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### This month in the news..

Welcome to the December Issue of the Acupuncture.com.au monthly newsletter.

This month there is a good article on Acupuncture for Insomnia and another on Acupuncture for Plantar Fasciitis. There is also some interesting news about Acupuncture being integrated into a hospital in Brazil.

If you wish to contribute a story or article about Acupuncture or Traditional Chinese Medicine please contact the Acupuncture.com.au team through the web.

## 28/11/2009—Acupuncture for treatment of Insomnia— A systematic review of randomized controlled trials.



**BACKGROUND:** Acupuncture is commonly used in treating insomnia in China, and clinical studies have shown that acupuncture may have a beneficial effect on insomnia compared with Western medication.

**METHODS:** We included randomized controlled trials on acupuncture for insomnia. We searched PubMed, the Cochrane Library (2008 Issue 3), China Network Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI), Chinese Scientific Journal Database (VIP), and Wan Fang Database. All searches ended in December 2008. Two authors extracted data and assessed the trials' quality independently. RevMan 5.0.17 software was used for data analysis with effect estimate presented as relative risk (RR) and mean difference (MD)

with a 95% confidence interval (CI).

**RESULTS:** Forty-six (46) randomized trials involving 3811 patients were included, and the methodological quality of trials was generally fair in terms of randomization, blinding, and intention-to-treat analysis. Meta-analyses showed a beneficial effect of acupuncture compared with no treatment (MD -3.28, 95% CI -6.10 to -0.46,  $p = 0.02$ ; 4 trials) and real acupuncture compared with sham acupuncture (MD -2.94, 95% CI -5.77 to -0.11,  $p = 0.04$ ; 2 trials) on total scores of Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index. Acupuncture was superior to medications regarding the number of patients with total sleep duration increased for >3 hours (RR 1.53, 95% CI 1.24-1.88,  $p < 0.0001$ ). However, there was no difference between acupuncture and medications in average sleep duration (MD -0.06, 95% CI -0.30-0.18,  $p = 0.63$ ). Acupuncture plus medica-

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tions showed better effect than medications alone on total sleep duration (MD 1.09, 95% CI 0.56-1.61,  $p < 0.0001$ ). Similarly, acupuncture plus herbs was significantly better than herbs alone on increase of sleep rates (RR 1.67, 95% CI 1.12-2.50,  $p = 0.01$ ). There were no serious adverse effects with related to acupuncture treatment in the included trials.

**CONCLUSIONS:** Acupuncture appears to be effective in treatment of insomnia. However, further large, rigorous designed trials are warranted.

**Country:** China **Institute:** Center for Evidence-Based Chinese Medicine, Beijing University of Chinese Medicine, Beijing, China. **Author(s):** Cao H, Pan X, Li H, Liu J. **Journal:** J Altern Complement Med. 2009 Nov;15(11):1171-86.

## Events Calendar for December 2009

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### Singapore - Traditional Medicine Expo

When: 11.00am - 7.00pm, Where: Suntec International Convention Centre

Contact: tmxpo on or visit [www.tmxpo.com](http://www.tmxpo.com).

This is a multi-day event ending on the 06/12

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### Adelaide - YIN/YANG NATURE OF IMMUNITY

When: 10am - 3.30pm, Where: Hilton Hotel, 233 Victoria Square

Contact: Emily Lewis on 1300 133 807 or [emily@panaxea.com](mailto:emily@panaxea.com)



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## 20/11/2009 -Integration of Acupuncture for outpatients and inpatients in a general hospital in Brazil.



Acupuncture and related techniques have increasingly been offered in conventional medical settings in Western societies. In Hospital Israelita Albert Einstein, Brazil, acupuncture has been integrated into the care pathways since October 2005.

Since then, medical acupuncture has been offered for both inpatients and outpatients. Acupuncture has become an integrated therapeutic modality both for outpatients in the clinic setting and for inpatients in the wards. It has been observed that acupuncture performed in a hospital differs in specific characteristics when compared with acupuncture performed in an outpatient setting.

The main differences found between inpatients and outpatients treatment are summarised and attitudes and cautionary measures to be taken into account during application of acupuncture in inpatients are suggested. Future plans for the service include offering acupuncture in the emergency ward and surgical centre. The description of this experience could encourage other hospitals to develop an acupuncture service.

## 24/11/2009—Acupuncture Treatment for Plantar Fasciitis: A Randomized Controlled Trial with Six Months Follow-up.



Plantar fasciitis is a common cause of heel pain. It has been suggested that some acupoints have a specific effect on heel pain. The aim of this study was to determine the efficacy and specificity of acupuncture treatment for plantar fasciitis.

Subjects were randomly assigned to the treatment group (n = 28) or control group (n = 25). The treatment group received needling at the acupoint PC 7, which is purported to have a specific effect for heel pain. The control group received needling at the acupoint Hegu (LI 4), which has analgesic

properties. Treatment was administered five times a week for 2 weeks, with an identical method of manual needling applied to the two acupoints.

The primary outcome measure was morning pain on a 100-point visual analog scale (VAS) at one month post-treatment. Secondary outcome measures included a VAS for activity pain, overall pain rating as well as pressure pain threshold using algometry.

Significant differences in reduction in pain scores, favoring the treatment group, were seen at one month for morning pain (22.6 +/- 4.0 versus 12.0 +/- 3.0, mean +/- SEM), overall pain (20.3 +/- 3.7 versus 9.5 +/- 3.6) and pressure pain threshold (145.5 +/- 32.9 versus -15.5 +/- 39.4). No serious adverse event was observed in either group.

The results indicate that acupuncture can provide pain relief to patient with plantar fasciitis, and that PC 7 is a relatively specific acupoint for heel pain.

**Institute:** School of Chinese Medicine, Hong Kong Baptist University, Kowloon Tong, Hong Kong, PRC. [spzhang@hkbu.edu.hk](mailto:spzhang@hkbu.edu.hk). **Author(s):** Zhang SP, Yip TP, Li QS. **Journal:** J Altern Complement Med. 2009 Nov;15(11):1171-86.