

CASE REPORT

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Acupuncture treatment for Insomnia

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Abstract

Insomnia is a prevalent sleep disorder that makes it difficult to fall asleep, stay asleep, or return to sleep after waking up too early. As a result, a person may wake up feeling unrefreshed and fatigued. This condition can lower the energy levels and impact one's mood. The amount of sleep needed varies for each person, but most adults require between 7 and 9 hours per night. Many adults experience short-term insomnia at some point, lasting for days or weeks. However, some individuals suffer from long-term insomnia, known as chronic insomnia. In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), insomnia is more than just difficulty sleeping—it reflects an imbalance between Yin and Yang, the opposing forces that regulate the body's natural rhythms. Yin, which symbolizes coolness, nourishment, and rest, dominates the night, while Yang, linked to warmth, energy, and alertness, governs the day. When this balance is disrupted, the body has trouble shifting between wakefulness and rest, resulting in sleep disturbances. In this research paper is about eighteen years old girl who suffer from insomnia around 6 months. She is a high school student, and she goes to school in shifts. She uses melatonin as a therapy for this problem, and another health problem she has is an allergy to flowers and grass. When she came to our center for TCM, she slept for 3-5 hours and usually fell asleep in the early morning hours around 5-6 am. So far, he has had a total of 16 acupuncture treatments. The first 9 treatments were done more frequently, every second or third day, and then when the situation improved, she continued with the treatments once a week. After acupuncture treatments, the patient feels better, she sleeps 5-6 hours at night and also sleeps during the day. When she is on the second shift at school, she sleeps up to 8-9 hours at night. Acupuncture is often used as a treatment for insomnia and gives positive results.

Key words: Insomnia, treatment, acupuncture, TCM

Introduction

Insomnia is a common sleep disorder characterized by difficulty falling asleep, staying asleep, or going back to sleep after waking too early. This often leads to feelings of fatigue and not feeling well-rested upon waking. This condition can lower the energy levels and impact one's mood. The amount of sleep needed varies for each person, but most adults require between 7 and 9 hours per night. Many adults experience short-term insomnia at some point, lasting for days or weeks. However, some individuals suffer from long-term insomnia, known as chronic insomnia. [1]

Symptoms of insomnia include: lying awake for a long time before you fall asleep, being awake for much of the night, sleeping for only short terms, feeling as if you have not sleep at all. Insomnia can lead to daytime fatigue and low energy levels. It may also contribute to feelings of anxiety, depression, or irritability. Difficulty concentrating, paying attention, learning, and remembering are common challenges. Additionally, insomnia can result in more serious health issues. [2]

Risk Factors — Numerous sociodemographic factors have been linked to insomnia, including older age, being female, lower socioeconomic status, unemployment, limited education, psychological distress, and poor self-perceived health. However, only some of these factors fulfill the criteria to be considered true risk factors. For example, being female, having a family history of insomnia, and experiencing stress from chronic or severe life events are consistently recognized as reliable predictors for the development of insomnia. [3]

The criteria for diagnosing insomnia continue to evolve as research on the disorder progresses. Under current guidelines, a diagnosis of insomnia requires the individual to report at least one of the previously listed symptoms of insomnia. In certain situations, a definitive diagnosis of insomnia may require additional testing. Your doctor might refer you for one of the following procedures. Your doctor might recommend an overnight sleep study, commonly referred to as a polysomnogram. This test typically involves spending the night at a specialized sleep center, where sensors are placed on areas such as your scalp, face, eyelids, chest, limbs, and a finger. These sensors track brain waves, heart rate, breathing, oxygen levels, and muscle movements before, during, and after sleep. Actigraphy is a type of sleep test that is somewhat similar to an overnight sleep study, but it's typically done at home. During this test, you'll wear a sensor—usually on your wrist or ankle—that tracks your sleep and wake patterns. It is generally recommended to wear the device continuously for a period of three to 14 days. Blood tests: Several medical conditions can contribute to or worsen sleep issues. Based on the results of your questionnaire and physical exam, your doctor may suggest blood tests to check for thyroid problems and other underlying conditions. [4]

