PILOT STUDY ON THE EFFECTS OF SCALP ACUPUNCTURE FOR THE TREATMENT OFCHEMOTHERAPY-INDUCED PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY

by

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Abstract

INTRODUCTION: Chemotherapy-Induced Peripheral Neuropathy (CIPN) has a negative impact on up to 92% of all cancer patients with no specific or effective treatment yet established. This patient population's Quality of Life (QOL) is diminished considerably with symptoms ranging from shock-like pain to numbness. Scalp Acupuncture (SA) has been clinically observed to be highly effective on disorders of the Peripheral Nervous System (PNS) producing outstanding results while remaining a safe, effective mode of therapy.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this study was to determine if SA could decrease the symptoms of CIPN.

DESIGN: This quantitative, qualitative, quasi-experimental pilot study sought to determine if utilizing SA would decrease patients' symptoms of CIPN.

Eight participants (*n*=8) with CIPN symptoms were recruited from the University of San Diego (UCSD) Research Cancer Institute in Encinitas, CA.

The Neuropathy Pain Scale (NPS) was the instrument utilized in this study.

RESULTS: Using the one-way repeated measure of variance (ANOVA) statistical significance was found ($p < 0.05$). The effect size at 53% was strong with six out of the ten questions on the NPS demonstrating significant decrease.

CONCLUSIONS: The analysis presented in this small sample size statistically supports the hypothesis: SA will have a positive impact on the symptoms of CIPN. The significance is seen in six out of the ten questions on the NPS. However, with such a small sample size ($n = 8$) these results cannot be considered reliable.