

# Acupuncture and Stroke Recovery

Johansson et al (1993) 1 investigated the effectiveness of acupuncture as a supplement to physical therapy in recovery from stroke. 78 patients suffering from severe hemiparesis of the left or right side within ten days of stroke onset were randomly divided into a control group (n=40) who received daily physical therapy and a treatment group who additionally received two acupuncture treatments per week for ten weeks. Patients receiving acupuncture recovered faster and to a larger extent than controls with significant differences in measures of balance, mobility, quality of life index, and days spent in hospitals/nursing homes.

Pang (1994) 2 investigated two particular scalp acupuncture techniques (slow\_rapid reinforcing\_reducing vs. flat\_twisting) in order to compare their effectiveness in treating apoplexy following stroke. He found a significant superiority in the slow\_rapid reducing\_reinforcing method group (n=52) over the other group (n=33) with respect to improvement in myodynamia and motile functional disturbances of the limbs. While the intention of the study was not to confirm the effectiveness of acupuncture, per se, the results do suggest that differences in technique engender different outcomes.

## References:

1 Johansson, K., Lindgren, I., Widner, H., Wiklund, I., Johansson, B.B.  
[Can Sensory Stimulation Improve the Functional Outcome in Stroke Patients?](#)  
Neurology 1993 Nov; 43 (11): 2189–92

2 Pang, H.  
[52 Cases of Apoplexy Treated with Scalp Acupuncture by the Slow–rapid Reinforcing–reducing Method](#)  
Journal of Traditional Chinese Medicine 1994; 14 (3): 185–188