

Right facial nerve palsy with integrated acupuncture care: a case report

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SUMMARY

Facial nerve palsy is a common neurological disorder that affects facial movement and expression. Although tapering corticosteroids remain the primary treatment, acupuncture has been increasingly explored as an adjunct therapy for functional recovery. **Case Presentation:** A 36-year-old Indian man with no known allergies and a history of childhood asthma presented with sudden right-sided facial weakness for an hour. Symptoms included right-sided drooping of the mouth, difficulty closing the right eye and reduced taste sensation on the right anterior two-thirds of the tongue. He complained of mild pain of 4/10 behind the right ear prior to symptom onset, along with a recent upper respiratory tract infection history. No trauma, stroke-like symptoms, or systemic illness was noted. On examination, he was afebrile with a full GCS and haemodynamically stable. Examination revealed absent forehead wrinkling, incomplete eye closure with Bell's phenomenon, nasolabial fold flattening, and weakness in cheek puffing and lip pursing. No other cranial nerve deficits or limb abnormalities were noted. Other examinations were unremarkable. The patient was treated accordingly and referred to a nearby tertiary hospital with outpatient acupuncture services. He obtained full recovery by the third week of treatment, suggesting that acupuncture effectively complements conventional treatments in facial nerve palsy recovery. Acupuncture in Bell's palsy is believed to stimulate nerve regeneration, reduce inflammation, and enhance blood circulation, thereby improving facial muscle function and accelerating recovery. Studies suggest its adjunctive role in reducing recovery time and enhancing nerve repair. This case highlights the potential role of acupuncture in accelerating facial nerve recovery, warranting further research into its efficacy in facial nerve palsy management.