



CLINICAL CASE REPORT



Treatment for an Adult Patient With Psoriasis with Traditional Korean Medicine, Especially Sa-Am Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine

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Available online 22 January 2016

Received: Nov 13, 2015
Revised: Jan 9, 2016
Accepted: Jan 12, 2016

KEYWORDS

Gui-Pi-Tang;
hand shao-yang
meridian;
hand tai-yin meridian;
hand tai-yang meridian;
psoriasis;
Sa-Am acupuncture

Abstract

In this clinical study, the author tried to prove that meridians, each having its own characteristics, exist in humans through which skin diseases can be treated. Three meridians, the hand tai-yin meridian, the hand tai-yang meridian, and the shao-yang meridian, were used to control lung dryness and heat and liver fire. By using the LU9 and SP3 acupoints to tonify the hand tai-yin meridian and the SI3 acupoint to tonify the hand tai-yang meridian, we could sedate lung dryness and heat, and by using the TW2 acupoint to sedate the hand shao-yang meridian, we could sedate liver fire. As psoriasis is known not to respond well to many clinical treatments, this report presents the case of an adult woman with psoriasis who was effectively treated using traditional Korean medicine (TKM). The patient was diagnosed with psoriasis based on lung dryness and heat and liver fire. Acupuncture and herbal medicine based on the theory of Sa-Am acupuncture were given to the patient. With this treatment, her symptoms completely disappeared in ~14 months. This study gives a preliminary indication that TKM, especially Sa-Am acupuncture, can be effective for treating psoriasis. Thus, further study is warranted.

1. Introduction

Psoriasis is a common, benign, chronic, inflammatory skin disease with a genetic basis. Injury or irritation of normal

skin tends to produce lesions of psoriasis at the site (Koebner's phenomenon). The essential symptom of psoriasis is silver scales on bright-red, well-demarcated plaques. Psoriasis usually occurs on the knees, elbows, scalp, and

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Table 1 Components of Gui-Pi-Tang modification

Scientific name	Dose (g)	Scientific name	Dose (g)
<i>Angelica gigas</i> root	4	<i>Aucklandiae radix</i>	2
<i>Longan arillus</i>	4	Licorice	1
<i>Zizyphus</i> seed	4	<i>Cyperus</i> rhizome	4
<i>Polygala</i> root	4	<i>Scutellaria</i> root	4–5
<i>Codonopsis lanceolata</i>	4	<i>Bupleurum</i> root	4–6
<i>Astragalus</i> root	4	<i>Liriope</i> tuber	4
<i>Atractylodes</i> rhizome white	4	<i>Schizonepeta</i> spike	1
<i>Poria sclertum</i> cum <i>Pini radix</i>	4	<i>Mentha</i> herb	1

nails, with findings including pitting, onycholysis, and mild itching. Often no symptoms may occur except for itching at the scalp, elbows, knees, palms of the hands, and soles of the feet; in such cases, the finger and toe nails should be examined. The lesions are red, sharply-defined plaques covered with silver scales [1]. The cause of psoriasis is unclear, but heredity and abiotic factors are clearly involved [2].

From the view of traditional Korean medicine (TKM), psoriasis corresponds to bai bi, yin xie bing, and feng xian, which are caused by blood heat, blood dryness, and blood stasis, as well as liver and kidney depletion. Recently, various methods, such as constitution classification, acupuncture, and herbal medicine, have been tried as treatments for psoriasis [3]. The body has 12 main meridians, and in the view of Sa-Am acupuncture, each meridian

