

Effects of Electric Current Produced by Medical Equipment's on Human Body: Review on Health Hazards Assessment

Type: Research Article

Received: March 17, 2023

Published: March 27, 2023

Citation:

Samaila B., et al. "Effects of Electric Current Produced by Medical Equipment's on Human Body: Review on Health Hazards Assessment". PriMera Scientific Surgical Research and Practice 1.4 (2023): 33-41.

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Samaila B*, Jumare IA and Umar AB

Department of Physics with electronics, Federal University Birnin Kebbi

***Corresponding Author:** Samaila B, Department of Physics with electronics, Federal University Birnin Kebbi.

Abstract

Background: Electrical medical devices have become a crucial part of modern healthcare, aiding in diagnosis, treatment, and monitoring of various medical conditions. However, the exposure of the human body to electrical currents produced by these devices can cause adverse effects, ranging from mild tingling sensations to severe injuries, and even death.

Aim and objective: This systematic review aims to investigate the effect of exposure to electrical current produced by medical equipment on the human body.

Material and Method: The review included studies which investigated the effects of exposure to electric current in healthcare workers, patients, and the general public. The search was conducted using the following keywords: "medical equipment", "electrical current", "exposure", "health hazards", and "assessment". The studies were identified through searches of electronic databases, including PubMed, Embase, and Scopus, using a predefined search strategy. After screening 1240 studies, 43 studies were included in the review. The studies evaluated a range of medical equipment, including electrosurgical devices, defibrillators, electrocardiographs, and magnetic resonance imaging machines.

Result and Discussion: The results of this systematic review indicate that exposure to electrical current produced by medical equipment can lead to a range of adverse effects. These effects include burns, tissue damage, nerve damage, cardiac arrhythmias, and even death. The severity of the effects was found to depend on the duration and intensity of the electrical current, the pathway of the current through the body, the electrical resistance of the body tissues, and the individual's health status. Furthermore, the review identified several risk factors associated with electrical injuries, such as the presence of moisture or conductive materials on the skin, the use of metallic implants, and the proximity of the equipment to vital organs. The review also revealed that various safety measures, including proper equipment insulation, grounding, and the use of safety protocols, can minimize the risk of electrical injuries associated with medical equipment.

Conclusion: The study found that exposure to electric current can cause a range of health effects, including burns, cardiac arrhythmias, nerve damage, and even death. The review also found that the level of risk associated with exposure to electric current varies depending on the type of

equipment and the individual's susceptibility. Exposure to electrical current produced by medical equipment can have significant adverse effects on the human body. Therefore, healthcare providers and medical personnel must be aware of the risks associated with electrical medical devices and implement appropriate safety measures to prevent such injuries. Healthcare workers and patients with pre-existing medical conditions may be at higher risk of adverse health effects. Overall, the review highlights the need for improved safety measures and training programs to reduce the risk of exposure to electric current in healthcare settings. Further research is needed to better understand the mechanisms of injury and to develop more effective prevention strategies.

Introduction

The effect of electrical current on human has been a subject of research and discussion for many years. The electrical current that passes through the human body can cause a range of effects, depending on the current's strength, duration, and frequency. In general, electrical currents can be divided into two categories: low-level or high-level currents. Low-level electrical currents, also known as microcurrents, are below 1 mA and can be used for therapeutic purposes such as electrotherapy or transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS). High-level electrical currents, on the other hand, can cause serious injury or death and are typically used for electrical shocks or electrocution. The effects of electrical current on human can be physical or physiological. Physical effects are related to the current's ability to cause muscle contractions, heat, and burns. Physiological effects, on the other hand, are related to the current's effect on the body's organs, including the heart and the central nervous system. The amount of current required to produce these effects depends on the electrical resistance of the body and the current's path through the body.

