

Titel : Scapula Alata: Description of a Physical Therapy Program and its Effectiveness measured by a Shoulder-Specific Quality of Life Measurement

Abstract tekst :

Background: To date, there are no published outcomes-based treatment programs to guide clinicians when managing patients with scapula alata. The purposes of this study were to describe a physical therapy program in patients with scapula alata and to evaluate its effect using a shoulder-specific quality-of-life measurement.

Methods: In this case series and retrospective study, 22 patients (11 female patients) with a median age of 34 years (interquartile range, 28 - 44 years), diagnosed with scapula alata caused by injury to the long thoracic nerve, were successively referred as outpatients to a physical therapy program at a university hospital. The program included (1) physical examination, (2) thoracic brace treatment and, (3) muscular rehabilitation. The treatment frequency and duration were determined individually. The effect was evaluated by a shoulder-specific quality-of-life questionnaire, the Western Ontario Rotator Cuff Index (WORC). The WORC Index is grouped in 5 domains: physical symptoms, sport/leisure time, work, life style, and emotional health.

Results: The results showed a highly significant improvement ($p < 0.001$) from pretest to post-test as measured by all 5 domains in the WORC Index.

Conclusions: This study described in detail a physical therapy program; the program showed significant benefit. Further research is needed before recommending the program as a potential treatment option.

Level of evidence: Level IV, Case Series, Treatment Study

Keywords: Brace; physical therapy; rehabilitation; thoracic nerve; scapula alata

Forfattere (Authors) Sigrid Tibaek, DMSc, Janne Mørch Gadsbøll, PT