



Patient Information Sheet

EXTRACORPORAL SHOCKWAVE THERAPY (ECSWT)

Your practitioner may have recommended this new form of treatment available at FARC for pain related to a number of chronic soft tissue conditions (eg, Achilles tendinopathy and plantar fasciopathy).

This form of treatment was developed from other medical indications (eg. treating kidney stones) and is widely used in Europe and North America for the treatment of a number of soft tissue conditions. There are numerous published scientific studies, with the majority demonstrating positive outcomes of around 60 to 80%. More recently, research has shown that when used in combination with good rehabilitation, ECSW has better outcomes than when either treatment is employed alone. Most importantly ECSW has been demonstrated to be a safe treatment modality.

Radial shockwaves are high energy soundwaves transmitted from a probe held against and passing through the skin and spreading outwards into the underlying tissues. This is believed to induce increased blood flow and metabolic activity around the site of pain accelerating the healing process. At the very least it is most effective at reducing pain in this area.

ABOUT THE TREATMENT:

After a simple examination of the affected area, shockwaves are applied via a handpiece held against the skin. The initial phase of treatment may cause some deep pain however this indicates correct targeting of the problem area. This is usually followed by numbness or heaviness in the area and the latter phase of the treatment feels less painful. The treatment sessions are of 10 minutes duration during which you may receive up to 3000 pulses. Many patients get pain relief in just 8-10 days after the first treatment. Depending on the condition and your response you may require from 1 to 5 treatments, although the average is 3.

AFTER THE TREATMENT:

You may feel some soreness which may intensify on the night of treatment. Simple analgesia and icing may be required to control this pain. There may also be some minor bruising in the treatment area. You should rest from aggravating activities for 2-3 days after treatment as your practitioner will discuss with you.

SIDE EFFECTS:

Post-treatment pain as above.

Local bruising – uncommon and minor.

Tendon rupture has not been reported following radial shockwave therapy, unlike cortisone injection and surgery.

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Pregnancy

Bleeding and blood clotting disorders and associated medications.

Skin wound or acute inflammation in treatment area.

Tumour in treatment area.

If you have any concerns or questions regarding ECSW treatment please make contact with us to discuss its suitability. Please note no referral is required for this form of treatment.

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