

015 THE EFFICACY OF TRAUMEEL VERSUS DICLOFENAC AND PLACEBO OINTMENT IN TENDINOUS PAIN IN ELITE ATHLETES: A DOUBLE-BLIND RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL

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Purpose:

To investigate the efficacy of Traumeel versus Diclofenac and placebo ointment in tendinous pain in elite athletes.

Methods:

We conducted a randomized, double-blind, three-armed, parallel group clinical trial in Chilean elite athletes with various tendinopathies.

Eligible patients who provided written informed consent were randomized into receiving topical treatment with either Traumeel ointment, Diclofenac ointment or placebo ointment. Treatment took place three times daily, plus night use for a period of at least 21 days, after which a follow up echographic assessment took place.

The clinical assessment was based on a 10 point Visual Analogue Scale for Pain (VAS-P), return to sports (number of days) and tolerability.

Echographic assessment was based on measurement of peritendinous diameter and oedema. The assessor was blind to treatment allocation and the same assessor compared the before and after treatment recordings. Statistical analysis was by intention-to-treat, by the use of STATA 8.1.

Results:

252 professional athletes (169 male, 83 female, average age 23.5 years) affiliated with the Chilean Olympic Committee, Tennis Federation, Davis Cup Team and Professional Soccer League, were recruited in the trial between December 2005 and September 2006. There were 89 athletes (59 male, 30 female) in the Traumeel group, 87 (60 male, 27 female) in the diclofenac group and 76 (50 males, 26 females) in the placebo group. The main results are given in the table below.

Outcome parameter	Traumeel	Diclofenac	Placebo
Pain reduction (VAS-P)	5.2*	3.6	1.4
Average N days to return to sporting activity	20.3 [†]	24.6	30.6
Peritendinous diameter/oedema (% change)	88.2*	69.1	24.6

* P=0.000 for pairwise between group comparisons

† P<0.000 for pairwise comparisons to placebo

Treatments were generally well tolerated, 4 patients dropped out (all in the diclofenac group due to allergic skin reactions).

Conclusion:

Traumeel is an efficacious and safe alternative in the treatment of non-traumatic tendinopathies in athletes.