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Hyperalgesia is prevented by transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS) in rats subjected to model chronic stress

Carla de Oliveira^{1,2,4}, Isabel Cristina de Macedo^{1,3,4}, Lauren Naomi Spezia Adachi^{1,2,4}, Vanessa Leal Scarabelot^{1,3,4}, Andressa de Souza^{1,4}, Rafael Vercelino^{1,3,4}, Éllen Almeida Nunes^{1,3,4}, Felipe Fregni⁶, Wolnei Caumo^{2,5}, Iraci Lucena da Silva Torres^{1,2,3,4,5}

Laboratório de Farmacologia da Dor e Neuromodulação: Investigações Pré-Clínicas- Departamento de Farmacologia – UFRGS.

Programa de Pós-Graduação em Medicina: Ciências Médicas – UFRGS. 3 Programa de Pós –Graduação em Ciências Biológicas: Fisiologia – ICBS/UFRGS. 4 Unidade de Experimentação Animal - GPPG - Hospital de Clínicas de Porto Alegre – UFRGS. 5 Departamento de Farmacologia – ICBS/UFRGS. 6 Associate Professor of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Associate Professor of Neurology Harvard Medical School. Berenson-Allen Center for Noninvasive Brain Stimulation, Department of Neurology, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Harvard Medical School, Boston, Massachusetts, United States of America. Hospital de Clínicas de Porto Alegre (HCPA)

Objective: Chronic stress has been related with decreased pain thresholds and hyperalgesia. Additionally, transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS) induces cortical excitability and has been suggested as a treatment for pain. This study aimed test whether tDCS can reverse the specific behavioral effects of chronic stress in the pain system. We evaluated also BDNF and IL10 levels. Methods: 24 male Wistar rats were divided in 4 groups: control-TC; chronic stress-S; chronic stress + sham tDCS-SSham and chronic stress + tDCS- StDCS. The animals were exposed to 20-min sessions of 500 µA anodal tDCS, and 30-sec of sham procedure for 8 days before exposure to chronic stress. Chronic stress consisted of 1h per day/5 days on week /11 weeks. After 11 weeks the Hot Plate-HP and Tail-Flick-TF test were done to assess hyperalgesia, and were evaluated the serum levels of BDNF and IL-10. Statistical analysis was performed by One-Way (ANOVA/SNK, p<0.05). Project was approved by Ethics Committee of CEUA/HCPA: 11-0544. Results: The HP final test showed differences (p<0.001), and the tDCS group increased the latency in relation S and Sham groups suggesting reversal of hyperalgesia. TF latency showed decreased in groups that received chronic stress when compared to control (p<0.001). Both, BDNF and IL-10 serum levels not showed significant differences between groups (p>0.05). Conclusion: The chronic stress led to decreased of nociception threshold shown by HP test, suggesting hyperalgesia and this parameter was prevented by tDCS on TF test. Nonetheless, the chronic stress not affected the BDNF or IL-10 serum levels. Keywords: tDCS; hyperalgesia; chronic stress. Projeto 11-0455. Financial Support: FIPE/GPPG-HCPA, CNPq, CAPES.