

18. Symptoms and Signs

Reference

Jung IT, Kim SY, Kim KS, et al. A clinical study of aroma acupuncture on chronic headache patients. *Daehan-Chimgu-Hakhoeji (Journal of Korean Acupuncture & Moxibustion Society)* 2004; 21(5): 123–36 (in Korean with English abstract).

1. Objectives

To compare the effectiveness of general and aroma acupuncture as treatment for chronic headache.

2. Design

Randomized controlled trial (RCT).

3. Setting

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

4. Participants

Patients with chronic headache who visited the hospital between February and July 2004.

The headache lasted more than 4 hours a day, and occurred on more than 15 days a month (n=38).

5. Intervention

Arm 1: Aroma acupuncture (twice a week for 8 weeks) (n=15).

Arm 2: General acupuncture (twice a week for 8 weeks)(n= 23).

In both groups, acupuncture was applied to the Baihui (GV20, 百會), Sishencong (EX-HN23, 四神聰), Touwei (ST8, 頭維), Taiyang (EX-HN46, 太陽), Yingxiang (LI20, 迎香), Yifeng (TE17, 翳風), Fengchi (GB20, 風池), Quchi (LI11, 曲池), Zusanli (ST36, 足三里), Hegu (LI4, 合谷), and Taichong (LR3, 太衝) acupoints for 20 minutes.

6. Main Outcome Measures

Pain evaluated on a visual analogue scale (VAS), Brief Pain Inventory (BPI).

7. Main Results

In Arm 2, there was significant improvement in VAS score after 4 and 8 weeks of treatment and in BPI subscores for mood and relations with other people ($P<0.05$) but not for general activity, enjoyment of life, and sleep. In Arm 1, there was significant improvement in VAS score after 4 and 8 weeks of treatment and in BPI subscores for general activity, mood, enjoyment of life, relations with other people, and sleep ($P<0.05$). The decrease in VAS score was significantly greater in Arm 1 than Arm 2 ($P<0.05$). There were no between-group differences in subscores for general activity, mood, and relations with other people, but the improvement in subscores for enjoyment of life and sleep were significantly greater in Arm 1 than Arm 2.

8. Conclusions

Aroma acupuncture was more effective than general acupuncture for relieving chronic headache pain and improving quality of life.

9. Safety assessment in the article

Not mentioned.

10. Abstractor's comments

This study compares the efficacy of general acupuncture with that of aroma acupuncture for chronic headache. Through VAS and BPI score analysis, both treatments were shown to be effective, and the greater efficacy of aroma acupuncture was confirmed objectively. However, the lack of a description of the randomization method and aroma method used in this study are limitations.

11. Abstractor and date

Jang KT, 31 August 2010.