

## **Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation at acupuncture points in the induction of uterine contractions.**

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The effectiveness of transcutaneous electrical stimulation at acupuncture points for increasing uterine contractions in 20 post-dates pregnant women was assessed in a controlled study. Subjects were randomly assigned to either a treatment condition, consisting of the application via surface electrodes of a 30-Hz current to the points "spleen 6" (lower leg) and "liver 3" (foot), or a placebo condition, in which the equipment was attached but not activated. The frequency and strength of uterine contractions were monitored for 1 hour prior to stimulation and then for the final 2 hours of a 4-hour test period. A significant increase in frequency and strength of uterine contractions was found in the electrically stimulated women compared with the placebo-group women. The possible physiologic mechanisms underlying this effect, and its implication for labor induction, are discussed.

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