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Acupuncture for treating temporomandibular disorder: retrospective study on safety and efficacy.

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Abstract

This study aimed to retrospectively examine the efficacy and safety of acupuncture for the relief of pain originating from temporomandibular joint disorder and trigeminal neuralgia. Participants included patients suffering from trigeminal neuralgia or temporomandibular disorder with osseous pathology ruled out by panoramic X-rays. Participants received a series of 8-10 weekly acupuncture treatments and rated their pain via a visual analogue scale. From assessment of a total of 39 patients, analysis of pain severity before and after treatment showed that acupuncture intervention was highly beneficial for patients with temporomandibular joint disorder (88.6%, $p < 0.01$), compared with patients with trigeminal neuralgia in which there was only a minor effect (25%). The data also demonstrated that acupuncture was both efficacious in acute patients (91%, $p < 0.01$) and chronic patients (70%, $p < 0.05$) and elicited no side effects during the course of treatment.

Acupuncture treatment was a safe and efficient methodology for relieving the pain of patients suffering from temporomandibular disorder with no detectable osseous joint component. Based on these results, a randomized clinical trial is being initiated at the Stomatologic Clinic at the Tel Aviv Sourasky Medical Center to assess the role of acupuncture in treating temporomandibular joint disorder.

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