Hyperbaric oxygen therapy for sudden sensorineural hearing loss

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Record Status
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Citation

Authors' objectives
Hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) involves the intermittent inhalation of 100% gaseous oxygen in chambers pressurized between 1.5 and 3.0 times atmosphere absolute. HBOT may be used as a primary or adjunctive therapy for sudden sensorineural hearing loss (SSHL), which is a rapid loss of hearing over a period of < 72 hours. The rationale for use of HBOT in SSHL is that hearing loss may result from a hypoxic event in the cochlear apparatus, and HBOT may reverse the oxygen deficit, and improve hearing. Controversy: There is limited evidence that HBOT is effective for treatment of SSHL, and the procedure carries potential for barotrauma. Furthermore, the cost and limited availability of the treatment may hamper its use. The impact of the relatively high spontaneous recovery rate for SSHL on treatment outcomes following HBOT is unclear. Relevant Questions: Is HBOT alone or as an adjunctive therapy effective for restoring hearing in patients with SSHL? How does HBOT compare with other treatments for SSHL? Is HBOT safe for patients with SSHL? Have definitive patient selection criteria been established for HBOT for SSHL?

Final publication URL
The report may be purchased from: http://www.hayesinc.com/hayes/crd/?crd=51366

Indexing Status
Subject indexing assigned by CRD

MeSH
Humans; Hearing Loss, Sensorineural; Hearing Loss, Sudden; Hyperbaric Oxygenation

Language Published
English

Country of organisation
United States

English summary
An English language summary is available.

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AccessionNumber
32017000023

Date abstract record published
04/01/2017