The heart is particularly sensitive to electrical currents and can be affected by both low-level and high-level electrical currents. Low-level currents can affect the heart rate and rhythm, while high-level currents can cause ventricular fibrillation, a condition in which the heart beats in an uncoordinated and ineffective manner. If not treated immediately, ventricular fibrillation can lead to cardiac arrest and death (Tuttle, 1988). In addition to the physical and physiological effects, electrical current can also affect the central nervous system. High-level electrical currents can cause seizures, unconsciousness, and even death, while low-level electrical currents can be used to stimulate nerve fibers and modulate pain (Chou and Gahukamble, 2010). The effect of electrical current on human depends on the current's strength, duration, and frequency. The electrical current can cause a range of effects, from muscle contractions to ventricular fibrillation, and from nerve stimulation to unconsciousness and death. Further research is needed to better understand the exact mechanisms by which electrical current affects the human body and to develop safe and effective therapeutic applications for low-level electrical currents.

Interaction of human body with electrical current

The human body is a complex system that functions through electrical currents. These electrical currents can be seen in many physiological processes, including the conduction of nerve impulses, the generation of muscle contractions, and the maintenance of the heart's rhythm. One of the most important aspects of human body electrical current is the conduction of nerve impulses. Nerve impulses are electrical signals that travel through the nervous system and transmit information from one part of the body to another. The impulses are generated by the depolarization of the nerve membrane and are propagated along the nerve fibers. The conduction of these impulses is crucial for the proper functioning of the nervous system and is dependent on the presence of ion channels in the nerve membrane (Alberts et al., 2002). Another important aspect of human body electrical current is the generation of muscle contractions. The muscles in the body work by contracting and relaxing, and this movement is controlled by electrical signals generated by the motor neurons. The motor neurons release a neurotransmitter, acetylcholine, which binds to the muscle fibers and triggers an action potential, which generates an electrical current in the muscle (Alberts et al., 2002). Finally, the maintenance of the heart's rhythm is also dependent on electrical currents. The heart has a natural pacemaker, called the sinoatrial node, that generates electrical impulses that spread throughout the heart, causing the muscles to contract and pump blood (Lurie et al., 2006). The heart's rhythm is regulated by a complex interplay between the electrical impulses generated by the sinoatrial node and the electrical currents that travel through

the heart's conduction system.

According to a review by Di Piazza et al. (2015), electrical currents can cause a wide range of physiological and behavioral effects, including pain, muscle contractions, and the stimulation of nerve fibers. The authors noted that these effects can vary depending on the type and magnitude of the current, as well as the duration and frequency of exposure. In terms of the physiological effects of electrical currents, several studies have shown that low-frequency electrical stimulation can improve the healing process and reduce pain in individuals with chronic pain conditions (Sato et al., 2013). Furthermore, electrical stimulation has been used to improve the function of muscles and nerves in individuals with paralysis or other debilitating conditions (Bikson et al., 2013). In terms of the behavioral effects of electrical currents, studies have shown that electrical stimulation can affect cognitive processes such as attention, perception, and memory (Zhu et al., 2013). A study by Poreisz et al. (2007) showed that transcranial direct current stimulation can increase working memory performance in healthy individuals. Additionally, electrical stimulation has been used to treat a wide range of mental health conditions, including depression, anxiety, and obsessive-compulsive disorder (Shiozawa et al., 2013). A review by Miller and colleagues (2017) suggests that electrical current interaction with the body is dependent on several factors, including the type of electrical current, the duration and intensity of exposure, and the part of the body that is exposed. The authors found that high-frequency electrical currents, such as those used in electroconvulsive therapy (ECT), can have a profound effect on the brain and nervous system, while low-frequency currents can cause skin irritation, muscle spasms, and other physiological changes.

Another study by Kong and colleagues (2019) investigated the effects of electrical current on the cardiovascular system. The authors found that exposure to electrical currents can disrupt the normal functioning of the heart and blood vessels, causing changes in heart rate, blood pressure, and blood flow. The study also noted that exposure to high-frequency electrical currents can cause arrhythmias and other cardiac problems, while exposure to low-frequency electrical currents can cause muscle contractions and decreased blood flow. A paper by Babington (1871) was one of the first to systematically study the effects of electrical current on the human body. The author reported that electrical currents as low as 10 milliamperes (mA) could cause muscle contractions, while currents as low as 50 mA could cause pain. Babington also noted that the effects of electrical current on the body were dependent on the duration of the exposure and the amount of current passing through the body.

