

Efficacy of Acupuncture in reduction of the Gag Reflex in Patients Requiring Upper Alginate Impression

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Abstract

Background and Aim: The gag reflex is prevalent during dental impression taking. Conventional methods are available for controlling the gag reflex; however, they are not without side effects. Alternative treatments have been proposed for this purpose. The current study assessed the effects of acupuncture on patients who had nausea during the upper alginate impression taking.

Materials and Methods: The study populations in this crossover clinical trial included (20) female dental students experiencing gagging during the upper alginate impression taking. Gagging Severity Index (GSI) and the Gagging Prevention Index (GPI) 1-5 were used objectively by the operator and the Visual Analogue Scale (VAS) (0-10) was used subjectively by the patient to assess and record the Gagging Reflex (GR). The patients were allocated to groups of control, empirical 1 and empirical 2. Kruskal-Wallis test was used to analyze the changes of reflex ranking.

Result: A total of 60 samples (20 individuals) were assessed in this study. Their initial reflex during impression taking was observed to be 3.3 ± 0.22 , 1.35 ± 0.53 in Sham group, indicating about 59% decrease ($P < 0.0001$). In empirical group 2 it was equal to 1 showing 70% decrease ($P < 0.0001$). Based upon VAS, GR had decrease by 49% in Sham group and 100% in case group ($P < 0.0001$).

Conclusion: According to results of this study it seems that acupuncture decreases the gag reflex during upper alginate impression taking.

Keywords: *Acupuncture therapy; Gagging; Dental impression techniques*