

# Effectiveness of acupuncture to treat irritable bowel syndrome: a meta-analysis.

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## Abstract

### AIM:

To evaluate the efficacy of acupuncture for treatment of irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) through meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials.

### METHODS:

We searched MEDLINE, PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, and Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials from 1966 to February 2013 for double-blind, placebo-controlled trials investigating the efficacy of acupuncture in the management of IBS. Studies were screened for inclusion based on randomization, controls, and measurable outcomes reported. We used the modified Jadad score for assessing the quality of the articles. STATA 11.0 and Revman 5.0 were used for meta-analysis. Publication bias was assessed by Begg's and Egger's tests.

### RESULTS:

Six randomized, placebo-controlled clinical trials met the criteria and were included in the meta-analysis. The modified Jadad score of the articles was  $> 3$ , and five articles were of high quality. We analyzed the heterogeneity and found that these studies did not cause heterogeneity in our meta-analysis. Begg's test showed  $P = 0.707$  and Egger's test showed  $P = 0.334$ . There was no publication bias in our meta-analysis (Begg's test,  $P = 0.707$ ; Egger's test,  $P = 0.334$ ). From the forest plot, the diamond was on the right side of the vertical line and did not intersect with the line. The pooled relative risk for clinical improvement with acupuncture was 1.75 (95%CI: 1.24-2.46,  $P = 0.001$ ). Using the two different systems of STATA 11.0 and Revman 5.0, we confirmed the significant efficacy of acupuncture for treating IBS.

### CONCLUSION:

Acupuncture exhibits clinically and statistically significant control of IBS symptoms.

### KEYWORDS:

Acupuncture, Functional gastrointestinal disorder, Irritable bowel syndrome, Meta-analysis

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