

Crossover Clinical Trial to Determine the Effect of Manual Acupuncture at Siguan Points (Bilateral LI4 and LR3) on Intestinal Motility in Healthy Subjects

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Abstract

Objective: The objective of this study was to examine whether manual acupuncture at Siguan points (bilateral points LI4 and LR3) affects intestinal motility in healthy human subjects.

Materials & Methods: Twenty healthy male subjects were randomly assigned to real acupuncture at Siguan points (RA) or sham acupuncture (SA) groups in a crossover manner. All subjects underwent two experimental sessions; the RA group in the first session was treated with SA in the second session after a 2-week washout period, and vice versa. Each subject took 20 radio-markers and was treated with acupuncture 0, 12, 24, and 36 h after radio-marker intake. Radiographs were made at 6, 12.5, 24.5, and 48 h, and the effect of acupuncture on intestinal motility was evaluated based on the distribution of the radio-markers in the ileum, ascending colon, transverse colon, descending colon, sigmoid/rectum, and outside the body. Defecating habit was monitored during the trial, and complete blood counts were checked before and after the two acupuncture sessions.

Results: The RA and SA results showed extremely similar distributions in five distinct regions of the alimentary canal and outside the body in radiographs taken at four different times.

Conclusion: Manual acupuncture at Siguan points has no effect on intestinal motility in healthy human subjects.

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