

Suppression of Pregnancy-Induced Nausea and Vomiting with Sensory Afferent Stimulation²

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This randomized, placebo-controlled, cross-over study examined the effect of the ReliefBand® Device on 23 women experiencing pregnancy-induced nausea and vomiting. Women in the first 14 weeks of pregnancy with nausea and vomiting clearly associated with the onset of pregnancy were recruited.

The study was designed so that each subject started with either an active device worn over the P6 acupuncture site located on the underside of the wrist or a placebo device that looked identical to the active device, but produced no electrical stimulation. The placebo device was also worn over the P6 acupuncture point. After 48 hours of continuous use, each subject crossed over to the other device. The initial assignment of active or placebo device was determined via a randomization schedule.

The study design required each subject to complete a daily log that recorded the frequency and intensity of nausea and vomiting every 2 hours, using a scale of 1-6 (1= no nausea/vomiting, 6=constant vomiting with no relief). After 48 hours of initial use, each subject returned the first device and paperwork to the study nurse and received the second device. After waiting 24 hours, each subject started using the second device for another 48 hours continuously, completing the same daily paperwork.

Results:

The average nausea scores for the ReliefBand® Device were significantly different, and overall, 87% of the subjects experienced improvement with the active device versus 43% with the placebo device.

The researchers concluded that electrically stimulating the P6 acupuncture point effectively reduced the nausea and vomiting associated with pregnancy for these women, and, in view of the few treatment options for pregnancy-induced nausea and vomiting, this may represent a new therapeutic approach.