



CALL FOR PAPERS

Stroke is a major cause of death and disability in many countries of the world. With increasing longevity globally coupled with the decrease in infectious causes of death in developing countries that are also in economic transition, the burden of stroke as measured by incidence, prevalence, and disability-adjusted life years lost due to stroke will likely rise. Despite recent advances in stroke treatments that have reduced vascular mortality and stroke recurrence, there has been little advancement in effective interventions that enhance recovery after stroke. As a result, many stroke survivors remain disabled, some after an initial period of improvement. The disability may be mild with loss of ability to return to usual leisure activities, to a severe including a bed-bound state and complete dependence on others for all activities of self-care. This has led many to seek alternative and complementary therapies in their attempt to return to a normal life. These include herbal remedies and bioactive natural products, as well as physical measures that are hoped will enhance neuroplasticity and aid recovery.

Many of these have been used for generations and have been felt to be beneficial. However, their prescription is based more on faith and belief rather than hard scientific evidence: many have unproven clinical value. These interventions may also lead to side effects and may come at considerable cost; the money spent may be better used for other more pressing needs of the patient and family. In the current age of evidence-based medicine, there is clearly a need for a strong body of carefully derived evidence to guide clinical practice in stroke recovery. This is the theme for this special issue.

Potential topics include, but are not limited to:

- ▶ Original data from randomized controlled trials of complementary and alternative treatments to enhance stroke recovery among human subjects
- ▶ Systematic reviews and meta-analysis of published clinical trials
- ▶ Adverse effects of complementary and alternative treatments used in stroke treatment
- ▶ Acupuncture, herbal and natural remedies, homeopathy, massage, yoga, meditation, tai ji, and reiki therapy
- ▶ New and exciting translational concepts of poststroke rehabilitation
- ▶ Limitations of large clinical trials as one and only evidence of stroke management and new perspectives beyond current guidelines “gold standard”
- ▶ Mechanistic and empirical reviews of treatment of stroke using complementary and alternative treatments
- ▶ Animal and in vitro research into new alternative treatments for stroke that could be tested in the future
- ▶ Stroke prevention using complementary and alternative treatments

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