

## Clinical Report

# Observations on the therapeutic effect of acupuncture with left ascending and right descending method for 52 cases of chronic diarrhea

## 左升右降法针灸治疗慢性腹泻52例疗效观察

LI Hai-jun (黎海军), LIU Xu-guang (刘旭光)✉

Acupuncture and Tuina College, Chengdu University of TCM, Chengdu 610075, Sichuan Province, China  
(成都中医药大学针灸推拿学院, 四川成都 610075, 中国)

### ARTICLE INFO

✉ Corresponding author: Liu Xu-guang  
(1965-), male, professor.  
Research field: basic studies on  
acupuncture for immunological diseases.  
E-mail: lxxg418@126.com  
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### ABSTRACT

**Objective** To search for effective methods of acupuncture therapy in treating chronic diarrhea. **Methods** Treatments were carried out on 52 patients with chronic diarrhea by using the left ascending and right descending method. Three acupoints at the left side, namely Xiàngǔ (陷谷 ST 43), Zú sān lǐ (足三里 ST 36) and Qū chí (曲池 LI 11), and Liè quē (列缺 LU 7) at the right side were selected, moxibustion was also carried out according to syndrome differentiation. The operation of left ascending and right descending method were firstly left and then right, first down and then up, firstly four limbs and then abdomen; the thumb moved backward and the index finger moved forward during needle twisting for the acupoints at the left side, and it was on the contrary for the right side. The needles were retained for 1 h for deficiency, and the pinholes were pressed when the needles were withdrawn; the needles were retained for 0.5 h for excess syndrome and newly-contracted disease, and the pinholes were enlarged by shaking the needles when they were withdrawn. Except that the needling was carried out twice a day for the patients with desertion following chronic diarrhea, the needling was carried out once a day, five days as a treatment course, the patients were given an interval for two days after every two treatment courses, and the therapeutic effect was observed after five treatment courses. **Results** totally 36 patients were cured, among which 11 patients were cured after one treatment course, 19 patients were cured after two to three treatment courses and 6 patients were cured after four to five treatment courses; eight patients were improved; six patients were not cured; the total effective rate was 88.0%. **Conclusion** the acupuncture with left ascending and right descending method has satisfactory therapeutic effect in treating chronic diarrhea.

**KEY WORDS:** chronic diarrhea; acupuncture; left ascending and right descending method

Chronic diarrhea belongs to the category of “diarrhea” in TCM which is characterized by increase in the frequency of stools, loose and watery stools, long disease courses and recurrent attacks. The therapeutic efficacy of common acupuncture therapy in treating acute diarrhea or diarrhea due to simple

pathogenesis is acceptable, and it could not take effects rapidly for the patients of long disease courses and some severe cases. The authors had totally collected 52 patients with chronic diarrhea treated by acupuncture therapy with using left ascending and right descending method since 2009, and the therapeutic effect is

summarized as below.

## CLINICAL DATA

Totally 30 male patients and 22 female patients were collected in the present study, the youngest patient was 13 years old and the eldest patient was 80 years old, the shortest disease course was half a month and the longest disease course was six years. They were diagnosed as chronic gastroenteritis, irritable bowel syndrome, dysbacteriosis, intestinal polyps and other diseases in western medicine respectively. In contrast, the syndrome differentiation groupings in TCM were cold-dampness encumbering the spleen, dampness-heat of large intestine, syndrome of food stagnation in stomach, stagnation of *qi* due to depression of the liver, spleen-kidney *yang* deficiency and others.

## METHODS

Therapeutic methods: three acupoints at the left side, namely Xiàngǔ (陷谷 ST 43), Zúsānlǐ (足三里 ST 36) and Qūchí (曲池 LI 11), and Lièqūē (列缺 LU 7) at the right side were selected, ginger moxibustion on Shénquē (神阙 CV 8) was carried out for patients with cold-dampness encumbering the spleen and spleen-kidney *yang* deficiency, needling on Tiānshū (天枢 ST 25) was carried out for patients with dampness-heat of large intestine, syndrome of food stagnation in stomach, and needling on Tàichōng (太冲 LR 3) was carried out for patients with stagnation of *qi* due to depression of the liver. Moxibustion on Baihuì (百会 GV 20) was carried out for patients with desertion following chronic diarrhea. The patients were kept at supine position, the needling was carried out after the patients became calmed down, the operating steps of firstly left and then right, first down and then up, firstly four limbs and then abdomen were performed on all of the patients, the needling was carried out on ST 43 on the left foot, then ST 36 and LI 11, and finally LU 7 at the right side<sup>[1]</sup>. The thumb moved backward and the index finger moved forward during needle twisting for the acupoints at the left side, and it was on the contrary for the right side. The needles for deficiency syndrome were removed to sky-part (the upper 1/3 area in acupoint) after needling responses, and the needles were stabbed inwards to earth-part (the lower 1/3 area in acupoint), while it was on the contrary for excess syndrome. Moxibustion on CV 8 and GV 20 was successively carried out for half an hour respectively for patients with desertion following chronic diarrhea. The needles were retained for 1 h for deficiency and macronosia, and the pinhole was pressed when the needles were removed; the

needles were retained for 0.5 h for excess syndrome and newly-contracted disease, and the pinholes were enlarged by shaking the needles when they were removed. Except that the needling was carried out twice a day for the patients with desertion of chronic diarrhea, the needling was carried out once a day, five days as a treatment course, the patients were given a interval for two days after every two treatment courses, and the therapeutic effect was observed after five treatment courses.

## THERAPEUTIC CRITERIA

Cured: normal stools, other symptoms disappeared, the results of clinical examinations were normal; effective: the frequency of stools significantly decreased and other related symptoms were significantly alleviated; ineffective: the symptoms were not significantly improved.

## RESULTS

Except that one patient was transferred to another hospital and one patient was transferred to ICU due to aggravation in the primary diseases, the therapeutic effect for the other 50 patients was shown in Table 1. Among these patients, most of the patients of dysbacteriosis could be cured after about one treatment course, most of the patients of chronic enteritis or irritable bowel syndrome were healed or improved slowly, or even invalid since the influences from daily life, diets, daily schedule and other factors were significant. Diarrhea may be not completely eliminated for some patients with chronic diarrhea and severe cases, but the immediate effects in checking diarrhea were rapid and convenient, and diarrhea at later period could be controlled at about twice a day, and the diarrhea volume also significantly decreased.

Table 1 Therapeutic effect of acupuncture with left ascending and right descending method in treating the patients with chronic diarrhea Cases

Patients	Cured			Effective	Ineffective	Total effective rate (%)
	1 treatment course	2-3 treatment courses	4-5 treatment courses			
50	11	19	6	8	6	88.0

## TYPICAL CASE

Patient, male, 50 years old and suffered from cerebral hemorrhage for more than 40 days, he was in coma and suffered from alteration of intestinal flora, diarrhea and watery stools after administration with large amount of antibiotics due to infections, the frequency of stools was not countable for continuous

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