

Acupuncture for Shoulder Pain

The purpose of the study is to compare the efficacy of electro-acupuncture with placebo-acupuncture for the treatment of shoulder pain. The participants are patients aged from 25 to 83 years with shoulder pain. They were randomly given two treatments over eight weeks, with electro-acupuncture or skin non-penetrating placebo-acupuncture, both able to take diclofenac, a NSAID, if needed for intense pain. The main outcome measure was the difference between groups in pain intensity (visual analogue scale-VAS). Secondary outcomes were differences between groups in pain intensity measured by Lattinen index, in range of motion (goniometer), functional ability (SPADI), quality of life (COOP-WONCA charts), NSAIDS intake, credibility (Borkoveck and Nau scale) and global satisfaction (10 points analogue scale). Assessments were performed before, during and three and six months after treatment. At six months, the acupuncture group showed a much greater improvement in pain intensity compared with the placebo group. The acupuncture group had consistently better results in every secondary outcome measure than the placebo group. Acupuncture is an effective long-term treatment for patients with shoulder pain (from soft tissues lesions).