

However, the big lack exists for complete spinal cord lesions that are said to have a poorer prognosis for treatment.^{2,3} Although novel treatments are making hope for recovery in SCI, but care must be taken to spread any report about success in treating SCI, and the terms “complete” or “partial” have to be mentioned in all series.

Conclusion

Novel treatments for spinal cord injury make opportunities to recover partial spinal cord injury, but not complete lesions. Care must be taken in translating these treatments, not to make false hope for many survivors of complete spinal cord lesions. There could be a review article accomplished, assessing the success in treatments for spinal cord injury based on the type of spinal cord lesion, either complete or partial lesions.

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None.

Conflicts of interest

None.

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