

## 10. Respiratory Diseases (including Influenza and Rhinitis)

### Reference

Isobe Y, Yu S, Inoue E. Common cold prevention and therapeutic effects of acupuncture in a randomized controlled trial\*. *Toyo Ryoho Gakko Kyokai Zasshi (The Journal of Oriental Medicine College Association)* 2000; 24: 94–7 (in Japanese). Ichushi Web ID: 2003049904.

#### 1. Objectives

To evaluate the preventative effects of acupuncture against common cold and its therapeutic effects after infection.

#### 2. Design

Randomized controlled trial (RCT).

#### 3. Setting

Morinomiya College of Medical Arts and Sciences, Osaka, Japan.

#### 4. Participants

Twenty-four healthy adult students and teachers recruited for the cold-prone winter period of 20 January to 19 February 2000.

#### 5. Intervention

Arm 1: Acupuncture treatment group. Acupuncture for 15 seconds at the *ah-shi* (tender) point(阿是穴) on both sides of the throat, above a point about 45 mm (1.5 cun) lateral to the laryngeal prominence, with 0.16 x 40 mm needles after obtained “acupuncture sensation (*hibiki*)” toward the back part of the throat as an indicator, twice a week for four weeks (1 month)(n=11).

Arm 2: Control group. No treatment (n=12).

One participant was dropped before allocation.

#### 6. Main outcome measures

Daily cold diary written by each subject noting the following: fit and well, normal, feels like cold coming on, severe cold (staying home and resting), number of days before catching cold, number of days sick with cold.

#### 7. Main results

The two groups were allocated almost evenly. The number of days until a cold was caught was greater in Arm 1 (second week). The number of occurrences of cold was the same in both groups. The median number of sick days was two days less in Arm 1.

#### 8. Conclusions

Intervention by acupuncture treatment delays the onset of cold, and decreases the number of sick days.

#### 9. From acupuncture and moxibustion medicine perspective

Treatment on “the *ah-shi* point located above a point about 45 mm lateral to the laryngeal prominence after obtained “acupuncture sensation (*hibiki*)” toward the back part of the throat as an indicator” is an empirical method. It is not the usual acupuncture point or an extra point.

#### 10. Safety assessment in the article

None.

#### 11. Abstractor’s comments

This study is of great interest since it focused on the preventative effects of acupuncture therapy against the common cold. The study was a pilot trial, as the authors mentioned, and there was no statistical analysis because the number of subject cases was small. This is problematic. The control group received no treatment: receiving some kind of sham treatment would be preferable. Another particular feature of the study was the selection of an atypical acupuncture point. Obtaining “acupuncture sensation (*hibiki*)” by manual insertion of a fine acupuncture needle, and using the “acupuncture sensation (*hibiki*)” as a guide, holds much interest since it is unique and characteristic method in Japanese acupuncture. It is anticipated that a future larger clinical trial based on this one will be designed with a suitable sample size.

#### 12. Abstractor and date

Shinohara S, 31 January 2011, Kawakita K, 3 December 2011.