

Reviewer #1:

Scientific Quality: Grade D (Fair)

Language Quality: Grade C (A great deal of language polishing)

Conclusion: Major revision

Specific Comments to Authors: The authors have presented an interesting case. I suggest following changes to improve manuscript quality 1. The manuscript has been poorly written without much emphasis given on history proceeding presenting complaints, past relevant history etc. 2. English language polishing is required (grammar, as well as spelling). The authors should consider taking english editing services from professional organisation 3. The authors could have added a table reviewing other similar case reports available in literature. Also if similar complication was reported among other patients going for acupuncture at the centre 4. Figure 3 does not clearly shows the growth of E.coli, rather it shows a mixture of Gram positive cocci and Gram negative bacilli 5. The manuscript can be cut short and presented as a letter to editor / commentary

1. The patient was diagnosed with herniated disc and given the treatment of acupuncture 31 days ago before the admission, but the backache gradually worsened. In the forth day after acupuncture, the patient developed a fever, but he did not pay attention to it and took antibiotics (which he could not describe). During the next nearly 4 weeks, fevers recurred sporadically and back pain gradually worsened.
2. We have found a professional organization to taking English editing services.
3. The subject words of infection, vertebral body, acupuncture and related free words were searched in CNKI, pubmed and embase databases, and 12 relevant articles were screened out form 2000 to 2022.
4. The bacterial species were obtained from a intraoperative swab, which is subject to chance, and we cannot rule out the possibility of multiple bacterial infections. The pathological results can be used to verify this conjecture.
5. We try to reduce the article without changing the original meaning.

Reviewer #2:

Scientific Quality: Grade C (Good)

Language Quality: Grade B (Minor language polishing)

Conclusion: Minor revision

Specific Comments to Authors: It is a well-written article. However, there are some concerns about this article. 1. The authors could present the acupuncture methods and places in the figures for general readers. 2. The number of references is small and not updated. 3. The patient's HbA1c level is relatively high. Did the authors deny diabetes? 4. The authors have required core tips in the article. 5. The weakest point of this article is that there is no strong correlation between acupuncture and vertebral infection. The authors should explain the pathway of infection (e.g., through vessel). 5. The duration of antibiotic treatment before the operation seems very short.

1. The patient could not describe which acupuncture points, only that they were on the back.
2. We will expand some new content.
3. The patient was found to have high glycosylated hemoglobin by examination upon admission, but the patient denied a history of diabetes on admission. After our post-admission glucose monitoring, the patient did have diabetes mellitus.
4. We have provided some core tips in the article.
5. We have added a detailed history, and the time and location of the patient's acupuncture treatment and the time and location of the onset of the vertebral infection are highly consistent. The patient was not found to have any other site of infection and the infected lesion was limited at the time of consultation.

6. Because the patient did not show significant signs of improvement after the application of antibiotics, we used surgical treatment for fear of delaying the patient's condition. Also patients and their families have high expectations and want early control.

Reviewer #3:

Scientific Quality: Grade C (Good)

Language Quality: Grade B (Minor language polishing)

Conclusion: Accept (General priority)

Specific Comments to Authors: Nice paper and unusual case scenario. Even if diagnosis and treatment were quite obvious, putative cause is rare and underreported. I think that the key message is that acupuncture could be kept in mind as source of infection. Obviously this is only a case report, but the note of caution regarding potential life threatening complication in healthy people of acupuncture could be meaningful

1. We have expanded on the details of the patient's treatment prior to admission and highly suspect that acupuncture was the source of the infection.

Round 2

Specific Comments To Authors: The manuscript looks much more informative and concise now. I noticed minor corrections like using short forms and starting bacterial genus name in with lower case letter. Rest looks good.

Dear Editor I have made changes based on the revisions, which are attached.