Case report: Treat Brain Tumor with acupuncture and herbs
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A brain tumor is a highly malignant tumor. This is a report on one brain tumor treated with acupuncture and herbs.
A 39-year-old female patient [came into the office]. 5 years ago, she had suffered from the onset of dizziness and seizures. An MRI showed a 4-5 cm left frontal brain tumor. The biopsy showed tumor cells (anaplastic astrocytoma, 3-4 grade). She received radiation therapy and chemotherapy and later tried surgery to excise the tumor tissue. Although the tumor in the brain diminished [in size] after treatment, it later continued to increase in size. The medical doctor told her that she did not have long to live. She was desperate and looked for help from TCM.

On her first visit, the patient’s condition was less than good; she had experienced a changed in her mental state and was fatigued; her tongue was dark purple with static macules with white fur and a deep-slippery pulse.

Diagnosis: Brain Tumor.

Treatment Principle: Support the right qi, dispel toxins, transform stasis and dispel phlegm, dissipate bindings and disperse swelling.

Treatment history: Acupuncture. One to two times per week using: LI-11 (qu chi), TB-5 (wai guan), ST-36 (zu san li), CV-4 (guan yuan), GV-7 (zhong shu), SP-9 (yin ling quan), SP-6 (san yin jiao), GB-34 (yang ling quan), Lv-3, and St-40. The needles were inserted without twirling, retaining the needles for 45 minutes.

Medicinals used:
1) A empirical formula including: huang qin (Radix Scutellariae Baicalensis), sheng di huang (Radix Rehmanniae Exsiccata Seu Recens) and shu di huang (Radix Rehmanniae Glutinosae Coquita) 15g each, shi jian chuan (Herba Salviae Chinensis) 30g, wu gong (Scolopendra Subspinipes) 5g, xuan shen (Radix Scrophulariae Ningpoensis) 15g, bei sha shen (Radix Glehniae Littoralis) 15g, ban xia (Tuber Pinelliae Ternatae) 15g, dan nan xing (Pulvis Arisaemae Cum Felle Bovis) 12g, wang bu liu xing (Semen Vaccariae Segetalis), 15g, di long (Lumbricus) 12g, fu ling (Sclerotium Poriae Cocos) 12g, ye ju hua (Flos Chrysanthemi Indici)15g, tian hua fen (Radix Trichosanthis Kirlowii) 15g, gou qi zi (Fructus Lycii Chinensis) 12g, feng fang (Nidus Vespae) 12g, and xia ku cao (Spica Prunellae Vulgaris)15g. She used four packages per week, changing according to her situation. If she had a dry and sore throat, ban xia (Tuber Pinelliae Ternatae) was reduced and shi hu (Herba Dendrobi) was added; if she had a stomachache, the shi jian chuan (Herba Salviae Chinensis) was reduced and shen qu (Massa Medica Fermentata) was added, etc.
2) Pre-made medicinal pills: kang liu wan (Anti-tumor Pills) 5-7 g two to three times a day, obtained from China.

Results: After 3-4 years of treatment, the patient is feeling better, no longer has seizures,
has more energy, and an improved mental attitude. An MRI showed that left-sided brain tumor had not gotten larger. A new biopsy found no tumor cells. Her current MRI exam (the last being in October 2004) showed that the appearance of the neoplasm in her left-brain is decreasing in size.

It been over 5 years and 5 months since she was diagnosed with a brain tumor and patient still feels well. Now she keeps coming to see me but with almost no complaints. She is living a normal life. All of the patient’s family members and friends are surprised by the TCM treatment.

Discussion: The prognosis for a brain tumor is very poor with the average life expectancy being only one year (1). For this patient, I used acupuncture to adjust Spleen and Stomach and to stop the source of sputum production. I used Chinese medicinals to support the right qi, dispel stasis, transform phlegm, dissipate bindings and disperse swelling. Under TCM treatment, the disease is now under control and the patient is living in a normal life. This proves that TCM can play a beneficial role in tumor treatment. However, this is only one case and more patients should be treated to accumulate more experience.
