13. Diseases of the Musculo Skeletal System and Connective Tissue

Reference

1. Objectives
To evaluate the effectiveness of combinations of Eastern-Western medical treatments for chronic shoulder pain.

2. Design
Randomized controlled trial (RCT).

3. Setting
One Oriental hospital (Kyunghee University Medical Center), Republic of Korea.

4. Participants
Patients with chronic shoulder pain (n=60). Patients were randomly assigned.

5. Intervention
Arm 1: (Eastern-Western combined treatment; EW): Acupuncture treatment + nerve block treatment (n=20).
Arm 2: (Eastern medical treatment only; E): Acupuncture treatment (n=20).
Arm 3: (control group; C): No treatment (n=20).
Suprascapular nerve block (steroid mixed with 1% lidocaine, 5 ml), subacromial injection, and trigger point injection (0.5–2 ml of topical anesthetic) for Western medical treatment.
Yangxi (LI15, 阳谿), Jianliao (TE14, 肩髎), Jianjing (GB21, 肩井), and Dong-si (董氏) acupuncture points (Shin-guan and Gyun-joong) twice a week for 4 weeks in the acupuncture group.

6. Main Outcome Measures
Score on the Constant Shoulder Assessment (CSA), Shoulder Pain and Disability Index (SPADI), and pain assessed on a visual analogue scale (VAS).

7. Main Results
Patients in Arm 1 and Arm 2 showed significant improvement in CSA, SPADI, and VAS (P<0.05). There was a significant difference in CSA, SPADI, and VAS between Arm 1 and Arm 3 (P< 0.001), and in VAS between Arm 1 and Arm 2 (P=0.012).

8. Conclusions
The combined treatment for chronic shoulder pain is significantly more effective.

9. Safety assessment in the article
Not mentioned.

10. Abstractor’s comments
The combining of Eastern and Western remedies is an active topic for discussion in medicine. In this study, the effectiveness of combined treatment for chronic shoulder pain is compared with that of Eastern medical treatment and no treatment. The overall study design, randomization, and inclusion criteria were clearly presented, but it is unfortunate that the Eastern treatment was combined with nerve block treatment (the Western treatment).

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