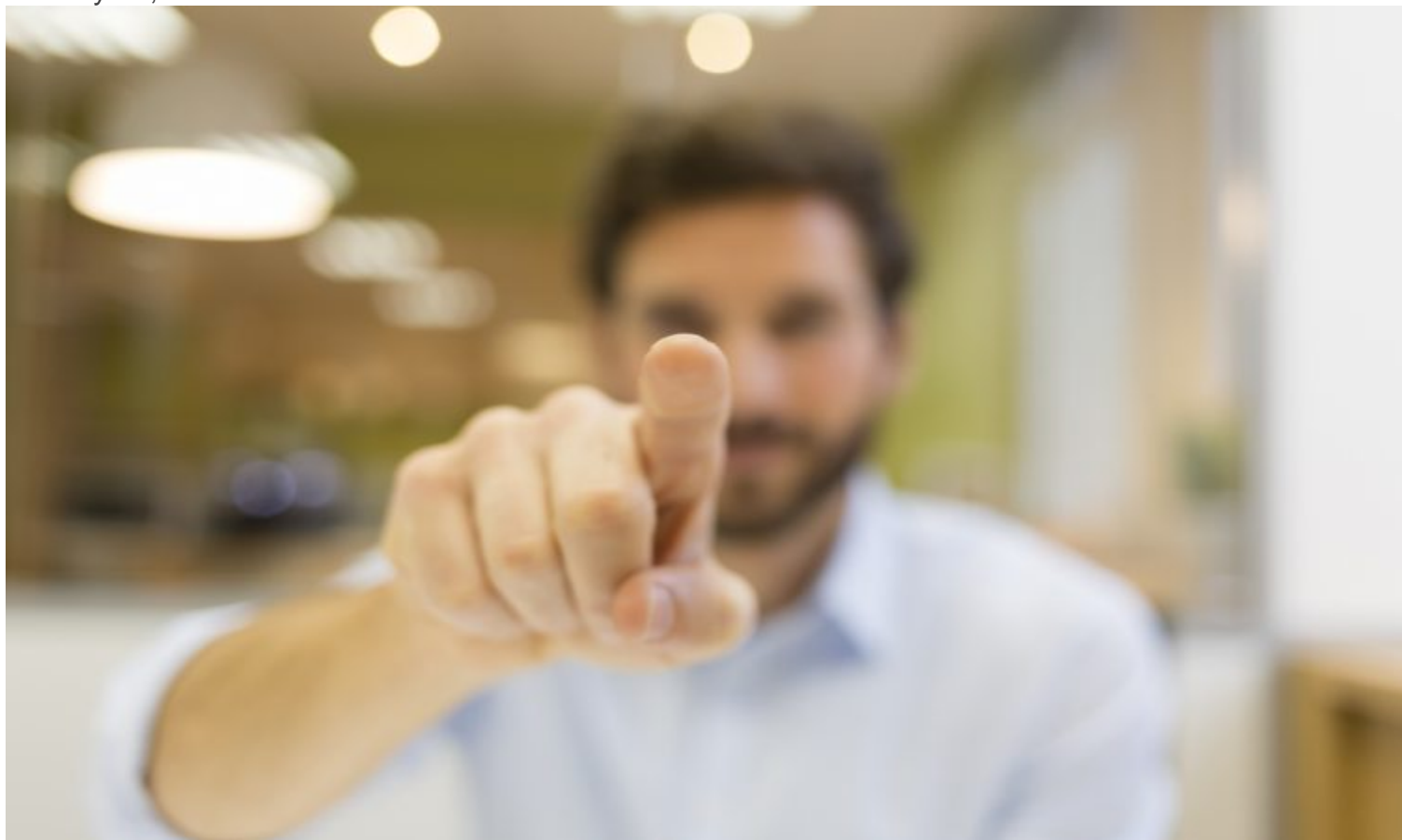


How to Recover from Numbness After Stroke

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When you look online for advice about numbness after stroke, it's a little bare out there huh? Why is that?

