Author's response to reviews

Title: Pain and sensory detection threshold following acupuncture are modulated by the association between coping strategy and acupuncture sensation

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Colleagues:

Enclosed, please find our manuscript “Pain and sensory detection threshold following acupuncture are modulated by the association between coping strategy and acupuncture sensation” submitted to BMC Complementary and Alternative Medicine.

We believe that this article is important for at least for the following reasons.

First, we found that the interaction between the psychological coping strategy and physical stimulation intensity can affect pain and sensory threshold modulation. In the active coping strategy group, improved pain and sensory detection thresholds were correlated with greater acupuncture sensation, while in the passive coping strategy group, improved pain and sensory detection thresholds were negatively correlated with greater acupuncture sensation. These findings were reported for the first time, and have clinical importance that acupuncture analgesic effect can be maximized by adjusting the acupuncture stimulation intensity according to the patient’s coping strategy to the treatment.

Second, we found the successful induction of active coping strategy in the active coping strategy group. This shows that coping strategy can be generated by experimental coping condition, which implies that patient’s coping strategy also can be changed according to the doctor’s instruction. Thus, the instructions given to the patient before and during the treatment (as a psychological intervention) and applied acupuncture intensity (as a physical intervention), are important for improvement of the patient’s symptoms and can be thought of as part of the doctor-patient relationship.

Given these reasons above, we feel that this article will be of interest to scientists and clinicians interested in the acupuncture analgesic effect, and the potential of doctor-patient relationship and individualized treatment. Thus we believe that this manuscript would be appropriate for that the large readership of this journal.

Co-authors had reviewed the final version of the manuscript and approved the submission. And the authors have no conflicts of interest.
We recommend that the paper is sent for review to the following three reviewers (These potential reviewers are experts in this field, so they can provide an objective assessment of this manuscript):

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We made some changes according to the editor’s valuable comments:

1. CONSORT flowchart and checklist: The CONSORT flowchart was included in the manuscript as Figure 1, and the checklist was attached as an additional file.
2. Trial registration number: Our research is not a clinical trial. We recruited healthy adults and applied acupuncture stimulation, then we measured sensory and pain threshold and autonomic responses in laboratory setting not in clinic. So we do not need to add ‘trial registration number’ in the abstract.
3. Compliance with Helsinki Declaration and the name of the body which gave approval: We actually performed our study in compliance with Helsinki Declaration and explained to the subjects before the informed consent was submitted. And our study was approved by the IRB in Kyung Hee University. Thus we modified the previous sentence into ‘All the participants submitted a written informed consent, in accordance with the Helsinki Declaration and the requirements of the Institutional Review Board of Kyung Hee University (KHU IRB 2010-012)’.

We hope that this manuscript can meet the high standards of the BMC Complementary and Alternative Medicine.

Yours sincerely,

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