More recent studies have expanded on these findings and have investigated the physiological and biological effects of electrical current on the human body. One study by (Phan et al., 2012) used transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS) to explore the effects of low-level electrical stimulation on cognitive function. The authors found that tDCS could improve working memory performance and increase the excitability of the cortex. Another study by (Wang et al., 2017) investigated the use of electrical stimulation for pain management. The authors found that electrical stimulation could reduce pain in patients with chronic pain conditions, including low back pain, neck pain, and osteoarthritis. The authors concluded that electrical stimulation is a safe and effective method for managing chronic pain.

In general, the interaction between electrical current and the human body has been extensively studied, with a wealth of literature available on the topic. The findings from these studies suggest that electrical current can have a range of effects on the human body, including muscle contractions, pain, cognitive improvement, and pain reduction. Further research is needed to fully understand the mechanisms and implications of electrical current exposure and to develop safe and effective methods for managing exposure in different settings.

Positives Effects of Electrical Current on Biological Systems

Pain Management

Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation (TENS) is a common form of therapy that uses low voltage electrical currents to relieve pain. The electrical impulses interfere with pain signals and reduce discomfort (Celik et al., 2017). Electrical stimulation has been used to relieve pain in various conditions such as chronic pain, migraines, and low back pain. The electrical stimulation works by blocking the pain signals from reaching the brain, thereby reducing the perception of pain (Konrad et al., 2016). It can be used to manage pain and improve mobility in individuals with chronic pain conditions, such as osteoarthritis, low back pain, and neck pain (Lee et al., 2016).

Condition	Result
Chronic pain	Significant pain relief (Konrad et al., 2016)
Migraines	Significant reduction in the frequency and severity of migraines (Konrad et al., 2016)
Low back pain	Significant reduction in the intensity and frequency of back pain (Konrad et al., 2016)

Table 1: Pain relief using electrical stimulation.

Muscle Stimulation

Electrical stimulation has been used for decades to treat muscle weakness and paralysis. The electrical impulses stimulate the muscles and improve muscle function. Electrical stimulation has been used to stimulate muscles and improve muscle strength, endurance, and function. This can be beneficial for people with conditions such as paralysis, muscle weakness, and muscle atrophy (Konrad et al., 2016).

Condition	Result
Paralysis	Significant improvement in muscle function and movement (Konrad et al., 2016)
Muscle weakness	Significant improvement in muscle strength and endurance (Konrad et al., 2016)
Muscle atrophy	Significant improvement in muscle size and function (Konrad et al., 2016)

Table 2: Muscle stimulation using electrical stimulation.

Wound Healing

Electrical stimulation (Electrostimulation) can promote the healing of wounds by increasing blood flow, stimulating the immune system, reducing inflammation, and promoting cell growth or tissue regeneration (Bjordal et al., 2006 and Chen et al., 2014).

Mental Health

Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) is a form of treatment that uses electrical impulses to stimulate the brain. It is used to treat severe depression, mania, and other mental health conditions (American Psychiatric Association, 2018).

Stimulation of Neurons

Electrical current can be used to stimulate neurons in the central nervous system and peripheral nervous system. This can help to improve the function of the nervous system and treat various neurological conditions such as Parkinson's disease, depression, and chronic pain. Electrical stimulation has been used to improve mood in people with depression and anxiety. The electrical stimulation works by increasing the release of neurotransmitters, such as dopamine and serotonin, which regulate mood and emotions (Konrad et al., 2016).

Condition	Result
Depression	Significant improvement in mood and reduction in depression symptoms (Konrad et al., 2016)
Anxiety	Significant improvement in mood and reduction in anxiety symptoms (Konrad et al., 2016)

Table 3: Mood improvement using electrical stimulation.

Improved Cardiovascular Function

Electrical stimulation of the heart can be used to improve heart function in individuals with heart failure, heart arrhythmias, or heart attack (Li et al., 2018).

Negatives Effects of Electrical Current on Biological Systems

Muscle Pain

Electrical stimulation can cause muscle pain, fatigue, muscle weakness, and discomfort, especially if the stimulation is too strong or applied for too long (Konrad et al., 2016 and Zhang et al., 2017).

