

Chronic Whiplash-Associated Disorders and Their Treatment Using Flotation-REST (Restricted Environmental Stimulation Technique)

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In this study, we investigated for the first time whether flotation-REST might be used for treating chronic whiplash-associated disorders (WAD).

Six women and one man, all diagnosed by licensed physicians as having chronic whiplash-associated disorder, participated. Two of the participants were beginners with regard to flotation-REST (2 or 3 treatments), and five of them had experienced between 7 and 15 treatments.

The method for data collection was the semi-structured qualitative interview. The empirical phenomenological psychological method devised by Karlsson was used for the analyses.

Two qualitative models explaining the participants' experiences of flotation-REST emerged. The models describe the participants' experiences of flotation-REST, as well as the short-term effects of the treatment in terms of five phases: (a) intensification, (b) vitalization, (c) transcendation, (d) defocusation, and (e) reorientation.

Results indicated that flotation-REST is a meaningful alternative for treating chronic whiplash-associated disorder.