

HEALTH REPORT

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CHILDREN WITH HEADACHES RESPOND WELL TO ACUPUNCTURE TREATMENT WITH LASERS

Children can certainly be counted among the many folks in the world who benefit from Acupuncture treatment. But for kids, the sight of needles alone can be tough to handle, much less having a number of them inserted in the skin. Hence, Laser Acupuncture – the concept of shining laser beams at Acupuncture points – is one means of circumventing this aversion. The question is, however, is Laser Acupuncture effective for children?

A recent study to determine if Laser Acupuncture is effective therapy for headache pain was recently conducted at University Children's Hospital in Homburg, Germany. Children suffering from headaches were the target of a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial conducted by the Department of Pediatric Hematology and Oncology of Saarland University.

A total of 43 children averaging 12.3 years of age were included in the study. Of these, 22 suffered from migraines and 21 were diagnosed with tension-type headaches. Patients were randomized to receive a course of 4 treatments over 4 weeks with either an active laser or a placebo laser.

Data was very thoroughly gathered on each patient starting with a health history done 4 weeks before treatment began and then at regular intervals all the way to 12 weeks after the final treatment. Each child enjoyed a highly individualized treatment program based on Traditional Chinese Medicine.

The study took aim at two separate findings. First, what effect does treatment have on the average number of headache days? Second, does Laser Acupuncture have an effect on the severity of the headaches?

The results showed that the average number of headache days between the first treatment and 4 months later decreased significantly by 6.4 days in the treatment group. At the same time, the placebo group only dropped by 1.0 day. Also, the researchers found a significantly lower severity of headache pain in the Acupuncture group.

The researchers provided this results statement, "We conclude that Laser Acupuncture can provide a significant benefit for children with headache with active laser treatment being clearly more effective than placebo laser treatment.

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MORE AND MORE, ACUPUNCTURE FOUND AS A VALUABLE MEANS FOR REDUCING HEADACHE PAIN

Acupuncture for the treatment of headache pain has shown positive results in the past. Now, another study recently completed at the University of North Carolina Headache Clinic lends even greater credibility to the value of Acupuncture for Americans in achieving headache pain relief.

Seventy-four patients already receiving medical treatment at the clinic were recruited to participate in the study. Only persons who suffered headaches at least 15 days a month qualified. Most of the patients in the study reported having headaches almost every single day.

One group of patients in the study continued to receive standard medical care for their condition. The second group was randomly assigned to receive standard medical care, plus receive a course of 10 Acupuncture treatments over the next six weeks.

The same Acupuncturist administered all treatments. Since each individual's body and their needs are considered to be different, the individual treatment regime was varied from person to person.

During the course of the six-week study, patients were instructed to maintain records of medications used and headache pain severity. They also were asked to complete standardized questionnaires designed to measure changes in quality of life, physical function, bodily pain and general health. Vitality, social functioning and general mental well-being were also noted.

The results were analyzed at both 6-weeks and 12-weeks. At 6 weeks, the results showed that the Acupuncture group members were 3.7 times more likely to report less suffering from headaches than the patients only receiving standard medical care. Furthermore, patients who received the Acupuncture treatments reported significant improvements in many of the quality of life measures. Beyond simply feeling better, the vast majority of the Acupuncture group reported that their headache conditions had improved during each of the 6-week segments.

Statistically, the group that received medical treatment alone did not report improvements. Their results remained essentially unchanged during the course of the study.

While researchers noted that more study is definitely needed in this area, the findings could be considered to be very encouraging to headache sufferers. Acupuncture may very well help them achieve levels of relief that can contribute to fewer days of pain and a higher quality of life.

SOURCE: <http://unc.edu/news/archives/oct05/acupuncture.htm>

LASER ACUPUNCTURE EFFECTIVE IN RELIEVING TENSION HEADACHES

Headaches affects the quality of life for many people throughout the world, and tension headaches are among the commonest forms. The search for an effective, drug-free treatment without side effects has made Acupuncture the most widely practiced non-medicinal treatment for headaches in the world.

Now, a scientific study supports the use of “laser Acupuncture” as a very effective treatment for tension headache. Fifty headache sufferers were split into two groups, one group treated with standard low-energy laser Acupuncture, the other with the laser intensity set to “zero” so that the laser could not create any Acupuncture-point stimulation. The zero-intensity group had no way of knowing they were receiving placebo Acupuncture. Ten sessions were given, three treatments per week.

The study analyzed the variables: headache intensity, duration of attacks, and number of days with a headache per month. These were found by having the participants keep a daily diary, which was then assessed monthly for three months after treatments.

Statistics Validate the Effectiveness of Laser Acupuncture

There were significant differences between groups in changes from baseline in months one, two and three. The median score for headache intensity in the treatment group showed decreases of -5, -3 and -2, whereas the placebo group showed a decrease of only -1 the first month, and then no improvement in the second and third months. Duration of attacks in the treatment group were reduced by a score of -6, -4 and -4 again in the third month. The placebo group showed only a -1 in the first month, and no subsequent improvement. The number of days with headaches per month in the treatment group went down by -15, -10 and -8, while the placebo group had a -2 in the first month and no subsequent improvement.

Laser Acupuncture uses high-energy, focused laser light instead of traditional Acupuncture needles to achieve stimulation of Acupuncture points in the body. The advantages are that the laser is completely painless, whereas the traditional needle can cause a small but painful jab; and a small number of patients are “needle phobic” who are just plain afraid of needles. For them, the laser is the perfect answer for their tension headaches, or for the many other conditions for which Acupuncture has proven so helpful.