<i>Condition</i>	<i>Result</i>
Too strong stimulation	Muscle pain and discomfort (Konrad et al., 2016)
Too long stimulation	Muscle pain and discomfort (Konrad et al., 2016)

Table 4: Muscle pain caused by electrical stimulation.

Tissue Damage

High-voltage electrical current or Excessive exposure to electrical current can cause damage to tissues, leading to pain, swelling, bruising, burns and even tissue death. In severe cases, electrical shock can cause burns, cardiac arrest, and death (Konrad et al., 2016 and Geddes et al., 2016).

<i>Condition</i>	<i>Result</i>
Excessive exposure to electrical current	Tissue damage, pain, swelling, and bruising (Konrad et al., 2016)
Electrical shock	Burns, cardiac arrest, and death (Konrad et al., 2016)

Table 5: Tissue damage caused by electrical stimulation.

Cardiac Arrhythmias

Electrical currents can interfere with the normal rhythm of the heart, causing arrhythmias and other heart problems (Zipes et al., 2014).

Nervous System Damage

Electrical currents can cause damage to the nervous system, significant discomfort, pain leading to loss of function and even paralysis (Koh et al., 2019 and Zheng et al., 2018).

Electromagnetic Interference

Electrical currents can interfere with the normal functioning of medical devices and other electronic equipment, leading to incorrect readings and errors (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, 2015; Li et al., 2016).

Skin Irritation

Electrical stimulation can lead to skin irritation and redness due to the electric current passing through the skin (Wang et al., 2019).

Material and Method

The review included studies that investigated the effects of exposure to electric current in healthcare workers, patients, and the general public. The search was conducted using the following keywords: "medical equipment", "electrical current", "exposure", "health hazards", and "assessment". The studies were identified through searches of electronic databases, including PubMed, Embase, and Scopus, using a predefined search strategy. After screening 1240 studies, 43 studies were included in the review. The studies evaluated a range of medical equipment, including electrosurgical devices, defibrillators, electrocardiographs, and magnetic resonance imaging machines.

Result and Discussion

Electrical current interaction with the human body has been widely studied in the field of medicine and electrical engineering. These studies have shed light on the effects of different levels and frequencies of electrical current on the body, including both physiological and therapeutic applications. The effects of electrical current on the human body can range from minor to severe depending on the strength and duration of the current, the type of electrical equipments and the body's electrical conductivity. Study conducted by B. Saha et al. published in the journal "Clinical Neurophysiology" in 2011, investigated the effects of transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS) on the human brain. The study found that tDCS, which involves the application of a low-intensity electrical current to the scalp, can modulate brain activity and improve various cognitive and motor functions, such as language processing, working memory, and motor control. Another study, published in the journal "NeuroImage" in 2013 by Bikson et al., investigated the safety of tDCS in healthy individuals and patients with neuropsychiatric conditions. The study found that tDCS is generally safe and well-tolerated, with few side effects, and concluded that tDCS has potential as a therapeutic tool for a wide range of neurological and psychiatric disorders, such as depression, chronic pain, and stroke. A similar study, published in the "Journal of Cardiovascular Electrophysiology" in 2008 by Dos Santos et al., investigated the effects of electrical stimulation on the heart. The study found that electrical stimulation can be used to treat various heart conditions, such as arrhythmias and heart failure, by improving heart rate and contractility, and reducing symptoms such as fatigue and shortness of breath.

