

Acupuncture Research Update

"A smile will gain you ten more years of life." -Chinese Proverb

Hepatic Encephalopathy (Acupuncture and The Effects On The Liver)

WHAT IS HEPATIC ENCEPHALOPATHY?

Although Hepatic Encephalopathy (HE) is a rare, it generally occurs in people with chronic liver disease such as those with hepatitis or cirrhosis and can be triggered by dehydration or infection.

Symptoms of this illness include early signs of forgetfulness, confusion and breath that can either be sweet or musty in odor. Once the symptoms are advanced, they often turn into shaking of the hands or arms, slurred speech, seizures and even disorientation.

There are three levels of HE; Acute Fulminant Viral Hepatitis which comes on suddenly, Toxic Hepatitis which may be caused by exposure to chemicals, drugs or alcohol and Reye's Syndrome which is most commonly seen in children and includes swelling and inflammation of the liver and brain.

There are a few ways that treatment can be handled for this illness such as removing the toxic substances from the intestine, eat less proteins as this can trigger the illness to act up, and even undergoing acupuncture treatment to help aid the symptoms.

WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

The purpose behind this study was to observe therapeutic effects that acupuncture may have on patients with hepatic encephalopathy.

The patients partaking in the study were divided into two groups, one being a group for acupuncture that had 38 candidates, and another for western medicine with 36 candidates. All patients that were involved with this study were treated for 1 week. Those that were a part of the western medicine group were given treatments with an "intravenous injection of aspartate ornithine and branched chain amino acids" and those who were partaking in the acupuncture group were treated with acupuncture at thirteen acupoints.

RESULTS

When the results were compared with pre-treatment, it was found that both parties from the western medicine group and the acupuncture group had significantly lower levels, however, the therapeutic effects of the acupuncture group "were obviously superior to those of the western medicine group."

After the results were reviewed, it was also declared that "treatment of acupuncture at thirteen ... acupoints combined with western medicine can enhance the curative effect of hepatic encephalopathy, improve patients' liver function and decrease the levels of plasma ammonia and β -endorphin."

Overall, using acupuncture can help aid in the symptoms that coincide with HE. If you struggle with Hepatic Encephalopathy, ask me how acupuncture can help!

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