



POSTER

# Electroacupuncture pretreatment at GB20 exerts anti-nociceptive effects via peripheral and central serotonin mechanism in conscious migraine rats

Lu Liu<sup>1</sup>, P. Pei<sup>1</sup>, L. Zhao<sup>1</sup>, Z. Qu<sup>1</sup>, and L. Wang<sup>1</sup>

Special Issue on Controversies in Neurology. From the 10<sup>th</sup> World Congress on Controversies in Neurology (CONy), Lisbon, Portugal. 17–20 March 2016.

## Abstract

**Background:** While electroacupuncture (EA) pretreatment in migraine has been found to attenuate pain and frequencies of attacks, the mechanism of its anti-nociceptive effect remain poorly understood. Emerging evidence suggests that peripheral and central serotonin system may be involved in migraine. We hypothesized that EA would exert anti-nociceptive effects via modulation of serotonin system.

**Methods:** We used a conscious migraine model induced by repeated electrical stimulation on the dural mater. Forty rats were randomly assigned to one of four groups: an EA group, which received EA at GB20 following dural stimulation; a sham acupuncture group, which received manual acupuncture at a non-acupuncture point following dural stimulation; a Model group, which received dural stimulation but no acupuncture; and a Control group, which received neither dural stimulation nor acupuncture. HomeCageScan was used to measure effects on the spontaneous nociceptive behaviors,

radioimmunoassay and HPLC were used to investigate the expression of 5-HT in peripheral plasma and in the periaqueductal gray (PAG), rostroventromedial medulla (RVM), and trigeminal nucleus caudalis (TNC), three key structure of the descending pain modulatory system.

**Results:** Our study showed that EA pretreatment could produce a significant reduction in resting, freezing and grooming, and a significant increase in exploration behavior. We found that the level of 5-HT in plasma were significantly increased, while significantly reduced in RVM, TNC in Model group. Furthermore, the above results were significantly reversed in EA at GB20.

**Conclusions:** EA pretreatment exerts anti-nociceptive effects in a rat model of recurrent migraine, possibly via modulation of the serotonin system.

<sup>1</sup>Acupuncture and Moxibustion Department, Acupuncture research center, China

Correspondence: lululavictor1985@126.com

Citation: Liu et al. Electroacupuncture pretreatment at GB20 exerts anti-nociceptive effects via peripheral and central serotonin mechanism in conscious migraine rats. International Journal of Clinical Neurosciences and Mental Health 2016; 3(Suppl. 1):P66

Published: 16 March 2016



Open Access Publication Available at <http://ijcnmh.arc-publishing.org>

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