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Diabetic Retinopathy

Rétinopathie diabétique : évaluation de l'acupuncture

1. Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis

1.1. Generic Acupuncture

1.1.1. Ang 2020

Ang L, Song E, Jun JH, Choi TY, Lee MS. Acupuncture for treating diabetic retinopathy: A systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials. Complement Ther Med. 2020. [212300]. [doi/](#)

Objective	This review aimed to examine the effectiveness of acupuncture for the treatment of diabetic retinopathy (DR).
Methods	Fourteen databases (5 English, 4 Chinese, and 5 Korean) were searched from their inception until May 20, 2020. Randomized controlled trials (RCTs) using acupuncture for DR treatment were included. The study selection and data extraction were performed by two independent reviewers. The Cochrane risk of bias tool version 2 (RoB 2.0) and the Grading of Recommendations Assessment, Development and Evaluation (GRADE) were used to assess all the included RCTs.
Results	Of 864 citations, 6 RCTs met the inclusion criteria of our review. Four studies reported the beneficial effects of acupuncture with standard medication or acupuncture alone compared with standard medication or no treatment on the effective rate. Only three studies showed that acupuncture combined with standard medications significantly improved visual acuity compared to standard medication alone. None of the studies reported on adverse events. The risk of bias of the included studies was judged to be of “some concern” and was marked with a moderate and low certainty of evidence in different outcomes.
Conclusion	Our results suggest the potential benefit of acupuncture in treating DR. Acupuncture in the form of combined therapy with standard medication or acupuncture alone may be more effective in the treatment of DR than standard medication alone. Further rigorous clinical trials are needed to confirm these findings.

1.2. Special Acupuncture Techniques

1.2.1. Comparison of Acupuncture techniques

1.2.1.1. Che 2025

Che SJ, Zhang ZY, Wang SA, Hu XY, Xu YH, Li L. Acupuncture and related therapies for diabetic retinopathy: A systematic review and network meta-analysis. Medicine (Baltimore). 2025 May

16;104(20):e42431. <https://doi.org/10.1097/MD.00000000000042431>

Background	Diabetic retinopathy (DR) is a significant long-term consequence of diabetes mellitus and is the primary cause of blindness in people of working age. Although acupuncture (AC) and medication are effective, the optimal treatment regimen for DR remains to be further defined. Consequently, we conducted a network meta-analysis to compare the efficacy of AC and the related treatments with that of medicines for DR.
Methods	We searched 8 academic electronic databases for randomized controlled trials published before December 1, 2023. The main outcome was the overall effective rate, and the secondary outcomes were the best corrected visual acuity and the central fovea of macula thickness. Two independent researchers identified eligible studies and collected data using pre-made forms. We conducted a network meta-analysis within a Bayesian framework to compare different interventions. The assessment of risk of bias and quality of literature was conducted using the risk of bias assessment tool recommended by the Cochrane Risk of Bias Tool 2 and the Jadad scale. Intervention ranking probabilities for all treatments were performed using the surface under the cumulative ranking curve.
Results	Twenty-eight studies published between 2012 and 2023 were included, involving 2801 patients. Interventions included AC, traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), electroacupuncture (EA), acupoint injections, and calcium dobesilate. In terms of the overall effective rate, EA + AC + TCM was the best treatment ($P < .05$) and for the best corrected visual acuity, AI + TCM was the best treatment ($P < .05$). In terms of the central fovea of macula thickness, AC + TCM was the best treatment ($P < .05$). An integration of AC and the related treatments is more effective than a single therapy.
Conclusion	EA combined with AC combined with TCM may be the most effective treatment for DR. AC and the related treatments have significant efficacy in treating DR, improving vision, and reducing macular edema with relatively few adverse effects. The use of integrative therapies combining AC and its related therapies can be promoted.

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