

7 Star Acupuncture Lowers Cholesterol

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Acupuncture combined with plum blossom needling reduces cholesterol and triglyceride levels in obese patients with hyperlipidemia. Researchers discovered an additive effect when combining the two protocols. The total effective rate in the acupuncture combined with plum blossom needling group was higher than in a group receiving only acupuncture. Other clinically significant changes documented in the study were improvements in

body mass index and body fat percentages.

Plum blossom needling, often referred to as seven star needling, refers to a group of needles attached to a wand. The flexible wand is manually manipulated to tap the needles to the surface of the skin. The researchers investigated the synergistic and additive effects of combining plum blossom needling with standard acupuncture protocols. One group received manual acupuncture and the other group received a combination of manual acupuncture plus plum blossom needling. Acupuncture was applied to acupoints including:

- Qimen (LV14)
- Taichong (LV3)
- Zhangmen (LV13)
- Taibai (SP3)
- Zusanli (ST36)
- Geshu (UB17)
- Ganshu (UB18)
- Pishu (UB20)

In the plum blossom group, the seven star needle was applied to the acupoints in addition to standard manual acupuncture. Acupuncture treatments were provided one time per two days for a period of three continuous months. The total effective rate in the acupuncture with plum blossom group was 96.2% and the acupuncture only group had a total effective rate of 84.6%. The researchers conclude that acupuncture combined with plum blossom needling is more effective than acupuncture as a standalone procedure for the treatment of hyperlipidemia (high cholesterol and triglycerides).

Sun et al. had related findings when testing the efficacy of acupuncture for the treatment of hyperlipidemia. They discovered that acupuncture combined with the drug Lipitor is more effective for the treatment of hyperlipidemia than using only Lipitor. The Lipitor only group had a

73.3% total effective rate whereas the acupuncture plus Lipitor group had a 93.3% total effective rate.

Lipitor was given to hyperlipidemia patients in both groups, one 20 mg tablet per day for six weeks. Manual acupuncture was applied in the acupuncture group to the following acupuncture points with a forty minute needle retention time at a rate of two times per day, five days per week, for six weeks:



- Baihui (GV 20)
- Zhongwan (CV 12)
- Zusanli (ST 36)
- Sanyinjiao (SP 6)
- Yinlingquan (SP 9)
- Fenglong (ST 40)

Measurements of serum total cholesterol, triglycerides, HDL cholesterol, and LDL cholesterol were recorded. The researchers note that combining acupuncture with Lipitor delivers superior positive patient outcomes than using Lipitor as a standalone procedure.

In a related study, Shen et al. find acupuncture effective for lowering blood pressure in patients with hypertension. Using fMRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging), the researchers examined how acupuncture point LV3 (Taichong) lowers blood pressure. They discovered that LV3 activates the anterior cingulate gyrus and its connection with surrounding areas of the brain. The researchers note that LV3 regulates the parasympathetic nervous system and lowers blood pressure through this pathway.

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