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Clinical Research

Influence of acupotomy loosening on IL-6, IL-10 and TNF- α in synovial fluid of rheumatoid arthritis patients with elbow joint stiffness[☆]

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ABSTRACT *Objective:* To compare differences of acupotomy loosening combined with medication treatment, electroacupuncture combined with medication treatment and simple medication treatment in effects on rheumatoid arthritis patients with elbow joint stiffness and investigate the anti-inflammatory mechanism of the acupotomy loosening. *Methods:* A total of 60 cases of rheumatoid arthritis (RA) patients with elbow joint stiffness were randomly assigned into the group receiving acupotomy loosening (group A), group with electroacupuncture (group B) and the one undergoing medication treatment (group C) with 20 cases for each group. Based on the medication treatment, all patients underwent continuous oral administration with Methotrexate (MTX), Leflunomide (LEF) and *Bitongding* capsules for 3 weeks. And no other treatments were given to group C. In addition to medications treatment, the electroacupuncture was performed in group B. The acupoints of Tiānzhu (天柱 BL 10), Dàzhuī (大椎 GV 14); Fēngchí (风池 GB 20), Qūchí (曲池 LI 11), Qūzé (曲泽 PC 3), Chǐzé (尺泽 LU 5), Shǒusānlǐ (手三里 LI 10), Xiǎohǎi (小海 SI 8), Shǎohǎi (少海 HT 3), Tiānjǐng (天井 TE 10), Qīnglěngyuān (清冷渊 TE 11) and Hégu (合谷 LI 4) in the affected side were selected. A pair of electrodes were connected to LI

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