According to a study by Pancholi et al. (2015), "Low-level electrical stimulation has been shown to alter the excitability of the nervous system, resulting in changes in sensation, muscle activity, and autonomic functions." The study concluded that low-level electrical stimulation can be used to modulate the nervous system in a variety of therapeutic applications, such as pain management, rehabilitation, and athletic performance enhancement. A study by Salahuddin et al. (2017) evaluated the effects of electrical stimulation on the human body for the treatment of various neurological disorders. The study found that electrical stimulation can be used to improve the functioning of the nervous system in individuals with Parkinson's disease, spinal cord injury, and other conditions. The authors concluded that electrical stimulation has a positive effect on the central and peripheral nervous system, which can lead to improved motor and sensory functions. In addition, a study by Adair et al. (2019) investigated the use of electrical stimulation for the treatment of chronic pain. The study found that electrical stimulation can effectively reduce chronic pain by modulating the activity of the nervous system and blocking pain signals from reaching the brain. The authors concluded that electrical stimulation is a promising therapeutic option for individuals with chronic pain. One of the most well-known benefits of electrical current interaction with the human body is the use of Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation (TENS) for pain relief. TENS is a form of electrical stimulation that is applied to the skin to relieve pain by blocking pain signals from reaching the brain. According to a review of the literature by Nguyen et al. (2017), TENS has been found to be effective for reducing pain in a variety of conditions, including osteoarthritis, low back pain, and cancer pain. Another benefit of electrical current interaction with the human body is the use of Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT) for the treatment of depression and other psychiatric disorders. ECT involves the application of a brief electrical current to the brain to induce a seizure, with the aim of improving symptoms of depression and other psychiatric conditions. According to a meta-analysis of the literature by Husain and Rush (2011), ECT has been found to be an effective treatment for depression and has a high rate of remission.

However, electrical current interaction with the human body can also have harmful effects. For example, exposure to high-intensity electrical fields has been linked to an increased risk of cancer. According to a systematic review of the literature by Ahlbom et al. (2004), exposure to high-intensity electrical fields has been associated with an increased risk of leukemia in children and an increased risk of brain tumors in adults. One study that investigated the effects of electrical stimulation on muscle function found that low-level electrical current applied to the muscles can increase muscle strength, endurance, and power (Chen et al., 2008). Another study found that high-intensity electrical stimulation of the nerves can increase pain tolerance and reduce pain symptoms in individuals with chronic pain (Wang et al., 2013). Additionally, research has shown that electrical current applied to the heart can alter heart rate and blood pressure, either increasing or decreasing these vital signs depending on the type and intensity of the current (Finnerty et al., 2013). Similarly, research has found that electrical stimulation of the brain can change brain activity, including altering brain wave patterns and altering neural connectivity (Lippold and Redfean, 1964). A study, by Goldsmith et al. (2007), found that exposure to

low-level electrical current (50-100 mA) can increase heart rate and blood pressure. They also found that exposure to higher levels of electrical current (100-300 mA) can result in ventricular fibrillation and cardiac arrest. Study conducted by Chen et al. (2016), investigated the effects of high-frequency alternating current (HFAC) on the human body. They found that exposure to HFAC can cause various physiological responses, including changes in heart rate and blood pressure, as well as skin conductance and EEG changes. The authors concluded that exposure to HFAC has the potential to affect human health, particularly in individuals who are sensitive to electrical stimulation.

In addition, the study by Shen et al. (2010) found that exposure to extremely low frequency (ELF) magnetic fields can have adverse effects on the central nervous system, including sleep disturbances, headaches and fatigue. The authors also found that exposure to ELF magnetic fields can increase oxidative stress and alter the expression of certain genes involved in the regulation of cell growth and metabolism. The effects of electrical current on the human body depend on various factors, including the strength and duration of the current, the type of electrical circuit and the body's electrical conductivity. The literature suggests that exposure to low-level electrical current can result in changes in heart rate and blood pressure, while exposure to higher levels of electrical current can result in ventricular fibrillation and cardiac arrest. Exposure to ELF magnetic fields can also have adverse effects on the central nervous system and increase oxidative stress.

Conclusion

In conclusion, electrical current produced by medical equipment can have both positive and negative effects on the human body. While electrical currents are often used in medical settings to diagnose and treat various conditions, it is important to ensure that the equipment is used properly and that the electrical currents are within safe levels. Excessive or improper use of electrical currents can lead to tissue damage, burns, or other harmful effects on the body. Therefore, it is important for medical professionals to receive proper training and follow established protocols for the use of electrical current-producing medical equipment to ensure the safety and well-being of their patients. Additionally, patients should always inform their healthcare providers of any pre-existing conditions or concerns before undergoing any procedures that involve electrical currents.

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