

# Ozone therapy

Ozone therapy is a form of alternative medicine treatment that purports to increase the amount of oxygen to the body through the introduction of ozone into the body. Various methods have been suggested on the method of introducing the ozone into the body, and the purported benefits of this therapy include the treatment of various diseases including cancer, AIDS, multiple sclerosis, among others. The American Cancer Society has concluded there is not enough evidence to support the use of this treatment in any disease.

It is important to assert that ozone therapy procedures can be associated with several major complications. Therefore, performing a revision of the guidelines and protocols for ozone therapy application is indispensable <sup>1)</sup>.

Oxygen-ozone therapy is used to treat degenerative pathology of the spine when surgery is not needed (e.g., removal of a herniated disk). Some authors have described it as a safe and effective procedure in ~ 70 to 90% of patients. The aim of the therapy is to dehydrate the intervertebral disc and alter its contents. However, this treatment has been associated with some rare but very serious side effects. Both cardiac damage and a case of fulminant septicemia were reported. Chirchiglia et al. described a case of suspected pulmonary embolism, followed by sudden death, in an elderly woman treated with oxygen-ozone therapy for low back pain caused by disc protrusion. They believed a massive pulmonary embolism occurred, probably caused by an intradiskal injection that accidentally punctured a venous vessel and created emboli <sup>2)</sup>.

<sup>1)</sup>

Vanni D, Galzio R, Kazakova A, Pantalone A, Sparvieri A, Salini V, Magliani V. Intraforaminal ozone therapy and particular side effects: preliminary results and early warning. Acta Neurochir (Wien). 2015 Aug 21. [Epub ahead of print] PubMed PMID: 26293228.

<sup>2)</sup>

Chirchiglia D, Chirchiglia P, Stroschio C, Volpentesta G, Lavano A. Suspected Pulmonary Embolism after Oxygen-Ozone Therapy for Low Back Pain. J Neurol Surg A Cent Eur Neurosurg. 2019 Aug 20. doi: 10.1055/s-0039-1685197. [Epub ahead of print] PubMed PMID: 31430795.

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Last update: **2024/06/07 02:50**

