

POSTER PRESENTATION

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P02.176. Acupuncture for symptom management in hemodialysis patients: a prospective, observational pilot study

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From International Research Congress on Integrative Medicine and Health 2012
Portland, Oregon, USA. 15-18 May 2012

Purpose

Patients undergoing hemodialysis suffer from a variety of complications related to end-stage renal disease. This prospective, observational pilot study aims to determine the feasibility, safety, and possible benefits of acupuncture for symptom management in patients undergoing hemodialysis.

Methods

Twenty-four patients undergoing hemodialysis received acupuncture treatment for their symptoms. Manually stimulated, individualized acupuncture treatments were provided twice a week for 6 consecutive weeks on a non-dialysis day or on the day of hemodialysis prior to initiating treatment. Symptoms were evaluated using the Measure Your Medical Outcome Profiles 2 Questionnaire, and quality of life was measured by the Kidney Disease Quality of Life-Short Form (KDQOL-SFTM) Version 1.3 at baseline, 7 weeks and 11 weeks from baseline. Statistical analysis was conducted on the basis of the intention-to-treat principle.

Results

Twenty-one patients (87%) completed the whole treatment course and follow-up evaluation. Three patients dropped out due to increased fatigue (n=1), pancreatic and renal transplantation (n=1), and infections of the arteriovenous fistula used for hemodialysis access (n=1). Patients experienced a significant improvement of symptoms considered the most bothersome, reporting a decrease of 1.87 and 2.08 points on a 0-6 symptom scale at 7 weeks and 11 weeks, respectively (both $p < 0.0001$).

Some subscales of KDQOL-SFTM showed significant improvement at 7 weeks (effects of kidney disease, burden of kidney disease, role-limitations physical, emotional well-being, and energy/fatigue) and 11 weeks (physical functioning and energy/fatigue). No serious adverse events related to acupuncture occurred.

Conclusion

Acupuncture seems feasible and safe for symptom management in patients undergoing hemodialysis. Future controlled trials are needed to confirm the benefits of acupuncture.

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Published: 12 June 2012

doi:10.1186/1472-6882-12-S1-P232

Cite this article as: Kim et al.: P02.176. Acupuncture for symptom management in hemodialysis patients: a prospective, observational pilot study. *BMC Complementary and Alternative Medicine* 2012 **12**(Suppl 1):P232.

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