



Exploring Laser Acupuncture as an Adjunctive Glaucoma Treatment

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DESCRIPTION

Open-angle glaucoma is a chronic eye condition that can lead to irreversible vision loss if not managed effectively. One of the key factors in its pathogenesis is compromised blood flow to the optic nerve, which can result in optic nerve damage and subsequent vision impairment. Traditional treatments for open-angle glaucoma typically involve medication or surgical interventions. However, in recent years, alternative therapies such as laser acupuncture have gained attention for their potential to improve blood flow and alleviate the symptoms of glaucoma. To understand the importance of blood flow in glaucoma, it is crucial to recognize the role of the optic nerve. The optic nerve is responsible for transmitting visual information from the eye to the brain. When blood flow to the optic nerve is reduced, it can result in ischemia (lack of oxygen), oxidative stress, and damage to the nerve fibers, leading to vision loss. Therefore, improving blood flow to the optic nerve is a crucial target in the management of glaucoma. Traditional acupuncture has been used for centuries in various cultures to treat a wide range of medical conditions. Laser acupuncture, a modern adaptation of traditional acupuncture, involves the use of low-level laser therapy to stimulate specific acupuncture points on the body. This stimulation is believed to promote the release of endorphins, reduce inflammation, and improve blood flow to the targeted area. A retrospective study conducted by some scholars and team at the Glaucoma Research Institute aimed to assess the impact of laser acupuncture on blood flow in the eyes of patients with open-angle glaucoma. The study included 50 participants with varying degrees of glaucoma severity, and each participant received laser acupuncture treatment sessions over a six-month period. The study observed a significant improvement in ocular blood flow

in patients who underwent laser acupuncture therapy. This improvement was measured using non-invasive techniques such as Doppler ultrasound and laser speckle flowmetry. In addition to enhanced blood flow, the study found a reduction in intraocular pressure in many participants. Lowering Intraocular Pressure (IOP) is a primary goal in glaucoma management as elevated pressure can damage the optic nerve. Patients reported a reduction in symptoms such as eye discomfort, headaches, and blurred vision. Improved blood flow may have contributed to these subjective improvements. Laser acupuncture was well-tolerated by the participants, with no significant adverse effects reported during the study period. The findings of this retrospective study suggest that laser acupuncture may have a role to play in the management of open-angle glaucoma, particularly in improving blood flow to the optic nerve. While the results are potential, it is essential to acknowledge the limitations of this study, such as its retrospective nature and the need for further randomized controlled trials to confirm these findings. Incorporating laser acupuncture into the treatment regimen for open-angle glaucoma should be considered alongside conventional therapies. It may offer a complementary approach to enhance blood flow and alleviate symptoms, potentially delaying disease progression. Open-angle glaucoma is a challenging eye condition that requires comprehensive management strategies. Laser acupuncture, as demonstrated in the retrospective study discussed, shows potential in improving blood flow to the eyes and reducing intraocular pressure. While further research is needed to establish its efficacy conclusively, laser acupuncture represents an exciting avenue for potential integration into glaucoma treatment protocols. Patients and healthcare providers should work together to explore this complementary therapy and its potential benefits in managing open-angle glaucoma.

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