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Acupuncture for chronic pelvic pain: A systemic review and meta-analysis

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Chronic pelvic pain (CPP) is pain in the pelvic region that lasts for 6 months or longer. Management of CPP is controversial, with evidence suggesting that multidisciplinary management is superior to monotherapy. Pharmacotherapies often fail to adequately resolve the pain, and they are associated with a high burden of healthcare expenditure. Scant evidence exists regarding acupuncture for CPP. This investigation systematically reviewed randomized controlled trial (RCT) evidence concerning acupuncture interventions versus control interventions (sham acupuncture, Western medicine, traditional Chinese medicine, standard care, health education, or physiotherapies) for CPP. All RCTs held by the PubMed and Embase databases were searched without language restriction from January 2011 to September 2022. Levels of perceived pain were evaluated by the Visual Analog Scale/Numerical Rating Scale (VAS/NRS) score and the National Institutes of Health Chronic Prostatitis Symptom Index (NIH-CPSI) total pain score. Post-intervention mean scores were extracted and examined by a pooled meta-analysis. Seventeen RCTs were eligible for the meta-analysis, with a total of 1455 patients. NIH-CPSI and VAS/NRS scores revealed significantly better pain relief with acupuncture interventions compared with control treatments, whether acupuncture was delivered as an adjunctive therapy or as a monotherapy. In conclusion, acupuncture is effective even when given alone for the relief of CPP, including endometriosis pain.

Biography

Dr. Kent Lin is an Obstetrician & Gynaecologist with a special interest in endometriosis, infertility and advanced laparoscopic surgery. Kent also has a special interest in integrative medicine including acupuncture, and he is committed to providing holistic and evidence based care to women. Kent graduated from medical school at University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia and obtained Master of Medicine in Reproductive Health Sciences and Human Genetics at the University of Sydney. Kent completed tertiary hospital training at the Royal Women's Hospital in Melbourne. Kent has a strong interest in minimally invasive surgery and completed 2 fellowship programs in advanced laparoscopy. Kent is also a clinical senior lecturer at the University of Sydney.