College of Chiropodists of Ontario

EXTRACORPOREAL SHOCK WAVE THERAPY

Guideline for Registrants of the College of Chiropodists of Ontario

Approved by Council: June 8, 2012
Amended: May 21, 2026

Introduction

Extracorporeal shockwave therapy (ESWT), or shockwave therapy, is a non-invasive treatment that uses high-energy sound waves to stimulate healing and reduce pain in targeted areas.

Regulatory Context

The **Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991** prohibits anyone from applying or ordering certain types of energy listed in **Ontario Regulation 107/96**, unless they are a registrant of a regulated health profession authorized to use that energy. For example, the regulation restricts some uses of electricity but specifically allows registrants to use it for electrocoagulation and fulguration.

The regulation also restricts the use of soundwaves, but only for the purpose of **ultrasound** and **lithotripsy**. Lithotripsy is not defined in the regulation but is generally understood to involve breaking up stones or calculi, usually in the kidney or gallbladder.

Guidelines for Registrants using ESWT

Registrants can use ESWT provided the following conditions are met:

1. Training

Registrants must have appropriate training to assess the need for ESWT and to administer the therapy safely.

2. Clinical Appropriateness

The treatment must be appropriate for the patient's condition, considering any contraindications, and it must be delivered at appropriate intervals.

3. Informed Consent

Registrants must obtain informed consent from the patient in compliance with the ***Health Care Consent Act, 1996***. This includes:

- Explaining the nature of the treatment, including the expected benefits, the material risks and side effects, alternative courses of action, and the likely consequences of not having the treatment.
- Answering any questions; and,
- Ensuring the patient (or their substitute decision maker) understands the information, taking reasonable steps to facilitate that understanding.

4. Documentation

Registrants must appropriately document the use of ESWT in the patient's chart, including:

- Device model and parameters (such as time, power, level)
- Area treated
- Date of treatment and the date of symptom onset
- Any complications or adverse outcomes

References

- Assessment and Management
- *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991*
- *Ontario Regulation 107/96: CONTROLLED ACTS*
- *Health Care Consent Act, 1996, S.O. 1996, c 2.*
- Consent Guideline
- Competence
- Records