

Electroacupuncture reduces duration of post-op ileus

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(HealthDay)—Electroacupuncture reduces the duration of postoperative ileus and shortens hospital stay for patients treated with laparoscopic surgery for colorectal cancer, according to research published in the February issue of *Gastroenterology*.

Simon S.M. Ng, M.D., of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and colleagues prospectively evaluated the efficacy of electroacupuncture in reducing the duration of postoperative ileus and hospital stay after laparoscopic surgery for colorectal cancer. A total of 165 patients were randomized to receive electroacupuncture or sham acupuncture once daily on postoperative days one to four or no acupuncture.

The researchers found that electroacupuncture was associated with a

significantly shorter average time to first postoperative bowel movement (85.9 hours) compared with those who did not receive acupuncture (122.1 hours) or received sham acupuncture (107.5 hours). Hospital stay was also significantly shorter for electroacupuncture-treated patients versus those who received no acupuncture (6.5 versus 8.5 days). Patients who received electroacupuncture had reduced postoperative analgesic requirement and time to ambulation compared with those who received no or sham acupuncture. In multivariate analysis, electroacupuncture and absence of complications correlated with shorter [duration](#) of postoperative ileus and hospital stay.

"This randomized sham-controlled study suggests that electroacupuncture at acupoints including Zusanli, Sanyinjiao, Hegu, and Zhigou is more effective than no [acupuncture](#) and [sham acupuncture](#) in stimulating early return of [bowel function](#) and reducing postoperative analgesic requirements after laparoscopic colorectal surgery," the authors write. "Further studies are warranted to validate and generalize our findings, and to assess the impact of electroacupuncture on the cost-effectiveness of laparoscopic colorectal surgery."

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