

# The effects of auricular electroacupuncture on obesity in female patients--a prospective randomized placebo-controlled pilot study.

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## Abstract

### BACKGROUND:

Obesity is a chronic condition related to serious morbidity and mortality of increasing incidence and prevalence. Several studies show a significantly higher weight loss with acupuncture treatment. This is the first prospective, randomized, double-blinded study, testing the effects of auricular electroacupuncture on weight loss in obese female patients.

### METHODS:

56 female obese patients (age>18, Body Mass Index, BMI>25) were randomized to receive either auricular acupuncture with electrical stimulation with a P-Stim® device (verum group, n=28) or placebo treatment with a P-Stim® dummy (n=28) for four days. Three auricular acupuncture points were chosen (hunger 18, stomach 87 and colon 91). The treatment was performed once a week for a period of six weeks. A follow-up visit was performed after 4 weeks. At each visit body weight, BMI (Body Mass Index) and body fat were measured.

### RESULTS:

Relative reduction of body weight was significantly greater in the verum group (-3.73%; CI=-4.70 to -2.76) than in the placebo group (-0.70%; CI=-1.57 to +0.16; p<0.001) In addition we also observed a significant reduction of BMI (p<0.001) in the verum group (-3.62%; CI=-4.39 to -2.84) compared to placebo (-0.82%; CI=-1.55 to -0.10; p<0.001). No patient reported side effects related to acupuncture.

### CONCLUSION:

In conclusion electrical auricular acupuncture could be a safe, additive, non-pharmacological treatment in obese patients.

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### KEYWORDS:

Auricular acupuncture, Electroacupuncture, Obesity

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