

Clinical Research

Penetration needling on complementary acupoints for insomnia^{*}

相对穴透刺治疗失眠症疗效观察^{*}

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ABSTRACT

Objective To observe the comparison of the clinical efficacy between penetration needling from Nèiguān (内关 PC 6) to Wàiguān (外关 TE 5) and western medicine estazolam for insomnia. **Methods** Sixty insomnia patients were divided into 2 groups according to the random number table, 30 cases in each group. Penetration needling from PC 6 to TE 5 was mainly adopted in acupuncture group for once a day, 5 times a week, and treatment for 4 weeks was 1 course of treatment. Estazolam was orally given in medicine group before sleep every night in a dosage of 1 mg per time, and treatment for 4 weeks was 1 course of treatment. After 4 weeks, the clinical efficacy and the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI) score were compared respectively between the two groups. **Results** The total effective rate was 90.00% in acupuncture group and 63.33% in medicine group, and the difference was statistically significant ($P < 0.05$). PSQI score in acupuncture group was (7.93 ± 3.77) , which was superior to that in medicine group (10.60 ± 4.20) , and the difference between the two groups was statistically significant ($P < 0.05$). **Conclusion** The penetration needling of complementary acupoints from PC 6 to TE 5 was simple and convenient which can significantly improve the patients' sleep quality.

KEY WORDS: Complementary acupoints; penetration needling; Nèiguān (内关 PC 6); Wàiguān (外关 TE 5); insomnia

Insomnia is a kind of disease caused by exuberance of *yang* with decline of *yin*, imbalance of *yin* and *yang*, as well as *yang's* failure to entering *yin* which are induced by various reasons. Clinically, insomnia is mainly manifested as such symptoms as restless sleep, profuse dreaming and difficult falling asleep, etc. A series of symptoms of neurasthenia may be caused to the patients with severe conditions due to long-term insomnia^[1]. It was indicated according to investigations^[2] that sleep disorders can be found in 45.5% of the Chinese people, and the incidence tends to increase year by year. Sedative drugs are mainly used in modern medicine for treatment of insomnia, which may cause drug resistance, dependence, addiction and other adverse effects. Compare to western medicine, the acupuncture therapy for

insomnia is more natural and safe. On the basis of the theory of point combination for complementary acupoints^[3,4], the author adopted penetration needling from Nèiguān (内关 PC 6) to Wàiguān (外关 TE 5) to treat 30 insomnia patients, and conducted control observation with the 30 cases treated with Estazolam tablets. The results are reported as follows.

CLINICAL DATA

General data

The 60 patients who visited the outpatient department and inpatient department of Baoding First Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine were enrolled from July, 2016 to August, 2017, numbered according to the visiting sequence, and divided into

acupuncture group (30 cases) and medicine group (30 cases) by applying the random number table. According to the comparison of gender, age and course of disease in the two groups, the differences were not statistically significant (all $P>0.05$), and the results were comparable (Table 1). The study has been reviewed and approved by the Ethics Committee of Chengde Medical University.

Diagnostic criteria

(1) Diagnostic criteria in western medicine: by reference to the *Classification and Diagnostic Criteria of Mental Disorders*^[5]; with the sleep disorders as the main symptoms, including difficult falling asleep, insomnia-middle, restless sleep, profuse dreaming, early awaking or difficult falling asleep again after awakening, discomfort after awakening and fatigue. The above-mentioned sleep disorders occurring for at least 3 times a week, and lasting for over one month with significant anguish, declined mental efficiency or obstruction of social function caused by insomnia.

(2) Diagnostic criteria in traditional Chinese medicine: by reference to the *Criteria of Diagnosis and Therapeutic Effect of Internal Medicine Diseases and Syndromes in Traditional Chinese Medicine*^[6]; with such main symptoms as difficult falling asleep, restless sleep or difficult falling asleep again after awakening, even difficult falling asleep all night, early awaking, sleepiness in the daytime or concomitantly with such symptoms as headache, dizziness, palpitation, poor memory and profuse dreaming, etc.

(3) Inclusion criteria: ① with the age of 18–74 years old, ② without dysfunction of vital organs or without taking drugs possessing serious impact on sleep in recent period, ③ the patients who accepted treatment willingly and signed informed consent form.

(4) Exclusion criteria: ① the patients with mental disorder or psychological disorder, ② night workers, ③ the patients with secondary insomnia induced by any physical disease or mental disorder.

TREATMENT METHODS

Acupuncture group

PC 6 and TE 5, the complementary acupoint,

were selected as the main acupoints, Shénmén (神門 HT 7, bilaterally) and Sānyīnjiāo (三阴交 SP 6, bilaterally) were selected as the combined acupoints. Manipulations: the patients were asked in supine position. 0.30 mm×40 mm filiform needles were adopted (*Hwato* sterile acupuncture needles produced by Suzhou Medical Appliance Factory Limited). After disinfection, the needle was inserted into PC 6 with the needle tip towards the TE 5, the inserting depth of needle was 1–1.2 *cun* to the extent that the patients had obvious sore and swollen sensation. Conventional acupuncture was performed at HT 7 with a depth of 0.3–0.5 *cun*, perpendicular insertion was performed at SP 6 with a depth of 1–1.5 *cun*, and even reinforcing and reducing method was applied. The treatment was conducted for once a day, and the needles were retained for 30 min each time, 5 treatments was performed in one week, and treatment of 4 weeks was needed.

Medicine group

Estazolam was orally given to the patients before sleep every night in a dosage of 1mg per time, and treatment for 4 weeks was needed.

The patients were asked to develop a regular schedule during the treatment period, not to take strenuous exercise, drink strong tea or coffee, or watch pungent film and television program.

CURATIVE EFFECT OBSERVATION

Criteria of the therapeutical effect

By reference to the *Guidelines of Clinical Research on Chinese New Herbal Medicine*^[7], cured: the sleep time returned to normal or with the sleep time of more than 6 hours, the sleep was deep, and full of energy after awakening, markedly effective: the sleep was obviously improved with the increasing sleep time of more than 3 hours, and the depth of sleep increased, effective: the symptoms were relieved with the increasing sleep time of less than 3 hours, ineffective: insomnia was not obviously improved or even aggravated after treatment.

PSQI score

Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI) scale^[8] was adopted to comprehensively evaluate the patients'

Table 1 Comparison of the general information of insomnia patients in the two groups

Groups	Patient (cases)	Gender (cases)		Age ($\bar{x}\pm s$, years)	Course ($\bar{x}\pm s$, months)
		Male	Female		
Acupuncture	30	13	17	43.43±13.52	19.87±7.21
Medicine	30	11	19	46.80±12.95	19.90±6.70

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