

1. Infections (including Viral Hepatitis)**References**

Taniguchi S, Terai T, Kono T, et al. The effect of hochuekkito on postherpetic neuralgia*. *Hifu no Rinsho (Clinical Practice of Dermatology)* 1999; 41: 601-3 (in Japanese)

Taniguchi S, Kono T, Terai T. Preventive effect of hochuekkito on postherpetic neuralgia*. *Progress in Medicine* 2002; 22: 863-5 (in Japanese). Ichushi Web ID: 2002176936 [MOL](#), [MOL-Lib](#)

1. Objectives

To evaluate whether hochuekkito (補中益気湯) has a preventive effect on postherpetic neuralgia (PHN).

2. Design

Randomized controlled trial (RCT).

3. Setting

One hospital (one department of dermatology), Japan.

4. Participants

Fifty-seven patients with acute-phase herpes zoster.

5. Intervention

Arm 1: oral administration of Kanebo Hochuekkito (補中益気湯) Extract Fine Granules (2.5 g t.i.d.) for 12 weeks (42 patients: 12 males and 30 females; mean age, 69.2 years).

Arm 2: no treatment with hochuekkito (補中益気湯) (15 patients: 5 males and 10 females; mean age, 66.9 years).

6. Main outcome measures

Pain intensity was evaluated by visual analogue scale (VAS) at baseline, and 12 and 24 weeks after the start of treatment. Obtained data are expressed as median (25 percentile, 75 percentile).

7. Main results

VAS score in the hochuekkito arm and control arm was respectively 7.1 (6.5, 7.4) and 6.9 (5.5, 7.9) at baseline, 4.1 (3.0, 5.4) and 3.5 (1.7, 5.1) at 12 weeks, 1.4 (0.5, 2.3) and 2.9 (1.7, 4.2) at 24 weeks. The ratio of VAS score at 24 weeks to that at baseline (rVAS) was significantly different between the hochuekkito arm (0.20 [0.09, 0.30]) and control arm (0.42 [0.33, 0.53]).

8. Conclusions

During the acute phase of herpes zoster, 12-week oral administration of hochuekkito significantly controlled PHN at 24 weeks. Hochuekkito therefore has a preventive effect on PHN.

9. From Kampo medicine perspective

None.

10. Safety assessment in the article

In one of the 42 hochuekkito-treated patients, transient stomach discomfort developed, which did not interfere with continuation of the treatment.

11. Abstractor's comments

Many patients suffer from PHN for years. This study provides valuable insight. Although the authors found no between-group difference in age, affected area, number of days with symptoms, underlying disease, and concomitant medications, there was a between-group difference in the number of cases. This problem is related to the incidence of PHN, so an examination of the influence of incidence of PHN on the study results is needed. The outcomes of these studies are clinically relevant, and results of further studies are expected.

12. Abstractor and date

Tsuruoka K, 15 June 2007, 1 April 2008, 1 June 2010, 12 October 2011, 31 December 2013.