9. Cardiovascular Diseases

Reference

Lee DY, Lee GM, Yeom SC, et al. A clinical study of bee venom acupuncture therapy on shoulder pain patients in stroke sequelae. *Daehan-Chimgu-Hakhoeji* (*Journal of Korean Acupuncture & Moxibustion Society*) 2006; 23(4): 69–80 (in Korean with English abstract).

1. Objectives

To evaluate the effectiveness of bee venom acupuncture therapy for shoulder pain in patients with hemiplegia after stroke.

2. Design

Randomized controlled trial (RCT).

3. Setting

One Oriental hospital (Oriental Medical Hospital at Sanbon, Wonkwang University), Republic of Korea.

4. Participants

Hospitalized patients found to have cerebral infarction or cerebral hemorrhage on brain CT or brain MRI, shoulder pain on the paralyzed side, no aphasia and cognitive impairment, stabilized vital signs, and neurological symptoms (n=40).

5. Intervention

Arm 1: Conventional therapy (drugs, acupuncture, moxibustion, physiotherapy, kinesitherapy) + Bee venom acupuncture (n=20).

Arm 2: Conventional therapy only (n=20).

6. Main outcome measures

Pain intensity measured on a visual analogue scale (VAS), passive range of motion (ROM), motor function score, pain on motion score, and score on the Modified Ashworth scale for spasticity.

7. Main results

The decrease in pain intensity was greater in Arm 1 than Arm 2. After three weeks of treatment, the between-group difference was statistically significant ($P<0.05$).

8. Conclusions

Treatment with bee venom acupuncture is effective for shoulder pain in hemiplegia after stroke.

9. Safety assessment in the article

Not mentioned.

10. Abstractor's comments

The shoulder pain occurs in 70–80% of patients with hemiplegia. The objective of this study is similar to that of the study of Ko et al (*Daehan-Hanui-Hakhoeji* [*Journal of Korean Oriental Medical Society*] 2007; 28 [1]: 11–24). This was a randomized clinical trial, but some requirements of randomization were not fulfilled. To improve the quality of the scientific evidence, the design of a future study should include random assignment to a placebo saline control group.

11. Abstractor

Kim HJ, 17 August 2010.