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Acupoint embedding therapy

[1,2]Olga Ignatov, [2]Oleg Pascal, [1]Viorel Nacu

[1]Laboratory of Tissue Engineering and Cell Cultures, [2]Department of Rehabilitation
Nicolae Testemitsanu State University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Chisinau, the Republic of Moldova

Authors' ORCID iDs, academic degrees and contributions are available at the end of the article

*Corresponding author: olga.ignatov@usmf.md
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Abstract

Background: Peripheral nerve trauma remains a major cause of motor disability, at the same time functional restoration after treatment continues to show modest results. Acupoint embedding therapy is a type of acupuncture treatment in which different biodegradable materials are inserted into specific points for long-term stimulation. It has a good analgesic effect in chronic pain, and it is considered a cure for many diseases. Different biodegradable materials have been developed and widely used. Catgut has a good biodegradability and low price, but it could cause infections and having unstable chemical properties had been limited in clinical use. Such synthetic materials as polylactic acid and polyglycolic acid present low-cost, good biodegradability and biocompatibility compared with the catgut. However, their poor hydrophilicity and cell adhesion limited their therapeutic efficacy. The ideal embedding materials are required to be safe, non-toxic, biocompatible, and to have excellent swelling and biodegradation behaviors. Acupoint embedding therapy can be a promising treatment method of peripheral nerve disorders.
Conclusions: Acupoint embedding therapy is an invasive treatment which can prolong point stimulation, reduces the frequencies of pain and psychological fear of patients. It seems to be a promising method of neuropathy treatment. The properties of the filaments for acupoint embedding therapy can be improved by surface modification technologies.
Key words: acupuncture embedding therapy, neuropathy.

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