The Effect of Transcranial Direct Current Stimulation on Cognitive Function and Biochemical Change of Rats with Alzheimer’s Disease

Jin-Young Kim1, Seong-Doo Park2, Hyun-Seung Song3, Kyung-Hee Yang4, Seong-Hun Yu5

1Department of Occupational Therapy, Howon University, 2Graduate School of Physical Therapy, Daejeon University, 3Gwangju Yangji Hospital, Rehabcenter, 4Department of Physical Therapy, College of Health, Kyungbok University, 5Gwangju Trauma Center, Department of Physical Therapy

Purpose: The objective of this study was to offer clinical primary data that it’s aims to examine effects of transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS) on cognitive function and biochemical change of rat with alzheimer’s disease (AD) induced by injecting scopolamine.

Methods: Subjects were instructed cognitive dysfunction model, rat of Sprague-Dawley system was injected with scopolamine and each experimental group was classified into three; group I (n=16) is non-treatment groups; group II (n=16) is applied with the tacrine; group III (n=16) is applied with the tDCS. The zigzagur task test was conducted to observe behavioral changes and cognitive function ability and 7, 14, 21, 28 days after the model. Acetylcholine Esterase (Ach E) activity was examined for biochemical assessment of which the results are followed.

Results: Participants showed as to behavioral change, tacrine application group was the most significantly responded, following tDCS application group. As to biochemical change, same as above, tacrine application group was the most significantly responded, following tDCS application group.

Conclusion: From these results, confirm that tDCS application to rat with alzheimer’s disease leads to positive effects on behavioral, cognitive function changes, and biochemical changes, lasting for certain period of time. This study, in particular, tDCS, which can change excitability of brain cells non-invasively, could provide basic data that is useful as a new treatment way for the patients with cognitive dysfunction.

Key Words: Acetylcholine Esterase, Alzheimer’s disease, Cognition

I. Introduction

Alzheimer’s disease (AD) is a neurodegenerative brain disease that insidiously robs patients of their cognition, function, independence, and identity and results in morbidity and eventual mortality. The cognition dysfunction can be cause of problem in doing activities of daily living, makes it more difficult to do various activities than before the damage of cognitive function appeared. It has been investigated that Loss of synapse which is room between neurons and Tau which made by over-phosphorylation in NFTs (neurofibrillary tangles) have high correlation with severeness of AD and until now, there have been many research that these factors are main cause of AD. Nitse and Paulus reported that motor evoked potential was significantly increased after stimulating primary motor area of usual person using 1mA positive direct current during 5minutes. However, safety in the case of clinically applying tDCS to patients was not conducted yet and also, research about therapy intervention using it was not done yet. Once, as a kind of neurotransmitters, Acetylcholine; Acetylcholine which is involved in signal transduction of brain that is biochemical change in our body used in checking
rehabilitation of cognitive ability developed, it becomes possible to observe change appearance of Acetylcholine. Acetylcholine synthesized through activity of enzyme choline acetyltransferase. It corresponds to work of acetylcholine, which leads to increase of acetylcholinesterase activity; Acetylcholine E so that acetylcholine, Ach is disassembled rapidly. Due to this work, concentration of acetylcholine; Ach decrease, As small quantity of this decrease can cause damage of memory, it is known as neurotransmitter which can be used as barometer to check damage on cognitive ability. Neuron transmission system that takes pivotal tole in memory and learning become more aggravated, when acetylcholine, neurotransmitters’s content decreases and acetylcholine E which decomposes it increases. It can be assumed acetylcholine content’s decrease as well as increase of acetylcholine E activity consequently have negative effects on various cognitive ability. To investigate the effects on cognitive ability, in the experiment, Ach content and Ach E activity were observed by biochemical evaluation. Among those, various traditional cognitive rehabilitation therapy is difficult to be implemented on the purpose of training cognition damaged patients due to therapist’s subjective intervention and shortage of diversity. Although computerization in cognition rehabilitation treatment has recently been introduced, it may cause difficulty in moving actually owing to image training separated from real life. This study is intended to provide basic study foundation, observing improvement on function center nerve system and mechanism of cognition ability improvement through verifying safety of tDCS.

II. Methods

1. Animals
In this study, 48 rats Sprague–Dawleys based paper randomly were assigned to perform experiments. All animal experimental protocols were performed in accordance with the guide lines of the Dongshin University Animal Care and Use Committee. Temperature of raising room was set at 22 ± 1°C and humidity was maintained at 55 ± 10%. Light and shade periodicity was 12 hours in order to keep the raising room in regular condition. Hard food was used as forage, food and water are freely provided. Each experimental group was classified into three groups; group I (n=16) is non–treatment groups; group II (n=16) is the tacrine group; group III (n=16) is the tDCS application group.

