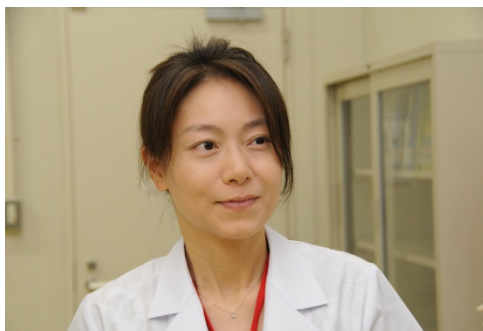


A brief review on clinical trials of acupuncture in Japan



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In order to understand the current status and characteristics of clinical trials on acupuncture conducted in Japan, we reviewed controlled clinical trial (CCT) papers on acupuncture and evaluated them. We included only CCTs which assessed the clinical effect of acupuncture for patients.

We performed a literature search by using Ichushi Web (Japana Centra Revuo Medicina) and PubMed. We also referred to relevant review papers already published and our own files. As of March, 2012, we located approximately 130 trials published between 1969 and 2011. Almost all of them were randomized controlled trial (RCT). Although sham-controlled RCTs increased after mid-1990's in Japan, many RCTs comparing one style of real acupuncture/acupoints with other style of real acupuncture/acupoints still existed.

Generally, acupuncture RCTs conducted in Japan are small sample-sized, difficult to access for non-Japanese native speakers, and more pragmatic for clinical practitioners who seek for better treatment methods of acupuncture.