P-Stim (Biegler GmbH) auricular electroacupuncture for pain management

Record Status
This is a bibliographic record of a published health technology assessment. No evaluation of the quality of this assessment has been made for the HTA database.

Citation

Authors' conclusions
Pain is defined as an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage or described in terms of such damage. Pain can be classified as neuropathic pain, inflammatory pain, bone pain, or muscle dysfunction. Pain is further characterized as acute or chronic. Treatment of acute pain, such as peri- and postoperative pain, generally involves pharmacological therapies, such as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), opioids, anticonvulsants, topical agents, muscle relaxants, and anxiolytics. Chronic pain responds to a broader spectrum of treatment regimens, including physical rehabilitation; psychosocial counseling; drugs; surgery; and more recently, complementary and alternative treatment adjuncts, such as acupuncture, electroacupuncture, and herbal products. Acupuncture is a group of procedures that are used to stimulate specified points (acupoints) on the body for the purpose of regulating the energy flow called Qi, which travels along prescribed pathways or meridians within the body. Endorphins, enkephalins, and various neuropeptides are released following needle insertion at specific acupoints. Electrical stimulation of acupoints is believed to increase the analgesic effects of acupuncture. Auricular acupuncture stimulates discrete anatomic loci of the external ear. Auricular electroacupuncture using the P-Stim device (Biegler GmbH) has been investigated as treatment for rheumatoid arthritis, low back pain, chronic cervical pain, and peri- and postoperative pain.

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