2. Experimental methods
Evaluation of theory in behavior reaction (ZTT) according to recovery of cognition function was conducted right after the induction and continuously conducted 4 times more after each 7, 14, 21, 28 days later. Biochemical inspection of was also conducted on the last day, victimizing 8 rats in each group. Scopolamine induced memory loss by inhibiting the cholinergic nerve signaling in non–specific antagonist which acts as a muscarinic acetylcholine receptor. In general, signaling of cholinergic nervous system, significantly reduced in the brains of patients with dementia, and is closely related to the degree of memory damage. A method of inhibiting acetylcholine decomposition enzyme is utilized development of medication to increase the cognitive and memory. To induce the cognition dysfunction on normal rats, scopolamine (Sigma, S1875, USA) 1mg/kg which was lysed and diluted in physiological saline at 0.9% had been injected in abdominal cavity during 30days (1time, a day). In addition, to compare it with experiment group that induced by scopolamine, tacrine (Sigma, A3773, St. Louis, MO, USA) 10 mg/kg that do detoxication and was lysed and diluted in physiological saline at 0.9% was injected in abdominal cavity during 4 weeks (1time, a day) after injecting scopolamine to experiment as well as comparison group. According to Kim’s method,10 tDCS applied in this experiment used direct current machine (Cyber Medic Co, Jeonju, Korea) which can control even 0.1mA. To let bipolar electrode be on transcranial region of cerebral cortex, pad 1 ㎝ wide and long. Also to fix the movement, plastic cup made to fit in experimental animal’s head was put on and fixed. Negative electrode was applied to body in a purpose of keeping shunting effect. Gel was used to minimize resistance between skin and electrode after shaving. Considering the strength point that beard of white rats are contracted, the strength of applying electric current was set at 0,1mA and applying time was 20minutes in one time. It had been done 2 time in a day, 5 time in a week during 4weeks at same time everyday(Figure 1).
breakdown enzyme was done through process which extracts cerebrum cortex and using Teflon homogenizer (Eyela, Tokyo, Japan) and goes through homogenization by 10 times homogenization buffer (12.5 mM sodium phosphat buffer pH 7.0, 400 mM NaCl) and lastly use supernatant as a zymogen after centrifugation. 200 µg/㎖ was diluted to become 0.1 M phosphate buffer (pH 8.0) and the mixture of 1.5 ㎖ target material, 2.6 ㎖ buffer solution, 20 µl 75 mM acetylthiocholine iodide solution, 100 µl Ellman`s solution (10mM DTNB, 15 mM sodium bicarbonate) was exposed at 25˚C. In addition, 400 µl enzyme source was added and at 410 nm, the optical density was measured after 5 minutes (OPTIZEN 2120UV, Mecasys Co. Ltd., Korea). At that time, instead of adding acetyl cholinesterase sample as a comparison group, reaction solution including saline was used. Additionally, it was confirmed that unusual reaction did not happen without adding acetylthiocholine iodide.

5. Data analysis
The static analysis of this study was done using SPSS 18.0 ver. for window and values of each result were presented as average and standard deviation. Behavioral measured value comparison among groups at each measurement time was done through one-way analysis of variance. Post hoc is conducted by Tukey’s multiple range test. To check changes among each groups according to time period, paired t-test was conducted. Significance level was set at α =0.05.

III. Results
1. The time to choose by ziggurat task learning
In the differences among groups according to time interval for measurement, since the 7th day, there has been significant difference in decrease of result value among each group at every measuring time. The 7th day after the result of post hoc test, there have been more significant differences in experiment group II than group I (p<0.001). In the 14th day, there was the most significant decrease in experiment group II as a result of post hoc test (p<0.001) and group III also showed significant decrease (p<0.01). In addition, in the 21 and 28th day every experiment group showed same significant
decrease that was same with that in the 14th day. Paired-t test was conducted to check variation of result value among each group according to time interval for measurement. Experiment group I didn’t show significant until the 21th day but did in the 28th day (p<0.05). Group II has shown significant decrease (p<0.05) since the 7th day and same result appeared in the 14, 21 and 28th day. The group III has shown significant decline (p<0.05) since 14th day (Table 1).

2. The error selecting number by ziggurat task learning
In differences among groups according to time interval for measurement, there have been significant differences in decrease of result value among each group at every measuring time, the 7th day after the result of post hoc test, there have been more significant differences in experiment group II than group I (p<0.001). In the 14th day, there was the most significant decrease in experiment group II as a result of post hoc test (p<0.001). In addition, in the 21 and 28th day every experiment group showed same significant decrease that was same with that in the 14th day. Paired-t test was conducted to check variation of result value among each groups according to time interval for measurement. Group II has shown

Table 1. Take-time of correct choice on the ziggurat task in each group (sec)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>7 days*</th>
<th>14 days**</th>
<th>21 days***</th>
<th>28 days***</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>253.44 ± 18.91</td>
<td>246.88 ± 19.04</td>
<td>238.75 ± 20.68</td>
<td>225.88 ± 28.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td></td>
<td>249.75 ± 12.55</td>
<td>223.75 ± 14.56</td>
<td>195 ± 22.65</td>
<td>178.44 ± 34.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td></td>
<td>248.63 ± 19.39</td>
<td>232.88 ± 20.27</td>
<td>220.81 ± 20.23</td>
<td>202.56 ± 22.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All values showed mean±SD. Test by one way-ANOVA(*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001) and post hoc were compared with group I (††† p<0.001) and tested by paired T-test (‡‡‡ p<0.001).

