

## *Correct-Site Acupuncture More Effective Than Placebo-Site Acupuncture in Reducing Cocaine Use*

A just released study examined the effects of auricular (ear) acupuncture on cocaine/crack usage. Cocaine and/or crack abusers attempting to enter treatment at the Lincoln Hospital Acupuncture Clinic in New York City were randomly assigned to receive either experimental (correct-site) or control (placebo-site) acupuncture treatments. Each subject was allowed a maximum of two acupuncture treatments per day, in a one-month period.

Experimental acupuncture treatments were given at points specifically related to cocaine detoxification; control acupuncture treatments were given at points not specifically related to cocaine detoxification. The experimental and placebo insertion points were within 5 mm of each other. Both acupuncture treatments involved inserting four thin needles into the cartilage ridge of each ear. The subjects then sat "in a relaxed manner" for 45 minutes with the needles in place.

Daily urine specimens were collected from each subject and tested for the presence of the cocaine metabolite, benzoylecgonine. This allowed for day-to-day comparisons of an indicator of cocaine use. Urinalysis results showed an initial decrease in urine cocaine metabolite levels for both the experimental and the placebo group during the first two weeks of treatment. After that, however, there was a significant difference in the cocaine metabolite levels of the two groups. Subjects who received the acupuncture treatment at points related to detoxification showed significantly greater improvement relative to subjects who received the placebo acupuncture treatments. The researchers concluded that "the experimental acupuncture [treatments] . . . promoted greater reductions in usage or greater short-term abstinence relative to the placebo [treatments]. . . ."

For more information on this study, contact Doug Lipton at (212) 966-8700, extension 434.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Douglas S. Lipton, Vincent Brewington, and Michael Smith. "Acupuncture for Crack-Cocaine Detoxification: Experimental Evaluation of Efficacy." *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*, 11(3): 205-215, 1994.

Note: Baltimore City is about to launch an acupuncture treatment program for addicted mothers.

### **CESAR SPEAKER SERIES VIDEO TAPE ON ACUPUNCTURE AVAILABLE!**

Dr. Michael Smith, Director of Substance Abuse, Lincoln Hospital was a CESAR Speaker Series lecturer in April, 1993. A videotape of his lecture, "Use of Acupuncture and Computers for Improving Drug Abuse Treatment" is available for \$13.00. For more information, contact Alicia Hobbs at (301) 405-3609.

For more information about today's topic or to be placed on the distribution list, please call CESAR at 301-403-8329.

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