

Spring Scientific Meeting 1999

Held 24th-25th April 1999, YORK

Day 1, Scientific

Professor Walter Zieglgansberger, from the Max Planck Institute of Psychiatry, Munich, opened the Saturday meeting with his excellent talk, **Signalling in the Pain Matrix**, where he presented recent advances in our neurophysiological understanding of pain pathways. Variable gene expression and neuroplasticity are new concepts, which could account for the long lasting effects seen when acupuncture treatment is given.

Dr Hagen Rampes, a consultant psychiatrist from Hammersmith & Fulham Mental Health NHS Trust, gave an overview of **The use of acupuncture for anxiety**. Anxiety is a common problem for which there is some evidence that acupuncture may be useful. Further randomised controlled trials and cost effectiveness studies are needed.

Mr J-B Park, a Korean practitioner working at the Department of Complementary Medicine, University of Exeter, presented his study of **Acupuncture and Functional MRI**. His study of 12 healthy human volunteers found a close correlation between stimulation of the acupuncture point BL67 and activation of specific areas in the visual cortex.

Mr A B Tillu, an orthopaedic surgeon from Bedford Hospital, presented the results of a prospective randomised study looking at **The effect of acupuncture on advanced osteoarthritis of the knee**. 44 patients were allocated randomly to bilateral or unilateral acupuncture. There was no significant difference in outcome between the 2 groups. Many patients reported improvement and 4 (9%) were removed from the waiting list for operation.

Dr Jim House, a G.P. from Horley, Surrey, discussed the difficulties in using **Acupuncture in NHS General Practice** with particular reference to time constraints.

Conversely, Dr Juliette Ross, a G.P. from Stanmore, presented the results of **An Audit of Acupuncture in General Practice**, which suggested that minimal acupuncture may be used as an effective treatment for neck pain in a general practice setting. This study has been published in the Journal, *Acupuncture in Medicine* **17(1)** page 5

Dr J Chan from Leicester described his study on **Acupuncture for Irritable Bowel Syndrome**. His 7 patients showed a significant improvement in general well being and bloating, but no difference in pain or bowel frequency.

Dr Palle Rosted, a consultant acupuncturist from Weston Park Hospital, Sheffield, presented the outcome of his randomised-controlled study using **TENS in the treatment of leg ulcers**. In his study of 40 patients, comparing TENS and mock-TENS, he found significant reduction in the size of ulcers in the group treated with TENS, although there was no difference in the numbers of patients achieving complete healing.

Dr Adrian White from the Department of Complementary Health Studies, University of Exeter, presented a literature review entitled **Auricular Acupuncture - Fact or Fiction**. He concluded that auricular acupuncture appeared to have a powerful non-specific effect, but found little good evidence for a point-specific effect.

Day 2, Clinical

Dr Tony van Gelder presented introduction to Auriculotherapy, from Rotterdam. The representation of the human body on the ear, strategies for pain management, techniques and point selection were discussed.

The afternoon was divided into 3 parallel sessions:

- 1) Auriculotherapy continued (Dr Tony van Gelder)
- 2) Where to needle and for how long? (Dr Anthony Campbell)

This article has been published in the Journal, *Acupuncture in Medicine* **17(2)**: 113-117

- 3) Acupuncture for palliative care (Dr Filshie, Dr Cushen)