Group I : Scopolamine induce+nontreatment
Group II : Scopolamine induce+Tacrine
Group III : Scopolamine induce+tDCS

Table 2. The number of error choice on ziggurat test in each group (ea)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>7 days*</th>
<th>14 days**</th>
<th>21 days***</th>
<th>28 days***</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>12.13 ± 2.22</td>
<td>11.50 ± 1.97</td>
<td>10.94 ± 1.61</td>
<td>10.13 ± 1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td></td>
<td>11.06 ± 1.55</td>
<td>9.06 ± 1.46</td>
<td>8.19 ± 1.20</td>
<td>7.75 ± 1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.56 ± 1.45</td>
<td>10.00 ± 1.53</td>
<td>9.13 ± 1.00</td>
<td>8.13 ± 0.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All values showed mean±SD. Test by one way-ANOVA(*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001) and post hoc were compared with group I (††† p<0.001) and tested by paired T-test (‡‡‡ p<0.001).

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Group II : Scopolamine induce+Tacrine
Group III : Scopolamine induce+tDCS

Table 2. The number of error choice on ziggurat test in each group (ea)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Acetylcholinesterase activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14 days***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>284.51 ± 9.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>243.81 ± 8.3 †††</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>265.25 ± 9.71 †††††</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28 days***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>120.71 ± 8.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>106.92 ± 6.36 ††††††</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>109.68 ± 5.96 †††††††</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All values showed mean±SD. Test by one way-ANOVA(***p<0.001) and post hoc were compared with group I (**p<0.01) and tested by paired T-test (††† ††† p<0.001).

Group I : Scopolamine induce+nontreatment
Group II : Scopolamine induce+Tacrine
Group III : Scopolamine induce+tDCS
significant decrease (p<0.05) since the 7th day and same result appeared in the 14, 21 and 28th day, the group III has shown significant decline (p<0.05) since 14th day (Table 2).

3. Measurement of ach E activity
In differences among groups according to time interval for measurement of Ach E activity, there were significant differences in both 14th and 28th day and experiment group II, III all showed more significant differences (p<0.001) rather than group. Especially, experiment group II showed most significant increase (p<0.001). Also, there was significant difference in the 14th day and as a result of post hoc test experiment group II, III all showed more significant increase than group I (p<0.01). Especially, experiment group II showed most significant increase (p<0.001), and so did group III (p<0.05). There is also significant difference in the 28th day and as a result of post hoc test II, III all showed more significant increase than group I (p<0.01). Especially, experiment group II showed most significant increase (p<0.001) and so did group III (p<0.05) (Table 3).

IV. Discussion
The exact treatment for AD is not known, but so far, various studies have been conducted. In which the two types of brain stimulation current stimulation of the motor cortex activity can be controlled. Boggio reported the effect of tDCS can be varied according to polarity of electrode. Cathodal current stimulation minimize excitement of cerebrum and anode current have a function to increase excitement of cerebrum. Nitsche and Paulus reported that cathodal tDCS is the technology that cures damage on center nerve system including excitement of increased neuron. In terms of time to choose and error selecting number by Ziggurat Task learning, group II rather significantly decreased than group I in the 7th day, and in the 14th day, group II, III rather significantly decreased in sequence than group I, but in the 28th day, group II, III showed significant differences in sequence compared with group I. Figure of the experiment group II which was injected Tacrine was most well maintained, being compared with Ziggurat test and the following was the group III in terms of maintaining figures, which is considered that the number of error and gluttony for food was maintained at certain level owing to rehabilitation of motor ability and simple characteristic of maze, even after the death. In the open field and Gluttony which are evaluating method of theory in behavior reaction related with cognition, group I of white rat with AD showed impairment with no change in time and number of error during measuring period, but in the other groups the time to get food and number of error was minimized. This result correspond with preceding thesis which consider this result as improvement of cognition.

When cognition dysfunction is severe after occur of Alzheimer’s disease, Ach E restrainer such as donepezil, tacrine, galantamine is clinically used to maintain cognitive function and memory, keeping Ach from decomposing rapidly. Although these Ach E restraining drugs have low possibility of side effects, common side effects such as nausea, anorexia, vomiting, diarrhea are accompanied and period of remedial effect is also very short. Accordingly, it is necessarily needed to conduct more research about tDCS and electrical stimulation as a medical technology that offset side effect of Ach E restraint drugs and control long tolerance of it. Furthermore, Intervention with tDCS is considered to have the most priceless value in aspect of treatment. Taking all above into account, it is considered that tDCS promote neuron activity of white rats induced by AD and through this, it activates neurotransmitter of hippocampus and cerebral cortex. Also it is thought that tDCS would have more beneficial effect on maintaining cognitive ability, being applied to patient who have Alzheimer’s disease. In conclusion, it is confirmed that the apply of tDCS after induction of cognitive impairment by AD have positive effects on change in theory of behavior reaction, rehabilitation of cognitive ability and biochemical change. The effect of it is maintained during certain period. Therefore, this study is a non-invasive method of treatment failure in patients with a new way to offer the possibility of using tDCS.

Acknowledgements
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References