

Non-Organic Motor Disorder: Combatting the Effects of Stress on Functional Mobility

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BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Non-organic motor disorders are common somatoform disorders diagnosed by a physical presentation of symptoms that may present as a neurological disease, with no proof of organic etiology. Disease processes and treatment remain unclear.¹⁻⁶

The purpose of the case report was to show how neurological symptoms can be effectively treated with task-specific interventions and the role of stress in symptom presentation in patients with somatoform disorders.

CASE DESCRIPTION

Body Structure & Function <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LE spasticity • Ataxia (all 4 limbs) • Weak hips • Decreased LE AROM • LE myoclonus • Trunk/axial rigidity • Difficulty motor planning 	Activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impaired balance • Dysfunctional gait • Poor bed mobility/transfers • Transitional movements difficult • Unable to perform ADLs 	Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community ambulation impossible • Unable to drive
Biological <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean toxicity reports • Clean MRIs • Pending genetic reports 	Psychological <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current stress • Current anxiety • No depression 	Social <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unknown childhood history of trauma • Recent divorce • Potential secondary gain

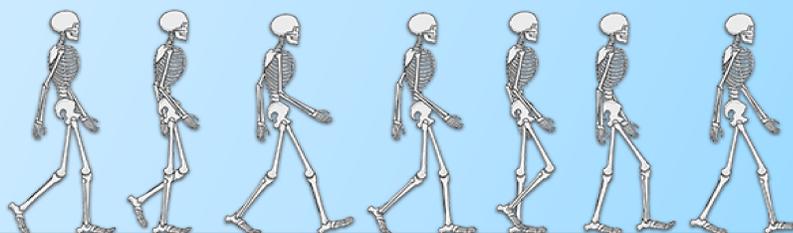
INTERVENTIONS

Table Exercises:

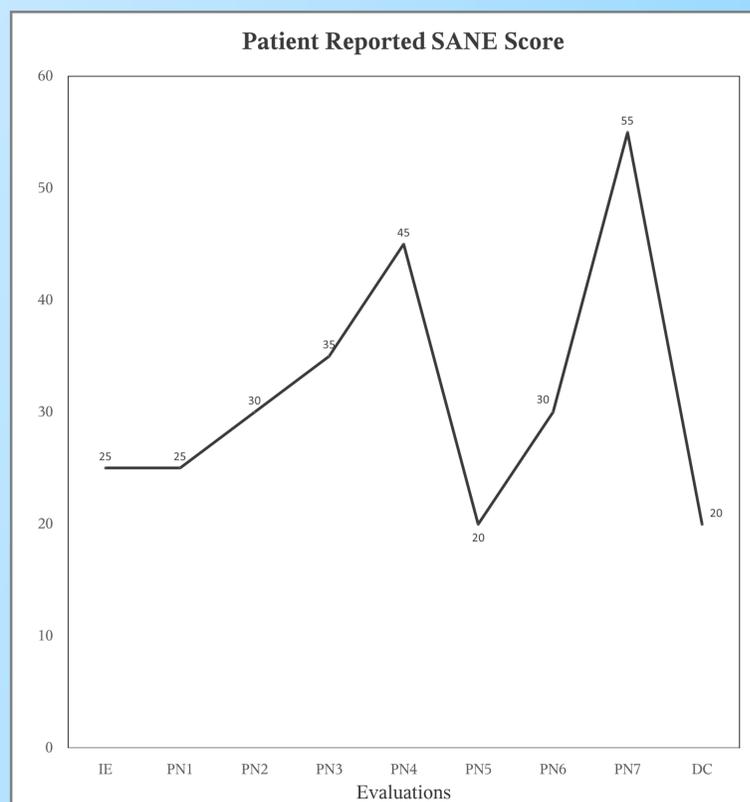
- Passive stretches
- Strengthening
- Trunk and extremity dissociation

Task-specific exercises with normal movement facilitation:

- Bed mobility and transfers
- Balance
- Gait



OUTCOMES



DISCUSSION

- Functional training improves mobility, decreases fall risk, improves quality of life, enhances voluntary movement control^{7,8}
- Changing fear-avoidance behavior may be beneficial in changing patient's post-stress symptoms⁹
- Start therapy at first sign of symptoms to prevent symptom progression⁸
- Improvements can be seen over a long rehabilitation period versus short-term, intense therapy sessions.

CLINICAL RELEVANCE

The case report suggests that physical therapists, as movement specialists, can improve functional mobility in patients with non-organic motor disorders and decrease neurological symptoms by applying task specific training.

Consideration of a multidisciplinary approach with a psychologist may be an important adjunct to successful physical therapy treatment for addressing the impact of stress.^{2,3}

