POSTER ABSTRACT

Acupuncture for Pain Management in Evidence-based Medicine

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Introduction

Pain is an enormous and prevalent problem that troubles people of all ages worldwide. The effectiveness of acupuncture for pain management has been strongly verified by large randomized controlled trials (RCTs) and meta-analyses. Increasing numbers of patients with pain have accepted acupuncture treatment worldwide. However, some challenges exist in establishing evidence for the efficacy of acupuncture. A more applicable and innovative research methodology that can reflect the effect of acupuncture in the settings of daily clinical practice needs to be developed

Aims Objectives Theory or Methods

Pain is "an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage or described in terms of such damage. The previous experience of acupuncture research studies are invaluable for researchers to recognize the limitations and challenges of research designs and would help to move the field forward in future research. For example, the design of an adequate sham control, involvement of skilled and experienced acupuncturists, adequate outcome measures in the clinical trials, and the discovery of physiological effects of acupuncture in basic science are all important tasks for acupuncture researchers to address and solve.

Highlights or Results or Key Findings

Challenges and future directions of acupuncture research for pain conditions in EBM

High-quality RCTs and meta-analysis have increasingly produced robust evidence of the effectiveness of acupuncture for pain conditions, although nonspecific physiologic response to the needle insertion and the nature of holistic character of acupuncture treatment lead to many challenges in the research designs that reflect the daily clinical acupuncture practice

Individual patient data meta-analysis and large RCTs of acupuncture for pain conditions

In recent years, studies have increasingly provided some evidence for using acupuncture for pain management. In 2012, an individual patient data meta-analysis was conducted by Andrew et al to evaluate the effectiveness of acupuncture for four types of chronic pain: back and neck pain, osteoarthritis, chronic headache, and shoulder pain. The result reflects that acupuncture was

superior to sham acupuncture controls and to the usual care controls in all four chronic pain conditions.

Conclusions

In recent years, large RCTs and meta-analysis of the effectiveness of acupuncture have greatly advanced our knowledge of acupuncture. Increasingly more patients worldwide now accept acupuncture treatment. Challenges remain in the course of establishing evidence on acupuncture,

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Implications for applicability/transferability sustainability and limitations

As the newest revolution in the field of medical science, EBM has converted the classic authoritarian expert-based medicine and become the fundamental basis for clinical practice.