

PEER REVIEW HISTORY

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ARTICLE DETAILS

TITLE (PROVISIONAL)	Acupuncture for post-herpetic neuralgia: a systematic review protocol
AUTHORS	LI, Wang; PENG, Weina; Zhou, Jing; LIU, Zhishun

VERSION 1 - REVIEW

REVIEWER	Dr. Arkady Kotlyar Pain Clinic, Kaplan Medical Center, Israel
REVIEW RETURNED	01-Jun-2014

- The reviewer completed the checklist but made no further comments.

REVIEWER	Tao Zhang Department of Acupuncture and Moxibustion, Beijing Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine affiliated to Capital Medical University, Beijing, China.
REVIEW RETURNED	23-Sep-2014

GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>1. For question 2 and 5, the author explained the ethics approval after discussion section, which should be located in abstract section.</p> <p>2. For question 9, this manuscript is a protocol of a systematic review. So the result of the study has not come to a conclusion yet.</p> <p>3. The written English is acceptable for publication. But some revisions are required before publication.</p> <p>This manuscript performed a systematic review protocol on the effectiveness and safety of acupuncture for post-herpetic neuralgia, which is important and timely. The description of the intended methods is correct and straightforward. The manuscript could be published if some minor revisions have been done.</p> <p>1. Page 2: Line 9, please add a space between the word 'over' and the number. Line 10, please add a space between the word 'than' and the number. Line 18, please replace the word 'reports' as 'the titles, abstracts or even full texts'. Line 32, please delete the keyword 'randomized controlled trials'. Line 37, actually it is not the first systematic review of acupuncture for PHN. There are 2 related systematic reviews have been published. They are 'Zhu Y, Zhu L, Li N, et al. Jiaji points combined with surrounding needling for the treatment of postherpetic neuralgia: A Meta-analysis. Journal of Clinical Rehabilitative Tissue Engineering Research.2011;15:2064-8' and 'Wei Y, Gao S. Acupuncture versus medication for postherpetic neuralgia: A systematic review. Journal of He Nan Traditional Chinese Medicine.</p>
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	<p>2011;31:1324-7'.</p> <p>2. Page 3: Line 7, please change the word 'manifestions' to 'manifestations'. Line 25, please add 'in' after the word 'both'. Line 44, please add a space between the word 'than' and the number. Line 51, there may be at least 2 related systematic reviews have been published, such as 'Zhu Y, Zhu L, Li N, et al. Jiaji points combined with surrounding needling for the treatment of postherpetic neuralgia: A Meta-analysis. Journal of Clinical Rehabilitative Tissue Engineering Research.2011;15:2064-8' and 'Wei Y, Gao S. Acupuncture versus medication for postherpetic neuralgia: A systematic review. Journal of He Nan Traditional Chinese Medicine. 2011;31:1324-7'. The author could explain the difference between this systematic review and the others in the discussion section.</p> <p>Page 4: Line 26, please add the following comparisons according to the paragraph above: 3. Acupuncture versus no active intervention. 4. Acupuncture versus sham acupuncture. 5. One form of acupuncture versus another form of acupuncture. Line 32, the subtitle number '1.' could be deleted. In addition, the written English of the sentence should be revised. Line 38, what did the author mean by 'global' impression? Please give some description in detail.</p> <p>Page 5: Line 37, if it is possible, please describe the calculation of kappa value.</p> <p>Page 7: Line 55, this paragraph should be located before the 'trial registration number' in abstract section.</p>
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VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

The revisions having been done according to the reviewers are included as the following:

1. The section 'ethics approval' has been move to the front of the 'trial registration number' and together with the 'dissemination' in abstract.

2. The conclusions of this protocol both in the abstract and main body have been deleted, because conclusions should not appear in a protocol of a systematic review.

3. Some revisions the reviewer marked have been done in the following:

1. Page 2:

Line 9, a space has been added between the word 'over' and the number.

Line 10, a space has been added between the word 'than' and the number.

Line 18, the word 'reports' has been replaced by 'the titles, abstracts or even full texts'.

Line 32, the keyword 'randomized controlled trials' has been deleted.

Line 37, there are actually two systematic reviews related to acupuncture and PHN. However, the Chinese databases were the only searching sources used, and lots of high risks of bias existed, such as allocation concealment, blinding and selective outcome reporting, etc. So these two systematic reviews cannot be able to provide powerful evidence that acupuncture for treating PHN is effective and safe. But this systematic review will add more databases and a list of medical journals in university libraries to search more studies. In a word, the sentence has been revised as: this systematic review will be the potent one to assess the efficacy and safety of acupuncture for PHN.

2. Page 3:

Line 7, the word 'manifestions' has been changed into 'manifestations'.

Line 25, the word 'in' has been added after the word 'both'.

Line 44, a space has been added between the word 'than' and the number.

Line 51, there are actually two systematic reviews related to acupuncture and PHN. However, the Chinese databases were the only searching sources used, and lots of high risks of bias existed, such as allocation concealment, blinding and selective outcome reporting, etc. So these two systematic reviews cannot be able to provide powerful evidence that acupuncture for treating PHN is effective and safe. But this systematic review will add more databases and a list of medical journals in university libraries to search more studies. In a word, the sentence has been revised as: the efficacy and safety of acupuncture for PHN are lack of high-quality synthesis of current evidence.

3. Page 4:

Line 26, the following two comparisons have been added: 3. Acupuncture versus no active intervention. 4. Acupuncture versus sham acupuncture. But, the comparison 'one form of acupuncture versus another form of acupuncture' will be not added, because there is no powerful evidence to prove that acupuncture for treating PHN is effective and safe. Thus, according to the authors' opinion the comparison between different types of acupuncture is not necessary.

Line 32, the subtitle number '1.' has been deleted. In addition, the written English of the sentence has been revised as: studies which applied scales such as Visual Analogue Scale (VAS), Numerical Rating Scale (NRS), Verbal Rating Scale (VRS), the Faces Pain Scale-Revised (FPS-R), etc. that were used to measure the intensity of pain will be included.

Line 38, global impression means the proportion of participants whose symptoms improved after treatments.

4. Page 5:

Line 37, the kappa value is calculated by $(P \text{ observed} - P \text{ chance}) / (1 - P \text{ chance})$, which is > 0.4 means moderate, substantial or even almost perfect consistency. So the sentence has been revised as: the kappa value calculated by $(P \text{ observed} - P \text{ chance}) / (1 - P \text{ chance})$, will be used to calculate the consistency evaluation between reviewers.

5. Page 7:

Line 55, this paragraph has been moved to the front of the 'trial registration number' in abstract section.

Otherwise, the written English of this manuscript has been revised a little. And the abstract has been re-conducted according to your considerations.

VERSION 2 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Tao Zhang Department of Acupuncture and Moxibustion, Beijing Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine affiliated to Capital Medical University, Beijing, China.
REVIEW RETURNED	06-Oct-2014

GENERAL COMMENTS	As the former comments have been revised appropriately, the manuscript is acceptable for publication.
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