E-Poster

EP-873

Acupuncture For Chronic Pain Management In Hemophilic Arthropathy: A Systematic Review

Topic: Integrative Medicine

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BACKGROUND

Hemophilia, a severe hereditary bleeding disorder, affects approximately 1 in 5,000 males due to deficiencies in coagulation factors (CF) VIII or IX, ranging from severe (< 1%) to mild (6-40%) based on factor activity. Chronic pain (CP) from hemophilic arthropathy (HA), particularly in target joints, severely impacts health-related quality of life (HRQOL), limiting Range of Motion (ROM) and daily activities. Standard treatment includes replacement therapy and rehabilitation, but acupuncture has emerged as complementary therapy with pain-relief benefits and fewer adverse effects.

This study aimed to evaluate effectiveness of acupuncture in alleviating CP, improving HRQOL, joint function, and patient satisfaction in People with Hemophilia (PWH).

METHODS

The systematic review followed PRISMA guidelines (PROSPERO: CRD42024567714). Databases included PubMed, Web of Science, and Scopus. PICO framework included: P) hemophilic patients, I) acupuncture, O) and arthropathic pain management. Studies on other coagulation disorders or non-acupuncture therapies were excluded. Methodological quality was assessed using a modified STROBE checklist.

RESULTS

Four studies with 37 patients (mean age 41.4 years) showed significant pain reduction on VAS and relief after treatments. Additionally, analgesic use reduced, HRQOL improved, with no significant bleeding.

CONCLUSION

Acupuncture appears effective for pain relief in HA with minimal side effects. Further research with larger samples is needed to confirm its potential.

Statement of Disclosures

None

Doi: 10.5606/archisprm.2026.EP-873

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