

6. Nervous System Diseases

Reference

Lim JA, Kim SC, Kim SN, et al. Treatment of carpal tunnel syndrome using Scolopendrid herbal acupuncture. *Daehan-Yakchim-Hakhoeji (Journal of Pharmacopuncture)* 2005; 8(1): 13–20 (in Korean with English abstract).

1. Objectives

To evaluate the efficacy of Scolopendrid herbal acupuncture in the treatment of carpal tunnel syndrome.

2. Design

Randomized controlled trial (RCT).

3. Setting

One Oriental hospital (Oriental Medical hospital at Gwangju, Wonkwang University), Republic of Korea.

4. Participants

Forty patients who visited the hospital with hand pain or tingling, and night pain. All were positive for Tinel's and Phalen's signs. (The subjects were allowed to receive treatment from another hospital in addition to the trial treatment.)

5. Intervention

Arm 1: Traditional Korean medicine treatment (drugs, electro-acupuncture, acupuncture, physiotherapy) group (n=20).

Arm 2: Traditional Korean medicine treatment plus Scolopendrid herbal acupuncture treatment group (n=20).

6. Main outcome measures

Patient satisfaction rated on a visual analogue scale.

Excellent: Nearly normal recovery both subjectively and objectively. Over 70% improvement.

Good: Improvement in everyday life, with slight impairment of physical activity and discomfort remaining at the affected site. About 50–70% improvement.

Fair: Symptoms not significantly improved. Physical activity impaired and strenuous exercise impossible to do. Less than 50% improvement.

Poor: No improvement or worsening of the symptoms. Less than 20% improvement.

7. Main results

1) The improvement in the symptoms of carpal tunnel syndrome was greater in Arm 2 (95% improvement) than in Arm 1 (75% improvement).

2) In patients with thenar muscle atrophy requiring surgery, pain disappeared completely after combined treatment.

3) The efficacy of treatment for carpal tunnel syndrome was greater in Arm 2 (excellent 9 [45%] vs. 6 [30%], good 10 [50%] vs. 9 [45%], fair 1 [5%] vs. 4 [20%], poor 0 [0%] vs. 1 [5%]).

8. Conclusions

Treatment efficacy for carpal tunnel syndrome is significantly improved by combined treatment.

9. Safety assessment in the article

Not evaluated. The directions for Scolopendrid herbal acupuncture needle insertion are mentioned.

10. Abstractor's comments

This report is the first to evaluate the efficacy of Scolopendrid herbal acupuncture for treatment of carpal tunnel syndrome. Among the outpatients who visited to the hospital with hand pain or tingling, and night pain, forty patients with Tinel's and Phalen's signs were enrolled and were allowed treatment from another hospital in addition to the trial treatment. The limitation of this study was that the trial was not long enough to permit sufficient evaluation. Carpal tunnel syndrome recurs readily with overuse of the wrist. Follow up of 1–6 months is needed for sufficient evaluation. (There was no statistical analysis of the efficacy of treatment, and the treatment periods and frequency were not mentioned. The effect of other treatments could dilute the effects of the trial treatments.)

11. Abstractor

Lee EJ, 26 May 2010.