

Pressure Pain Threshold of the Lateral Pterygoid Muscles in TMD Patients and Controls

Youssef S. Abou-Atme, DDS, MS; Marcello Melis, DMD, Rpharm;
Khalid H. Zawawi, BDS, DSc



Abstract

Objectives: The aim of this experiment was to detect pressure pain threshold (PPT) differences on intra-oral palpation of the lateral pterygoid muscle (LPM) between subjects diagnosed with temporomandibular disorders (TMD) and controls.

Methods: Thirty-one consecutive female TMD patients and 31 age and gender matched controls underwent palpation of the LPM using an algometer made with a queue-tip connected to a digital scale, and PPT was measured.

Results: Mean PPTs of the right and left LPM of the controls were respectively 191g (49KPa) and 200g (51KPa), and mean PPTs of the right and left LPM of TMD patients were respectively 245g (62KPa) and 256g (63KPa). ANOVA between the four PPT measurements showed significant difference only between the PPT readings of the right LPM of the controls and the left LPM of the patients ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusions: The findings of this study suggest that PPT measured by means of the described algometer is not decreased in TMD patients as compared to control subjects.

Keywords: Pressure pain threshold, algometer, lateral pterygoid, temporomandibular disorders

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