Hyperbaric oxygen (HBO) therapy in Hong Kong
Hyperbaric oxygen (HBO) therapy in Hong Kong

Before the change of sovereignty in 1997, the recompression therapy was provided by the United Kingdom Royal Navy mostly for the treatment of diving-related conditions. The public Recompression Treatment Centre on Stonecutters Island was opened in April, 1994. It was manufactured by the Haux of Germany in 1994. It consisted of two multi-placed chambers linked by an antechamber.
The facility was operated by the Hong Kong Fire Services Department under the medical supervision of the Occupational Medicine Division of the Department of Health. There were various conditions for which HBO could be useful. These were listed in table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acute</th>
<th>Decompression illness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arterial gas embolism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carbon monoxide poisoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Soft tissue necrotising infections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clostridial myonecrosis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic</td>
<td>Radiation tissue necrosis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Refractory osteomyelitis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Selected non-healing wounds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 1. INDICATIONS FOR HBO THERAPY
Decompression illness and arterial gas embolism would require emergency recompression and patients must be sent to the chamber by the quickest available means.

Patients with carbon monoxide poisoning would benefit from HBO therapy by a variety of mechanisms. HBO would be effective in preventing the delayed neuropsychiatric sequelae that often developed 10 to 21 days after carbon monoxide poisoning.

Complications of HBO were listed in table 2.

Local experience had shown that HBO therapy was a useful adjunctive treatment. However, the remote location of the Recompression Treatment Centre at Stonecutters Island and the lack of hospital facilities would be the major concern especially when critically ill patients were in need.

The risks and cost of transport would obviously be minimized if a hospital-based hyperbaric chamber could be established in the near future. Emergency physicians would certainly at the best position to lead and coordinate the service of HBO therapy in the Hospital Authority.

Dr. Au Yeung Kwan Leong of the Accident and Emergency Department of Queen Elizabeth Hospital has prepared to take up the challenge.

Editor – Dr. Karen Chan
College News

EEEM

Examination Date:
(OSCE) 21-22 Aug 2012 (Tue-Wed)
(Oral) 11-13 Sep 2012 (Tue-Thu)

Free Paper Presentation 2012
Date: 28 September 2012
Time: 14:30 – 18:00
Venue: Hong Kong Academy of Medicine, 99 Wong Chuk Hang Road,
Aberdeen, Hong Kong

EM Express – HKCEM Newsletter
Editor: Dr. Karen Chan (A&E, QEH)
Email: cklz02@ha.org.hk

Restricted to fellows and members of HKCEM. The opinions expressed in the EM Express are personal views only and are not necessarily those of the editor, publisher, sponsor or HKCEM. All copyrights reserved.