

9. Cardiovascular Diseases

Reference

Ko CN, Min IK, Park SW, et al. Effectiveness of bee venom acupuncture on shoulder pain after stroke. *Daehan-Hanui-Hakhoeji (Journal of Korean Oriental Medical Society)* 2007; 28(1): 11–24 (in Korean with English abstract).

1. Objectives

To evaluate the effectiveness of bee venom acupuncture for shoulder pain in patients with hemiplegia after stroke.

2. Design

Randomized controlled trial (RCT).

3. Setting

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

4. Participants

Hospitalized patients found to have cerebral infarction or cerebral hemorrhage on brain CT or brain MRI, hemiplegia, and shoulder pain after stroke (n=46).

5. Intervention

Arm 1: Bee venom acupuncture (0.6 ml; venom:saline = 1: 10000) (n=24).

Arm 2: Saline placebo (0.6 ml) (n=22).

6. Main outcome measures

Effectiveness measured on a visual analogue scale (VAS), Pain rating score (PRS), Fugl-Meyer assessment of motor recovery, and measurement of passive external rotation.

7. Main results

The effectiveness and PRS were significantly improved in Arm 1 compared with Arm 2 ($P=0.02$ and 0.03 , respectively).

8. Conclusions

Bee venom acupuncture treatment has an analgesic effect on shoulder pain in patients with hemiplegia after stroke.

9. Safety assessment in the article

Itching, skin flare, and pain occurred but were not specifically attributable to bee venom acupuncture.

10. Abstractor's comments

The shoulder pain is frequently observed in patients with hemiplegia after stroke. Many treatments such as electroacupuncture and taping have been tried for this complication of hemiplegia. Although bee venom acupuncture is highly effective, it hasn't be used in stroke patients because of concerns over adverse effects. No specific adverse effect was observed. It is suggested that a clinical trial with more patients is need to confirm the conclusion of this study.

11. Abstractor

Kim HJ, 17 August 2010.