

### 13. Diseases of the Musculo Skeletal System and Connective Tissue

#### Reference

Lee KH, Youn HM, Ko WS, et al. Comparison of treatment effects and allergic responses to stiff neck between sweet bee venom and bee venom pharmacopuncture. *Daehan-Yakchim-Hakhoeji (Journal of Pharmacopuncture)* 2008; 11(4): 39–48 (in Korean with English abstract).

#### 1. Objectives

To compare the efficacy and safety of sweet-bee venom and bee venom acupuncture.

#### 2. Design

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

#### 3. Setting

One Oriental hospital (Oriental Medical Hospital of Dongeui University), Republic of Korea.

#### 4. Participants

Patients with stiff neck (n=41).

#### 5. Intervention

Arm 1: Cupping therapy (附缸療法) + bee venom (BV) acupuncture + conventional acupuncture. (n=21)

Arm 2: Cupping therapy (附缸療法) + sweet bee venom (SBV) acupuncture + conventional acupuncture. (n=20)

#### 6. Main outcome measures

Stiff neck severity self-assessed on a visual analogue scale (VAS), Neck Disability Index (NDI) score, Clinical Evaluation Grade (CEG), allergic reaction assessed on a VAS.

#### 7. Main results

Stiff neck severity VAS score, NDI score, and CEG decreased significantly regardless of treatment, and there were no significant between-group difference in these decreases. The severity of treatment-site edema and itching were significantly less in Arm 2 than Arm 1.

#### 8. Conclusions

Sweet bee venom acupuncture and bee venom acupuncture both have similar efficacy for stiff neck, and both are relatively safe (i.e., trigger only weak allergic reactions).

#### 9. Safety assessment in the article

Not mentioned.

#### 10. Abstractor's comments

This study evaluated the efficacy and safety of bee venom acupuncture for stiff neck. As the enrollment procedure was clear and blinding was satisfactory, the results of this study result could be used to guide the choice between BV and SBV for acupuncture. However, the method used to evaluate allergic reaction severity was too subjective and it remains questionable whether the effect of general acupuncture and cupping therapy was greater than the effect of SBV and BVA.

#### 11. Abstractor and date

Kim HJ, 17 August 2010.