

Clinical Trial Protocol

Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

27 Jun 2026

The effect of discontinuous warm cupping on pain, stiffness and disability of patients with knee osteoarthritis

Protocol summary

Study aim

Determine the effect of discontinuous warm cupping on symptoms of patients with knee osteoarthritis.

Design

This will be a randomized clinical trial. Patients will be randomly matched according to sex. Then, based on the permutation block, they will be divided into two groups of intervention and control. The sample size will be 18 patients in each group.

Settings and conduct

This will be a randomized clinical trial. Patients will be randomly matched according to sex. Then, based on the permutation block, they will be divided into two groups of intervention and control. The sample size will be 18 patients in each group. The site of the research will be the traditional medicine clinic of Gonabad University of Medical Sciences. For patients in the control group, routine care will be provided. For patients in the intervention group, cupping therapy will be performed at the knee joint and on the four sides of the knee.

Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria: Satisfaction and willingness of the patient to participate in the study. Age range 40-60 years. Knee osteoarthritis based on diagnosis of rheumatologist. At least three months have passed from the disease. No-entrance criteria: History of mental, vascular, coagulation, severe deformity and bone structure disorders. No history of knee replacement, Intra-articular injection, Knee joint surgery, History of previous intra-articular fracture. Knee physical therapy based on patient reports. Severe pain during the past month.

Intervention groups

Intervention group: In this group, in addition to the prescribed medications by physician, four season of cupping therapy will be performed. Control group: In this group, patients will receive only prescription medications and no intervention will be performed.

Main outcome variables

Pain: Stiffness: Disability

General information

Reason for update

Acronym

IRCT registration information

IRCT registration number: **IRCT20180719040529N1**

Registration date: **2018-10-05, 1397/07/13**

Registration timing: **retrospective**

Last update: **2018-10-05, 1397/07/13**

Update count: **0**

Registration date

2018-10-05, 1397/07/13

Registrant information

Name

Amir Poorgheysar

Name of organization / entity

Country

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Phone

+98 51 5725 5699

Email address

amirpoorgheysar@gmu.ac.ir

Recruitment status

Recruitment complete

Funding source

Expected recruitment start date

2018-03-21, 1397/01/01

Expected recruitment end date

2018-06-22, 1397/04/01

Actual recruitment start date

2018-03-21, 1397/01/01

Actual recruitment end date

2018-06-22, 1397/04/01

Trial completion date

2018-10-23, 1397/08/01

Scientific title

The effect of discontinuous warm cupping on pain, stiffness and disability of patients with knee osteoarthritis

Public title

The effect of discontinuous warm cupping on the symptoms of knee osteoarthritis

Purpose

Treatment

Inclusion/Exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria:

Satisfaction and willingness of the patient to participate in the study Age range 40 to 60 years Knee osteoarthritis based on a diagnosis of rheumatologist (based on the description, clinical symptoms, physical examination, radiological criteria and the kellgren-lawrence grading system) At least three months have passed from the disease

Exclusion criteria:

History of mental illness, vascular disease, coagulation problems, severe deformity and bone building disorder. History of knee replacement, intra articular injection, knee joint surgery, previous fracture inside the articular according to the patient's own report. Knee physiotherapy treatment over last six months. Severe pain experience in the last months

Age

From **40 years** old to **60 years** old

Gender

Both

Phase

N/A

Groups that have been masked

- Outcome assessor

Sample size

Target sample size: **40**

Actual sample size reached: **36**

Randomization (investigator's opinion)

Not randomized

Randomization description

Blinding (investigator's opinion)

Single blinded

Blinding description

In this research, the evaluator of the outcome of the intervention was blind.

Placebo

Not used

Assignment

Parallel

Other design features

Secondary Ids

empty

Ethics committees

1

Ethics committee

Name of ethics committee

Gonabad University of Medical Sciences

Street address

Education and Research Department, Gonabad University of Medical Sciences, Asiaee Road, Gonabad, Khorasan Razavi Iran

City

Gonabad

Province

Razavi Khorasan

Postal code

9691793718

Approval date

2018-03-12, 1396/12/21

Ethics committee reference number

IR.GMU.REC.1396.150

Health conditions studied

1

Description of health condition studied

Knee Osteoarthritis

ICD-10 code

ICD-10 code description

Primary outcomes

1

Description

Knee pain

Timepoint

Before and after intervention

Method of measurement

Pain Visual Analogue Scale

2

Description

Knee stiffness

Timepoint

Before and after intervention

Method of measurement

Western Ontario and McMaster Universities Arthritis Index

3

Description

Disability

Timepoint

Before and after intervention

Method of measurement

Western Ontario and McMaster Universities Arthritis Index

Secondary outcomes

empty

Intervention groups

1

Description

Intervention group: Cupping therapy will be performed four times. Each cupping therapy session time will be about 10-15 minutes. The intervention time will be sixteen days, and every four days a cupping therapy will take place.

Category

Treatment - Other

2

Description

Control group: Patients in this group will receive only medications prescribed by a specialist and no intervention will be performed.

Category

Treatment - Devices

Recruitment centers

1

Recruitment center

Name of recruitment center

Iranian Traditional Medicine clinic

Full name of responsible person

Amir Poorgheysar

Street address

Allame Bohlool Gonabadi Hospital- Sadi Street-
Vahdat Blvd - Gonabad City

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amirpoorgheysar@gmail.com

Sponsors / Funding sources

1

Sponsor

Name of organization / entity

Gonabad University of Medical Sciences

Full name of responsible person

Seyed Ali Sajjadi

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Education and Research Department, Gonabad
University of Medical Sciences, Asiaee Road,
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sa_1344@hotmail.com

Grant name

Grant code / Reference number

Is the source of funding the same sponsor organization/entity?

Yes

Title of funding source

Gonabad University of Medical Sciences

Proportion provided by this source

100

Public or private sector

Public

Domestic or foreign origin

Domestic

Category of foreign source of funding

empty

Country of origin

Type of organization providing the funding

Academic

Person responsible for general inquiries

Contact

Name of organization / entity

Gonabad University of Medical Sciences

Full name of responsible person

Amir Poorgheysar

Position

Nurse

Latest degree

Bachelor

Other areas of specialty/work

Nursery

Street address

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Person responsible for scientific inquiries

Contact

Name of organization / entity

Gonabad University of Medical Sciences

Full name of responsible person

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Position

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Person responsible for updating data**Contact****Name of organization / entity**

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Sharing plan**Deidentified Individual Participant Data Set (IPD)**

No - There is not a plan to make this available

Justification/reason for indecision/not sharing IPD

After receiving the results of the decision for the publication, I will produce results.

Study Protocol

Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Statistical Analysis Plan

Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Informed Consent Form

Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Clinical Study Report

Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Analytic Code

Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Data Dictionary

Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available