Well, **numbness and tingling** are a couple strange stroke side effects that aren't well-studied; so doctors can't really talk about it with confidence. And that's why you have us! We love talking about taboo! Today we'll discuss the main cause of numbness after stroke and how to fix it. Let's get started.

Causes of Numbness After Stroke

To understand why numbness after stroke happens, let's use an example of numbness in your left hand. Although it feels like there's something wrong with your left hand, there's actually nothing wrong with it at all. **Rather, your left hand feels numb because your *brain* is having trouble processing information from the sensory receptors in your hand.**

Sometimes stroke affects your brain's ability to interpret information from your sensory receptors, like the ones on your skin. So although the sensory receptors in your hand are fine, your brain can't process the information, so it feels numb.

It's All About Sensation

Numbness after stroke is usually a sensation problem. Specifically, sensory issues arise from damage to the right side of the brain (9/1/2017) or the parietal and occipital lobes.

Sometimes it isn't though, and in those cases, it's best to talk with your doctor about other possible causes for your numbness after stroke. But since it's usually a sensation problem, the rest of this article will talk about how to treat numbness after stroke due to sensory issues.

How to Fix Numbness from Sensory Issues

The best way to fix sensory issues after stroke like numbness is with sensory reeducation (3/31/2017). Sensory reeducation involves rewiring the brain and retraining sensory pathways. This is accomplished through sensory reeducation exercises (3/27/2017).

Here's an example of how it works:

How Sensory Reeducation Works

An example of sensory reeducation exercise involves asking a caregiver to touch your skin in the numb/affected area while you aren't looking. After they touch your skin, you proceed to point to where you think they touched you. If you guess wrong, then your caregiver will move your finger to touch the actual spot they touched.

This sends signals to your brain that say, "I didn't touch you here, I touched you there." This helps retrain the brain to correctly interpret your senses. The better your sensory perception becomes, the better chance you have of getting rid of numbness after stroke.

Repetition Is How You Will Conquer Numbness After Stroke

The key with getting sensory reeducation exercises to work is to do them consistently and repetitively.

Stroke recovery = neuroplasticity + repetition + consistency

Sensory reeducation involves rewiring your brain through the process of neuroplasticity, and your brain needs LOTS of reinforcement to form new connections. The more frequently you do your sensory reeducation exercises – and the more repetitions you complete per exercise session – the faster your brain will rewire itself.

So when you begin your sensory reeducation exercises, set the intention to do them consistently and repetitively. Want some specific advice? Try 20 repetitions of each of these exercises (3/27/2017), 6 days a week.

Can Acupuncture Help?

The idea here is that the more sensory stimulation you send to your brain, the more sensation you will regain.

With that in mind, acupuncture might sound like a good option... but there are pros and cons.

The cons:

On the downside, acupuncture doesn't involve your participation. Rather, you just lie there and the acupuncturist pricks your skin a hundred (or so) times. This doesn't stimulate neuroplasticity as well as sensory reeducation exercises can. **Acupuncture is missing the element of *practice*.**

The pros:

On the other hand, acupuncture has the *potential* to greatly boost your efforts to regain feeling after stroke; especially if you couple it with sensory reeducation exercises. When the acupuncturist pricks your skin a hundred (or so) times, **it still sends stimulation to your brain.** Although you aren't actively participating, sometimes this sensation alone is enough to spark feeling in your affected areas.

Should You Try Acupuncture?

From our experience, acupuncture seems like a hit-or-miss treatment. We've heard some stroke survivors rave about it, and we've heard some stroke survivors say that it did absolutely nothing. So, what should you do?

We think that you should try acupuncture if it's safe for you (i.e. you don't have a pacemaker and your doc says it's O.K.) and you're willing to give something new a shot *without expectation of miracles*. That way, if something good happens, it's great! And if nothing happens, it was worth the shot anyway.

The Formula for Fixing Numbness After Stroke

And there you have it!

The best way to regain feeling after stroke is with sensory reeducation through exercises and maybe some acupuncture if you're interested.

When you're doing your sensory reeducation exercises, be sure to emphasize high repetition and consistency.

They're the keys to recovery.