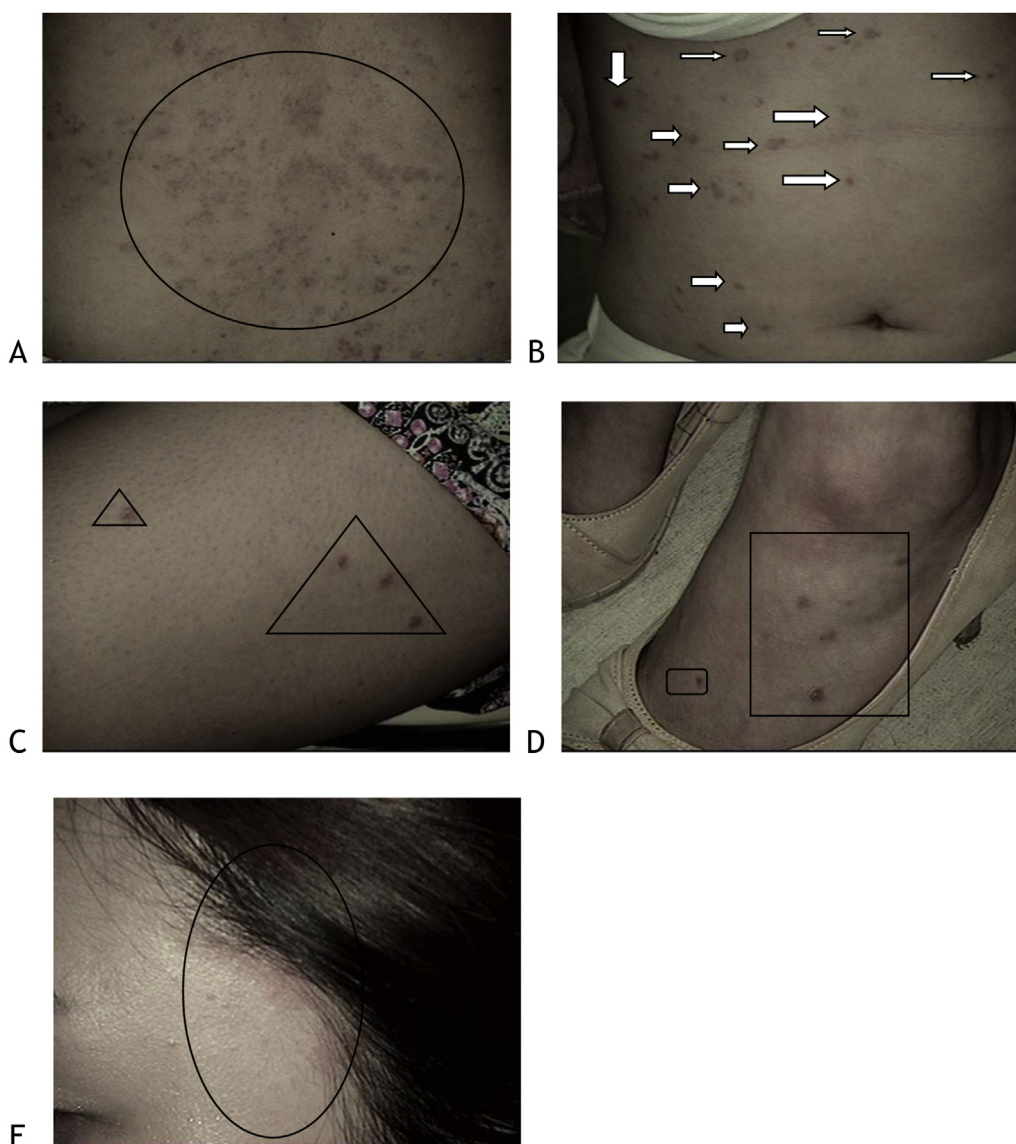


Figure 1 Initial state of the patient with psoriasis (May 20, 2013). Erythematous skin rashes accompanied by scales are seen to be scattered on (A) the back; (B) the abdomen; (C) four local erythematous skin rashes accompanied by scales are seen on the right thigh; (D) five local erythematous skin rashes accompanied by scales are seen on the back of the left foot; and (E) a faint and large erythematous skin rash accompanied by scales is seen on the left side of the scalp.

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