

## 2. Cancer

### Reference

Yoo WS, Kim JS. The effect of sweet bee venom pharmacopuncture (SBVP) on cancer-related pain: A randomized controlled trial and double blinded - pilot study. *Daehan-Yakchim-Hakhoeji (Journal of Pharmacopuncture)* 2008; 11(1): 2–29 (in Korean with English abstract).

#### 1. Objectives

To investigate the effect of sweet bee venom pharmacopuncture (SBVP) on cancer-related pain.

#### 2. Design

Double-blinded randomized controlled trial (DB-RCT).

#### 3. Setting

One Oriental hospital (Dunsan Oriental Hospital of Daejeon), Republic of Korea.

#### 4. Participants

Eleven patients (age, 18–70 years; male/female ratio = 8/3) with cancer-related pain over three days and mean Numeric Rating Scale (NRS) pain score greater than 3.

#### 5. Intervention

Arm 1: SBV (preparation concentration 0.1 mg/ml) was injected daily for 5 days at the Zhong Wan (CV12, 中脘) acupuncture point using a 1-cc syringe.

Arm 2: Saline was injected according to the same schedule.

#### 6. Main outcome measures

NRS pain scale pain score.

#### 7. Main results

One hour after injection, the decrease in NRS score was significantly greater in Arm 1 than in Arm 2 ( $2.48 \pm 1.52$  vs.  $0.97 \pm 1.88$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ). Also, the NRS pain scale score was significantly lower shortly after the SBV injection (pre- vs. post-injection:  $5.13 \pm 1.77$  vs.  $2.65 \pm 0.67$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ) but not significantly lower long after SBV injection (pre- vs. post-treatment values not significantly different).

#### 8. Conclusions

In the control of cancer-related pain, SBVP dramatically decreases NRS pain score in the short term, but not in the long term. This result indicates that SBVP could be helpful in the control of breakthrough pain.

#### 9. Safety assessment in the article

Not mentioned.

#### 10. Abstractor's comments

This purpose of the article was to verify the effectiveness of SBVP for the control of cancer-related pain in patients with different types of cancer including gastric cancer. Compared with saline injection, SBVP injection daily for 5 days at the Zhong Wan acupuncture point reduced breakthrough pain. However, the study had limitations including the small number of patients and nonspecification of target diseases related to gastralgia such as gastric cancer. The clinical study design should be changed to protect patients, and studies with larger numbers of patients should be performed.

#### 11. Abstractor

Kim JS, 8 June 2010.