



TREATMENT TABLE

Two Conditions ... One Solution?

Editorial Staff

According to the Sleep Foundation, insomnia is the most common sleep issue in adult depressed patients, affecting an estimated 75 percent. New research suggests electroacupuncture and standard medical care (guided by psychiatrists) is more effective than standard care alone or sham acupuncture with standard care in improving both conditions.

The 32-week assessor-blinded, randomized, sham-controlled clinical trial, featuring an eight-week intervention and 24-week follow-up, included 247 patients at three tertiary hospitals in China. All patients were diagnosed with depression per the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition*, among other diagnostic criteria.

Patients were randomized to one of three groups: electroacupuncture plus standard medical care, sham acupuncture plus standard care, or standard care alone (the control group). Patients in the EA and sham groups received three weekly sessions for eight weeks, totaling 24 sessions, at GV 20 (*Baihui*), GV 24 (*Shenting*), GV 29 (*Yintang*), EX-HN 22 (*Anmian*), HT 7 (*Shenmen*), PC 6 (*Neiguan*), and SP 6 (*SanYinjiao*).



The primary outcome measure: change in the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index from baseline to week eight (lower score equals better sleep quality); with PSQI at follow-up, total sleep time, and depression / anxiety indices as secondary outcomes.

PSQI scores declined by 6.2 points, on average, from baseline to week eight in the EA group, a difference of 3.6 points compared to the sham group and 5.1 points compared to controls (standard care alone). EA patients also enjoyed significantly lower depression scores (HDRS-17) than both the sham and control groups at eight weeks and 24-week follow-up; and more EA patients reduced their sedative dose during the treatment period than sham or control patients.

Full study text is available for free by [clicking here](#).

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