

DESENSITIZATION

Nerves traumatized by injury, amputation, and painful scar formation experience varying degrees of hyperesthesia (hypersensitivity) during recovery and reinnervation.

A light touch of the involved area may range from being mildly irritating to extremely painful.

Treatment begins with exposure to a stimulus that is slightly irritating but tolerable. As tolerance increases, more noxious stimuli is introduced.

- 1) Modalities such as Fluidotherapy, contrast baths, heat
- 2) Light stroking, massage, tapping – progress in intensity as tolerated
- 3) Vibration
- 4) Textures: Brushing affected area in one direction beginning with tolerable material such as a cotton ball or facial tissue, progressing to rougher textures such as corduroy, burlap, velcro, sandpaper, etc.
- 5) Contact particles – moving hand through cotton, dry rice, popcorn kernels, macaroni, pebbles, plastic squares, metal washers, nuts & bolts
- 6) Functional activities – manipulating objects of various sizes, shapes, weights, and textures.

Dowel textures	Contact particles	Vibration
1. Moleskin	1. Cotton	1. Battery/no contact
2. Felt	2. Terry cloth pieces	2. Battery/near contact
3. Quickstick	3. Dry rice	3. Low cycle/near contact
4. Velvet	4. Unpopped popcorn	4. Low cycle/intermittent contact
5. Semirough cloth	5. Pinto beans	5. Low cycle contact
6. Velcro loops*	6. Macaroni	6. Low cycle continuous
7. Hard T-foam	7. Plastic wire insulation pieces	7. High cycle/intermittent
8. Burlap	8. Small pebbles	8. High cycle/intermittent
9. Rug back	9. Larger pebbles	9. High cycle/continuous
10. Velcro hook	10. Plastic squares	10. Vibration, not irritating

Treatment is _____ X's per day for _____ minute segments.