

POSTER PRESENTATION

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# P02.176. Acupuncture for symptom management in hemodialysis patients: a prospective, observational pilot study

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## Purpose

Patients undergoing hemodialysis suffer from a variety of complications related to end-stage renal disease. This prospective, observational pilot study aims to determine the feasibility, safety, and possible benefits of acupuncture for symptom management in patients undergoing hemodialysis.

## Methods

Twenty-four patients undergoing hemodialysis received acupuncture treatment for their symptoms. Manually stimulated, individualized acupuncture treatments were provided twice a week for 6 consecutive weeks on a non-dialysis day or on the day of hemodialysis prior to initiating treatment. Symptoms were evaluated using the Measure Your Medical Outcome Profiles 2 Questionnaire, and quality of life was measured by the Kidney Disease Quality of Life-Short Form (KDQOL-SF™) Version 1.3 at baseline, 7 weeks and 11 weeks from baseline. Statistical analysis was conducted on the basis of the intention-to-treat principle.

## Results

Twenty-one patients (87%) completed the whole treatment course and follow-up evaluation. Three patients dropped out due to increased fatigue (n=1), pancreatic and renal transplantation (n=1), and infections of the arteriovenous fistula used for hemodialysis access (n=1). Patients experienced a significant improvement of symptoms considered the most bothersome, reporting a decrease of 1.87 and 2.08 points on a 0-6 symptom scale at 7 weeks and 11 weeks, respectively (both  $p < 0.0001$ ).

Some subscales of KDQOL-SF™ showed significant improvement at 7 weeks (effects of kidney disease, burden of kidney disease, role-limitations physical, emotional well-being, and energy/fatigue) and 11 weeks (physical functioning and energy/fatigue). No serious adverse events related to acupuncture occurred.

## Conclusion

Acupuncture seems feasible and safe for symptom management in patients undergoing hemodialysis. Future controlled trials are needed to confirm the benefits of acupuncture.

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