ACUPUNCTURE AND CHINESE MEDICINE

LIU and co-workers, Ninth People's Hospital of Chengdu, Sichuan Province 610016, report on clinical observations of 31 cases of chronic bronchitis treated with Bufei Keli.

Background: The study aimed at observing the effect of the Chinese medicine Bufei Keli, a medicine for invigorating the lung, in the treatment of chronic bronchitis in remission stage.

Methods: 62 patients with chronic bronchitis in remission stage were randomly divided into two groups. The treatment group received Bufei Keli, and the control group received Yufengkeli, another Chinese medicine.

Results: Patients in the treatment group showed a short-term improvement of 77.4% compared with 45.2% in the control group. Long-term relapse resistance was 74.2% in the treatment group compared to 38.7% in the control group. Moreover, patients in the treatment group showed larger increases in immunological parameters suggesting more resistance to infectious agents.

Conclusions: Bufei Keli can improve Qi deficiency and raise the immunity in patients with chronic bronchitis and so induce greater resistance to relapse.


MAA and colleagues, School of Nursing, Chang Gung University, Taoyuan, Taiwan, have carried out a pilot study of acupuncture or acupressure and their effects on the quality of life in patients with chronic obstructive asthma.

Background: Although acupuncture and acupressure are known to benefit people with asthma, there is a lack of data on the effects in people with chronic obstructive asthma.

Methods: In this prospective, randomized study, 41 patients with chronic obstructive asthma were recruited. They were randomly assigned to receive either acupuncture in addition to standard care (n = 11), acupressure in addition to standard care (n = 17), or standard care alone (n = 13). 20 acupuncture treatments were administered, and self-administered acupressure was administered daily for 8 weeks. Six-minute walking, the Dyspnoea VAS, the modified Borg scale, St. George's Respiratory Questionnaire, and the Bronchitis Emphysema Symptom Checklist were used pre treatment and post treatment.

Results: The total St George's Respiratory Questionnaire score improved in the acupuncture group on average 18.5-fold, and the improvement for the acupressure group was 6.6-fold. In addition, the irritability score of the Bronchitis Emphysema Symptom Checklist showed an 11.8-fold improvement in the acupuncture group. Other parameters did not vary significantly.

Conclusions: Patients with chronic obstructive asthma experienced clinically significant improvements in their quality of life when the standard care was supplemented with acupuncture or acupressure.


YU and colleagues, First Clinical Medical College, Harbin Medical University, Harbin 150001, Heilongjiang Province, have conducted a clinical study on the effect of acupuncture on Behcet's disease.

Background: Behcet's disease is a rare chronic inflammatory condition of the small blood vessels. In this study, it was investigated for susceptibility to treatment by acupuncture.

Methods: 46 patients with Behcet's disease were randomly divided into 2 groups. The 26 patients in the treatment group were treated with acupuncture and the 20 patients in the control group with drugs. The levels of immunoglobulin M kappa chain and of the trace element zinc were measured before and after treatment.

Results: The recurrence rate in the treatment group was significantly lower than in the control group (p < 0.01), and there were significant differences in the levels of IgM kappa chain and zinc before and after treatment in the treatment group.

Conclusions: Acupuncture appears to be a good treatment for Behcet's disease.


ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE

AUNG, Alberta Medical Clinic, 9904 106 Street, Edmonton, AB T5K 1C4, Canada, proposes that loving kindness is the essential Buddhist contribution to primary care.

Abstract: Loving kindness (metta), a traditional Buddhist concept, implies acting with compassion towards all living beings, with an awareness and appreciation of the natural world. The giving of metta has the potential to enhance modern primary health care. Metta must be given with selflessness (saydana), compassion (karuna), and sympathetic joy (mudita). The Buddhist system features several techniques, such as the Noble Eight-Fold Path and the metta meditations, to keep physicians moving towards metta. One does not have to be a Buddhist to practise metta, or more humane medicine, and the notion of tender loving care in spreading in biomedical circles.


WILSON and co-workers, Department of Medicine, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ont, MSG 2C4, Canada, kumanan.wilson@uhn.on.ca, have conducted a survey of attitudes towards childhood vaccinations amongst Canadian naturopathic students.

Background: Previous studies have suggested that the complementary and alternative medical community may harbour anti-vaccination attitudes, and that these attitudes may develop at early stages in their career. This study aimed to investigate if this was true by surveying students of naturopathic medicine.

Methods: All 4 years of students at the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine were surveyed.

Results: 59.4% of students responded to the survey. Only 12.8% of students would recommend full childhood vaccination, 74.4% of students would recommend partial vaccination. Both willingness to advise full vaccination and trust in public health and conventional medicine decreased in students in later years of training.

Conclusion: Supporters of full childhood vaccination need to find ways of engaging in discussion with students of complementary and alternative medicine at an early stage in their careers.


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