

# Enhancing Acupuncture's Efficacy in Chronic Stable Angina Through Standardization of Deqi Response and Dosage Parameters [Letter]

Ruixue Wang<sup>1,2</sup>, Fengjun Ma<sup>2</sup>, Xiangzhen Fan<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, Binzhou Medical University Hospital, Binzhou, Shandong, People's Republic of China; <sup>2</sup>Shandong University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Jinan, 250355, People's Republic of China

Correspondence: Xiangzhen Fan, Email 643355196@qq.com

## Dear editor

We have carefully reviewed the article titled “Acupuncture Dosage and Its Correlation with Effectiveness in Patients with Chronic Stable Angina: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Randomized Controlled Trials” by Huang et al.<sup>1</sup> This meta-analysis provides significant insights into the effectiveness of acupuncture for chronic stable angina (CSA), specifically examining the impact of acupuncture dosage on clinical outcomes. While we commend the authors for their comprehensive analysis, we would like to raise several points that could enhance the clinical application and scientific rigor of the study.

Firstly, the authors discuss the pivotal role of the “Deqi” response in acupuncture's therapeutic effects. While the study mentions the importance of this response, we believe that quantifying Deqi in a more standardized and objective manner could improve the reliability of acupuncture outcomes. Given the variability in patients' perception of Deqi, it would be valuable to explore ways of measuring this response consistently across studies.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, could the authors elaborate on how the Deqi sensation correlates with long-term clinical outcomes, such as reduced frequency of angina attacks or improved quality of life in CSA patients?<sup>3</sup>

Secondly, while the meta-analysis includes a broad range of studies, we noted that the variability in acupuncture protocols and patient characteristics may contribute to outcome heterogeneity. It would be beneficial for future studies to focus on creating more uniform acupuncture protocols and explore the potential impact of different Deqi experiences on treatment efficacy. Standardizing protocols related to Deqi, such as specific training for acupuncturists to achieve this sensation, might help mitigate this source of variability.<sup>4</sup>

In conclusion, while Huang et al's study offers essential insights into acupuncture's role in managing CSA, further research on the quantification of Deqi and its relationship with treatment outcomes could enhance the precision and applicability of acupuncture therapy. We encourage future studies to address these gaps through more rigorous and standardized methodologies.

## Disclosure

The authors report no conflicts of interest in this communication.

## References

1. Huang D, Li Y, Zheng X, et al. Acupuncture dosage and its correlation with effectiveness in patients with chronic stable angina: a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trial. *J Pain Res.* 2025;18:105–125. doi:10.2147/JPR.S489880
2. Si X, Xiang S, Zhang L, Li S, Zhang K, Ming D. Acupuncture with deqi modulates the hemodynamic response and functional connectivity of the prefrontal-motor cortical network. *Front Neurosci.* 2021;15:693623. doi:10.3389/fnins.2021.693623
3. Zhong Z, Yao L, Liu Y-Z, et al. Objectivization study of acupuncture deqi and brain modulation mechanisms: a review. *Front Neurosci.* 2024;18:1386108. doi:10.3389/fnins.2024.1386108
4. Zhao Y, Lu L, Sun L, Zhang S, Zhou S, Li Y. [Deqi(qi arrival) theory in ancient TCM books]. *Zhongguo Zhen Jiu.* 2017;37:90–94. Dutch. doi:10.13703/j.0255-2930.2017.01.024

Dove Medical Press encourages responsible, free and frank academic debate. The content of the Journal of Pain Research 'letters to the editor' section does not necessarily represent the views of Dove Medical Press, its officers, agents, employees, related entities or the Journal of Pain Research editors. While all reasonable steps have been taken to confirm the content of each letter, Dove Medical Press accepts no liability in respect of the content of any letter, nor is it responsible for the content and accuracy of any letter to the editor.

## Journal of Pain Research

**Dovepress**  
Taylor & Francis Group

### Publish your work in this journal

The Journal of Pain Research is an international, peer reviewed, open access, online journal that welcomes laboratory and clinical findings in the fields of pain research and the prevention and management of pain. Original research, reviews, symposium reports, hypothesis formation and commentaries are all considered for publication. The manuscript management system is completely online and includes a very quick and fair peer-review system, which is all easy to use. Visit <http://www.dovepress.com/testimonials.php> to read real quotes from published authors.

Submit your manuscript here: <https://www.dovepress.com/journal-of-pain-research-journal>

<https://doi.org/10.2147/JPR.S518950>