13. Diseases of the Musculo Skeletal System and Connective Tissue

Reference

1. Objectives
To evaluate the therapeutic effect of Weizhong (BL40, 委中) venepuncture on low back pain.

2. Design
Randomized controlled trial (RCT).

3. Setting
One oriental hospital (National Medical Center), Republic of Korea.

4. Participants
Patients with low back pain who visited the hospital (n=46).

5. Intervention
Arm 1: Weizhong (BL40, 委中) venepuncture + acupuncture treatment (n=25).
Arm 2: Acupuncture treatment (n=21).
Acupuncture needles were inserted into the low back local acupuncture points once and retained for 20 minutes.

6. Main Outcome Measures
Pain rating score (PRS).

7. Main Results
PRS (as well as subscores for pain intensity, duration, frequency, and aggravation) were significantly improved by treatment in both arms, and the improvement was significantly greater in patients with an exposed vessel around the Weizhong (BL40) than patients without this exposed vessel. This result suggests that the exposed vessel around the Weizhong (BL40) may be an important indication for venepuncture.

8. Conclusions
Weizhong (BL40) venepuncture is effective for low back pain in patients with an exposed vessel around the Weizhong (BL40), i.e., in the popliteal area.

9. Safety assessment in the article
Not mentioned.

10. Abstractor’s comments
Weizhong (BL40) venepuncture has been widely used to treat low back pain in traditional Korean medicine, but few studies have demonstrated its efficacy. This study fails to meet certain requirements of clinical trials such as randomization, and use of inclusion and exclusion criteria. Moreover, adverse events are not mentioned, though adverse events related to venepuncture are known.

11. Abstractor and date
Kim HJ, 17 August 2010.