Electroacupuncture cuts risk for prolonged postoperative ileus

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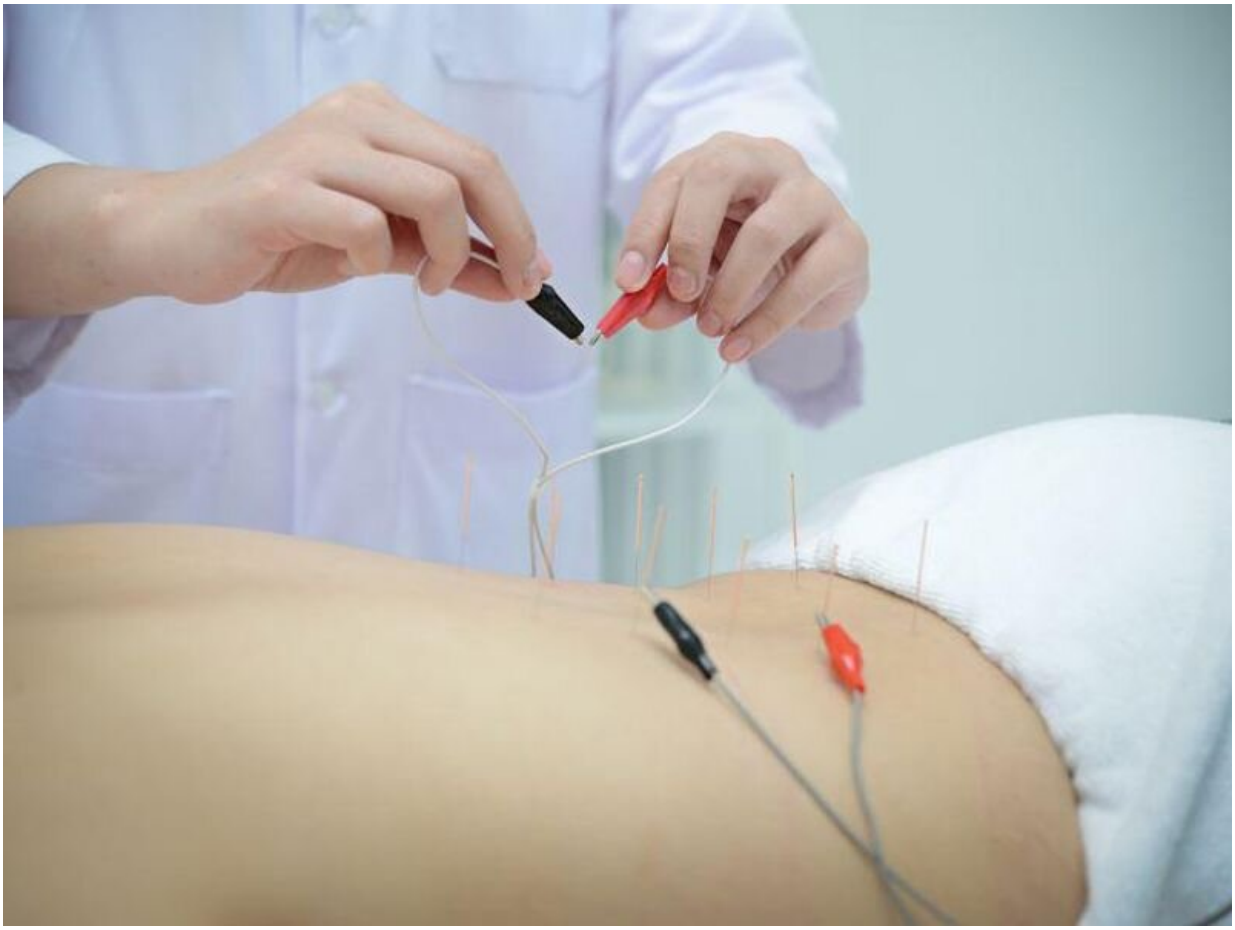

Electroacupuncture (EA) is effective in promoting gastrointestinal

function recovery following laparoscopic resection of colorectal cancer, according to a study published online Nov. 2 in *JAMA Surgery*.

Yu Wang, from the Beijing University of Chinese Medicine, and colleagues assessed the efficacy of EA in reducing the duration of postoperative ileus (POI) with the Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS) protocol. The analysis included 248 patients undergoing laparoscopic resection of colorectal cancer who were randomly assigned to EA or sham acupuncture (SA).

The researchers found that the median time to first defecation was 76.4 hours in the EA group and 90.0 hours in the SA group. Other significant decreases in the EA group included the time to first flatus (median, 44.3 versus 58.9 hours) and the tolerability of a semiliquid diet (median, 105.8 hours versus 116.5 hours) and solid food (median, 181.8 versus 190.3 hours). In the EA group, prolonged POI occurred in 13 of 125 patients versus 25 of 123 patients in the SA group (risk ratio, 0.51). There were no severe adverse events reported.

"EA may be considered as an adjunct to the ERAS protocol to promote gastrointestinal function recovery and prevent prolonged POI after surgery," the authors write.

More information: Yu Wang et al, Electroacupuncture vs Sham Electroacupuncture in the Treatment of Postoperative Ileus After Laparoscopic Surgery for Colorectal Cancer, *JAMA Surgery* (2022). DOI: 10.1001/jamasurg.2022.5674

Olle Ljungqvist et al, Will Acupuncture Be the Next Addition to Enhanced Recovery After Surgery Protocols?, *JAMA Surgery* (2022). DOI: 10.1001/jamasurg.2022.5683

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