

Acupuncture Treatment in Patients with Lumbar Degenerative Disc Disease and Hip Pain

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Abstract : Lumbar degenerative disk disease refers to a syndrome in which damaged disk causes pain in the lower back. The causes are multifactorial but mostly the reason is low energy injury to the disk in the lumbar area that slowly progresses with time. The pain can also radiate to the hips and legs. Statistics say that at least 30% of the people on age from 30 to 50 have some degree of disc degeneration. Acupuncture as part of the 5000 years old Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) can successfully treat lumbar degenerative disk disease and hip pain. In this research are included 20 patients, 9 female and 11 male on age from 29 to 79 all diagnosed with lumbar degenerative disc disease and hip pain. All patients were treated in a clinic for TCM and acupuncture with fire needle acupuncture on Ashi i.e. Trigger points. 11 patients were additionally treated with normal needle acupuncture. Most common age group was from 30 to 40. Most of the patients (16 patients) made 5 or less than 5 treatments. All patients were successfully treated and released from the pain in the low back and hip and all the additional symptoms were gone. Acupuncture can significantly improve, balance and correct the flow of the blood and Qi energy and restore the normal function of the spine.

Key words – acupuncture, traditional Chinese medicine, treatment, disk, pain, hip

1. Introduction

Lumbar degenerative disk disease refers to a syndrome in which damaged disk causes pain in the lower back. Statistics say that at least 30% of the people on age from 30 to 50 have some degree of disc degeneration. After age of 60 it's normal to find some level of disk degeneration on MRI scans. The causes are multifactorial but mostly the reason is low energy injury to the disk in the lumbar area that slowly progresses with time. In most cases is present pain in the lower back that can radiate

down to the hips and legs. The pain is usually worsening when sitting, prolonged standing, bending forward, lifting heavy objects and etc. Other more severe symptoms are weakness, numbness and tingling in the hips and legs and difficulty walking. [1] Acupuncture as part of the 5000 years old Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) can successfully treat lumbar degenerative disk disease and hip pain. Most common patients that seek acupuncture treatment are with lower back pain and hip pain. According to the TCM the stress and the unmanaged mental and emotional concerns create a big amount of systematic inflammation. The inflammation originates from the Heart and the Stomach and travels throughout the body. The joints are the most common places in the body where the inflammation accumulates. With the acupuncture treatment the heat and the inflammation can be successfully eliminated from the joints and discs, the organs function can be improved, the pain can be relieved, the toxins can be disposed from the body and the blood and Qi energy flow can be balanced. [2]

2. Material and methods

In this research are included 20 patients, 9 female and 11 male on age from 29 to 79 all diagnosed with lumbar degenerative disc disease and hip pain. All patients were treated in a clinic for TCM and acupuncture in Skopje, Macedonia by a doctor specialist in acupuncture. Treatment were done with fire needle acupuncture on Ashi i.e. trigger points in the area of the lower back and hip. 11 patients were additionally treated with normal needle acupuncture. Treatments that were made with fire needle were with duration of 5-10 minutes and treatments made with normal needle were with duration of 30-45 minutes. Treatments were made indoor on a room temperature.

3. Results and discussion

Of the treated patients some had pain on the left, some on the right side or on the both sides. Despite the pain in the lower back, hips and legs other symptoms were tingling and numbness in the legs, difficulty walking, pain and inability to lift heavy objects. The duration of the pain was different

lasting from 15 years, 1 year, 6 months and etc. All patients had different work activity: teachers, engineer, technician, salesman, advocate and etc. The most common age group was from 30 to 40. Age groups are shown on table 1.

Table.1. Age groups

Age group	Number of patients
20-30	1
30-40	6
40-50	4
50-60	5
>60	4

Most of the patients (16 patients) made 5 or less than 5 treatments. 6 patients made 2 treatments, 5

patients made 5 treatments etc. The number of the treatments are shown on table 2.

Table.2. Number of treatments made

Number of treatments	Number of patients
1	2
2	6
3	1
4	2
5	5
6	3
7	1

All patients were successfully treated and released from the pain in the low back and hip and all the additional symptoms were gone after certain number of treatments. Acupuncture doesn't repair a bulging or collapsed disc, but by reducing the inflammation in the area and by reducing the pain in the local and systematic pathways it is able to significantly reduce the low back and hip pain. [3]

Acupuncture operated by releasing opioid peptides, activating the hypothalamus and pituitary gland to secrete more neurotransmitters and neurohormones and by stimulation of electromagnetic points on the body. [4] Acupuncture stimulates the healing process and the body to heal on its own. When the Qi energy is blocked the body can develop physical illness such as low back and hip pain. Therefore the aim of the treatment is to free the meridians so the Qi energy can flow freely, remove all the blockages and harmonize the whole well-being. [5] [6]

4. Conclusion

Acupuncture successfully treats musculoskeletal problems and can significantly improve, balance and correct the flow of the blood and Qi energy and restore the normal function of the discs, joints and muscles.

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