Glossopharyngeal Neuralgia

Glossopharyngeal neuralgia is a disorder characterized by intense pain. The pain happens in the:

- Tonsils.
- Middle ear.
- Back of the tongue.

The pain can come and go. Or it can be fairly persistent.

CAUSES

- Compression of the 9th nerve (*glossopharyngeal*) or 10th nerve (*vagus*) from. These are nerves that come from your brain (*cranial nerves*). Compression may be from:
  - Tumors
  - Peritonsillar abscesses
  - Vascular aneurysms
- But in some cases, no cause is evident.

- Triggers of the disorder may include:
  - Swallowing.
  - Chewing.
  - Talking.
  - Sneezing.
  - Eating spicy foods.

TREATMENT

Generally, treatment is symptomatic. Medications may be prescribed to reduce the pain. In some cases, surgery may be needed to relieve pressure on the nerve.

People with this disorder have remissions. But they can also have times of increased pain. For many individuals, drug therapy reduces or eliminates the pain enough for them to carry on with their lives. When surgery is needed, most patients have very good results.

RESEARCH BEING DONE

Within the NINDS research programs, this disorder is addressed primarily through studies on pain. NINDS pursues new treatments for pain and nerve damage with the ultimate goal of reversing these debilitating conditions.

Research is continually being done to learn more about this problem.

Provided by: The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke

Document Released: 12/08/2003 Document Re-Released: 03/16/2010

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