

## **Acupuncture for the alleviation of hot flashes in men treated with androgen ablation therapy.**

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### **Abstract**

#### **PURPOSE:**

Hot flashes are common side effect due to androgen ablation therapy (AAT). The utility of acupuncture for hot flashes in men has not been thoroughly studied. We prospectively studied the effect of acupuncture in men with hot flashes.

#### **METHODS AND MATERIALS:**

The study was approved by internal review board. Seventeen men with hot flashes and history of AAT for prostate cancer were enrolled. Three men declined participation before receiving any treatment. A hot flash score (HFS) was used to measure daily hot flashes. The composite daily score was calculated as the product of frequency  $\times$  severity. The baseline daily scores were compared with scores taken at 2 and 6 weeks and at 8-month average follow-up.

#### **RESULTS:**

No side effects were encountered during, immediately after treatment, or at 8 months. The mean initial HFS was 28.3; it dropped to 10.3 ( $p = 0.0001$ ) at 2 weeks posttreatment, 7.5 ( $p = 0.0001$ ) at 6 weeks, and 7.0 ( $p = 0.001$ ) at 8 months. Clinical improvement for each patient is defined as the percent decrease in the mean HFS at each time point. The mean improvement at Weeks 2 and 6 was 68.4% (mean HFS decreased from 37.409 to 11.836,  $p = 0.001$ ) and 89.2% (mean HFS decreased from 37.409 to 4.05,  $p = 0.0078$ ) respectively. The improvement at 8 months was 80.3% (mean HFS decreased from 37.409 to 7.385,  $p = 0.002$ ).

#### **CONCLUSIONS:**

Acupuncture provides excellent control of hot flashes in men with a history of AAT. The absence of side effects and the durable response at 8 months are likely to be appealing to patients. Prospective randomized study is warranted to further evaluate this modality against medical therapy.

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