There are various home treatments for insomnia that a person can try. By adjusting certain habits and routines, a person might be able to enhance the quality of your sleep. Exercise is beneficial for overall health and can enhance the quality of the sleep. Maintaining healthy sleep habits and practicing good sleep hygiene are essential for managing insomnia. This includes maintaining a consistent sleep schedule every day. What a person eats and drinks may also affect the sleep. While a healthy diet has numerous benefits, one must try to avoid large meals close to bedtime. A dark room can help fall asleep more easily and stay asleep throughout the night. Using the phone, tablet, or watching TV before going to bed should be avoided. It's also helpful to complete any demanding tasks earlier in the day, rather than in the hours leading up to bedtime. To prepare the bedroom for rest, make it comfortable by dimming the lights, adjusting the temperature if possible, and reducing noise. [5]

Case Report

In this research paper is written about eighteen years old girl who suffers from insomnia around 6 months. She is a high school student, and she goes to school in shifts. She uses melatonin (*a hormone which helps the body wind down and prepare for sleep*) as a therapy for this problem, and another health problem she has is an allergy to flowers and grass. When she came to our center for TCM, she slept for 3-5 hours and usually fell asleep in the early morning hours around 5-6 am. So far, she has had a total of 16 acupuncture treatments. The first 9 treatments were done more frequently, every second

or third day, and then when the situation improved, she continued with the treatments once a week. After acupuncture treatments, the patient feels better, she sleeps 5-6 hours at night and also sleeps during the day. When she is on the second shift at school, she sleeps up to 8-9 hours at night.

The acupuncture treatments were made in an acupuncture clinic for acupuncture and TCM in Skopje, North Macedonia by a doctor specialist in acupuncture. Acupuncture treatments were with a duration of 30 to 45 minutes. Treatments were done indoors, on a room temperature, with normal (dry) acupuncture with fine sterile disposable needles sized 0.25x25mm. Meridians used in the treatments are: DU, LI, ST, KD, LU, PC.

Classical literature in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) reflects a rich and profound understanding of insomnia. The condition is described using various terms such as "sleeplessness," "lack of sleep," "no night," and "insomnia." Its origins, causes, and diagnostic approaches are explored in detail in numerous sections of the *Huangdi Neijing* (Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine), a foundational text from the pre-Qin period. In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), the heart is regarded as the "sovereign" organ, overseeing the entire body and playing a crucial role in both the development and treatment of insomnia. It is seen as the residence of the mind or "shen" (spirit), which governs consciousness. As the heart is also center of mental and emotional activity, it is closely linked to conditions such as depression and anxiety. Therefore, restoring balance to the heart is considered a fundamental approach in managing insomnia within the framework of TCM. [6]

Acupuncture is a key therapeutic method in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) that involves the insertion and manipulation of fine needles at specific locations on the body, known as acupoints. These points can be found on various regions such as the trunk, limbs, ears, and scalp. The goal of acupuncture is to alleviate symptoms, promote healing, and prevent more serious health conditions. With a history spanning over 5,000 years, acupuncture has demonstrated positive clinical outcomes in the treatment of a wide range of health issues. Research comparing acupuncture to pharmaceutical treatments has consistently shown that acupuncture offers superior long-term effectiveness. While medications tend to produce quicker initial results, acupuncture generally requires a greater number of sessions to exceed the benefits provided by drug therapy. [7]

Conclusion

The goal of acupuncture, as a Chinese Medicine treatment, is to restore harmony within the body's systems while rebalancing Yin and Yang energies within, soothing the body, calming the mind, and unlocking the potential for deep and restorative sleep.

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Conflict of interest

The author have declared that no competing interests exist.

Acknowledgement

None.

Statement of Informed Consent

Written informed consent was obtained from the patient for his anonymized Information to be published in this article