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## **The efficacy of hyperbaric oxygen therapy in the management of chronic fatigue syndrome**

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### **Abstract**

**Objective:** Chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) is a chronic disease with social components that ensue secondary to the incapacity of the person to fulfill work, social and family responsibilities. Currently, there is no consensus regarding its treatment. The aim of this study was to determine the efficacy of hyperbaric oxygen (HBO<sub>2</sub>) therapy in CFS.

**Design:** Sixteen patients included in the study were diagnosed with CFS according to the Fukuda criteria. Patients received 15 treatment sessions of HBO<sub>2</sub> therapy over a period of three consecutive weeks (five days per week). The outcome measures (visual analog fatigue scale (VAFS), Fatigue Severity Scale (FSS) and Fatigue Quality of Life Score (FQLS) were assessed before the treatment and after completion of the 15 sessions.

**Results:** HBO<sub>2</sub> therapy was well tolerated, with no complications. After treatment, patients' scores were found to have improved with respect to VAFS, FSS and FQLS (all  $p < 0.005$ ).

**Conclusions:** We may infer that HBO<sub>2</sub> therapy decreases the severity of symptoms and increases the life quality of CFS patients. It may be a new treatment modality for the management of CFS. However, further studies with larger sample sizes and control groups are definitely awaited.