

6. Nervous System Diseases

Reference

Lee CW, Kim HG, Heo SW, et al. The clinical study about Hominis placenta herbal acupuncture on Bell's palsy. *Daehan-Yakchim-Hakhoeji (Journal of Pharmacopuncture)* 2005; 8(3): 87–97 (in Korean with English abstract).

1. Objectives

To evaluate the efficacy of Hominis placenta herbal acupuncture in the treatment of Bell's palsy.

2. Design

Randomized controlled trial (RCT).

3. Setting

One Oriental hospital (Oriental Medicine Hospital of Dongeui Universtiy), Republic of Korea.

4. Participants

Patients with Ramsey-Hunt syndrome were excluded. Forty-four patients diagnosed with Bell's palsy by a otolaryngologist and treated with Western medicine. The patients received their first medical examination within 7 days of the disease onset, were hospitalized 7–10 days, and then received 4 weeks of ambulatory care.

5. Intervention

Injections (0.03 cc) were given 3 times per week during hospitalization and two times per week during ambulatory care. Affected facial acupuncture points included: Yangbai (GB14, 陽白), Quanliao (SI18, 顴髎), Dicang (ST4, 地倉), Jiache (ST6, 頰車), Yifeng (TE17, 翳風), and Sizhukong (TE23, 絲竹空).

Arm 1: Hominis placenta herbal acupuncture treatment group (n=23).

Arm 2: Saline acupuncture treatment group (n=21).

6. Main outcome measures

Yanagihara's unweighted grade.

7. Main results

1) Yanagihara's unweighted grade increased between pre-treatment and 3 weeks after treatment, but the increase was nonsignificantly greater in Arm 1 than in Arm 2. The difference (which was not significant before treatment; 17.4 ± 4.1 [Arm 1] vs. 16.4 ± 3.97 [Arm 2]; $P=0.532$) but became significant 5 weeks after treatment (33.7 ± 5.7 [Arm 1] vs. 28.7 ± 7.5 [Arm 2]; $P=0.032$).

2) The most frequently occurring symptom was stress-induced hypertension, and the initial symptom was postauricular pain.

8. Conclusions

The efficacy of hominis placenta Herbal acupuncture is greater in late treatment period than in early treatment period. In the early treatment period, most of the efficacy is attributable to Geo pung tong gi (祛風通氣, expelling wind and promoting the circulation of Ki). It is thought that hominis placenta Herbal acupuncture is more effective in older patients, patients with wasting diseases, and in cases where the treatment course is slow.

9. Safety assessment in the article

Not mentioned.

10. Abstractor's comments

This article examined the efficacy of hominis placenta herbal acupuncture in the treatment of Bell's palsy. Compared to previous papers, this article was more objective, using saline as a placebo. The limitations of the study are the small number of patients and short follow-up period, which was too short (5 weeks) to demonstrate complete recovery. A new trial with more patients and follow-up longer than 2 months is needed. Moreover, the use of Western treatment and physical therapy simultaneously complicates the interpretation of these hominis placenta herbal acupuncture findings.

11. Abstractor

Lee EJ, 26 May 2010.