

Chiropractic management strategies for Peripheral Joint Conditions in the UK

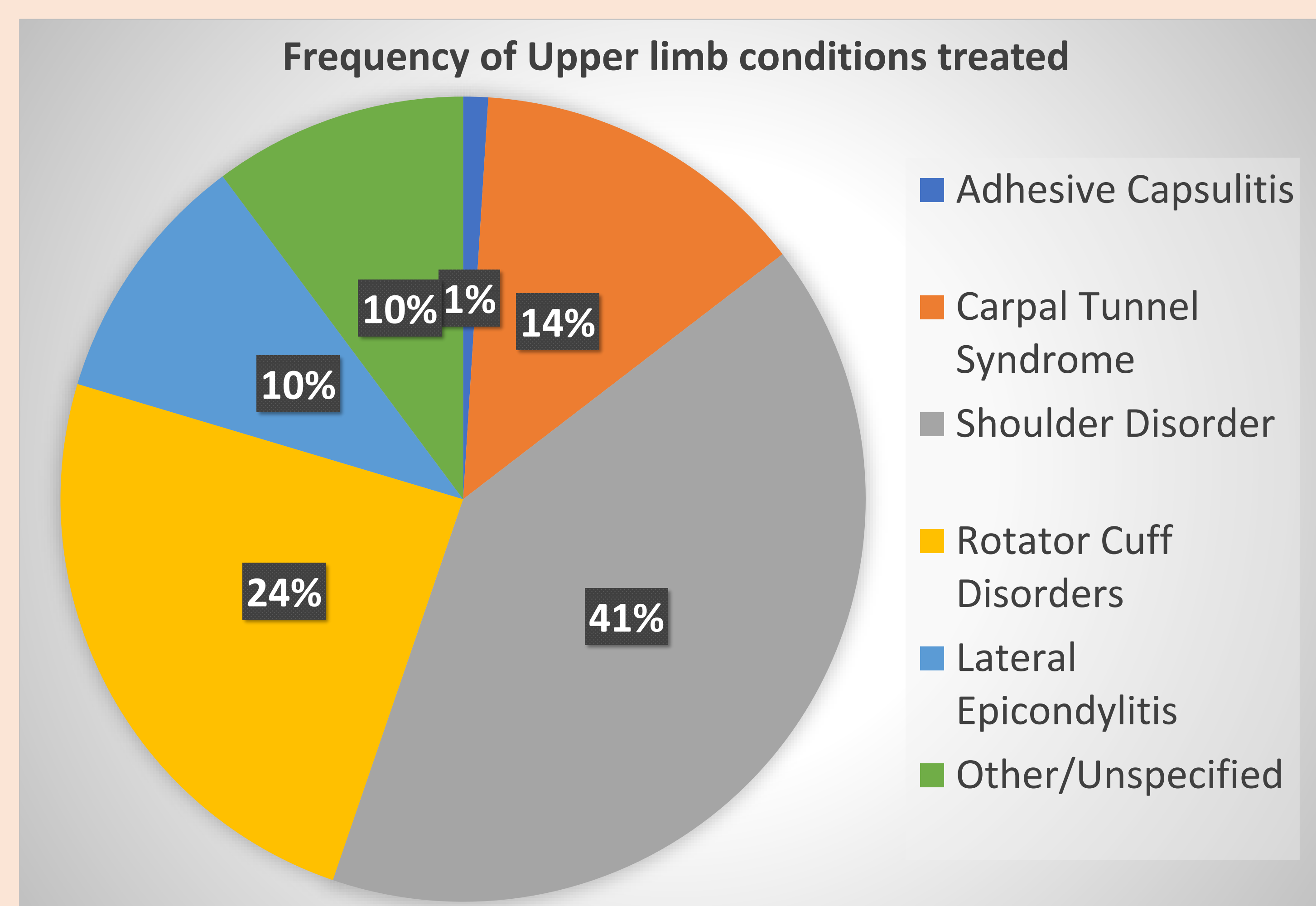
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Background:

Chiropractic treatment methods are generally consistent across the literature (Puhl, Reinhart & Injeyan, 2015), with a multimodal framework of care (Beliveau et al., 2017) encouraged by clinical guidelines. However, differences in method intricacies and prioritization exist, with some strategies not recommended by NICE, such as acupuncture and supplements. Recent literature lacks comprehensive data on the 'package of care' used by UK chiropractors for spinal pain and their adherence to guidelines. Beliveau et al. (2017) provided insight into individual method utilization, but no studies focused on the British population. This evaluation aims to assess current UK chiropractic practices and their evidence-based alignment.

Method:

At the time of the survey, 3108 chiropractors were registered in the UK (General Chiropractic Council, 2022). Of these, 342 registered for the study, and 137 responded (4.41% response rate). Invitations were mailed in December 2016 and sent electronically and via social media. Chiropractors completed a web-based survey and signed consent forms. Patients were enrolled, given information sheets, and assigned unique reference numbers. Case notes were recorded over four visits or one month. Data collection included demographics, conditions, and duration using Survey Monkey. Descriptive analysis reported presenting conditions and demographics, characterizing the care package.



Results:

A total of 1360 patient presentations resulted in 3687 visits for presenting complaints to chiropractors. Of these 238 patients presented with PJs complaints: 118 with upper and 120 with lower, accounting for a total of 616 (16.70%) visits. There were 295 visits (47.89%) for upper limb, and 321 visits (52.11%) were for lower limb. The mean age of participants presenting with PJs was 50.7 years (SD ± 18.73). Approximately 1.29% of the patients were under 16 years old. The gender distribution of patients was 60.65% female (376 participants).

Key Takeaway 1 -chiropractors appear to use multimodal approaches when treating PJs often incorporating treatments that align with NICE recommendations.

The average number of interventions used was three, and this did not change significantly over the four visits recorded in the study.

Key Takeaway 2 – Chiropractors deviated from NICE guidelines when treating Shoulder conditions

Despite NICE (2022b, d, e) providing no recommendations for certain types MT when treating Shoulder Disorders, chiropractors were found to employ these treatments in this condition.

Treatment frequency for all Peripheral joint Conditions

