

Acupuncture treatment in chronic prostatitis

Jihe Zhu¹, Blagica Arsovska^{1,2}, Kristina Kozovska^{1,3}

1 Center of Traditional Chinese Medicine and acupuncture 'Tong Da Tang', Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia

2 Faculty of Medical Sciences, University "Goce Delcev", Stip, Republic of N. Macedonia;

3 Medicine Faculty, University "St. Cyril and Methodius", Skopje, Republic of N. Macedonia

Abstract

Chronic prostatitis/chronic pelvic pain syndrome (CP/CPPS) is a genitourinary disease commonly seen in male, with symptoms involving pelvic pain, urinary system disease, painful urination and sexual dysfunction, which seriously affects physical and mental health, and also influences the quality of life of patients. Acupuncture is the primary form of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) that can show good curative effect with advantages of safety and affordability. Acupuncture is able to lower CP/CPPS symptoms without the drug treatments associated side effects. In this article is presented a case of 59 year old man with chronic prostatitis that has been present for more then one year. The patient has made 10 acupuncture treatments in a period of one and a half month. The blood results done before the treatment show - PSA 4.53 ng/ml (ref. range for male <4 ng/ml), on medications - PSA 4.28 ng/ml and after acupuncture treatment 2.16 ng/ml. Acupuncture points used in the treatments are: Baihui DU20, Hegu (left and right) L14, Zhongwan RN12, Guanyuan RN4, Tianshu (left and right) ST25, Qūgǔ RN2, Zúsānlí (left and right) ST36, Sanyinjiao (left and right) SP6. Acupuncture has been used widely and a number of clinical researches have indicated that it is a safe and effective treatment to prevent and treat prostatitis.

Key words: prostatitis, acupuncture, Traditional Chinese Medicine, urology

Introduction

Prostatitis is inflammation (swelling) of the prostate gland. The disorder can be very distressing and painful, but often by the time it gets better. The prostate is a small gland located between the bladder and the penis. The gland produces fluid mixed with sperm due to create semen. It is the most common urological diagnosis among adult men around the age of 50-70. Urologists give the diagnose for prostatitis by sending the patient to have a urine test, therefore the doctor can check for bacteria and other signs of infection. Patient might also need a blood test, might be offered a PSA test, ultrasonography, might also have a digital rectal examination to see if the prostate is inflamed and painful, and the doctor may examine stomach area (abdomen) and penis. Chronic prostatitis/chronic pelvic pain syndrome (CP/CPPS) is one of the most common urological diseases in male. The CP/CPPS is the most common prostatitis syndrome, comprising 90–95% of prostatitis cases. Symptoms that may occur are: discomfort or repeated and chronic pain in the pelvic region, urinary or ejaculatory symptoms such as dysuria, frequent urination, incomplete emptying or ejaculatory pain. Some patients may appear other symptoms like fatigue, dizziness, memory loss, anxiety and depression. The pathophysiology of e diseaset is still unclear. The treatment is aimed mainly to relieve the patient of the clinical symptoms and improve the quality of life. Conventional oral medications include antibiotics, α -blockers, anti-inflammatory drugs, which may have a lot of side effects like gastrointestinal reaction, orthostatic hypotension and other. Current research data indicates that there is still no ideal treatment for prostatitis.[1][2][3]

For a long time, acupuncture has been widely used as an essential and safest alternative or complementary treatment method against various diseases word-wide. Acupuncture is the primary form of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) that uses needles to puncture into acupoints located on the skin. Acupoints are points located on the meridians on the body that can be mechanically stimulated and can trigger nerve signals that affects the function of other parts of the body. Acupuncture raises the level of certain hormones, gamma globulin, antibodies, ie has immuno-stimulating effect, stimulating the production

of endorphins, influencing the production and secretion of several neurotransmitters and improving the circulation. [4]

Case report

The treated patient presented in the research is a 59 year old man with chronic prostatitis that has been present for more than one year. He was diagnosed with chronic prostatitis and benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) or prostate gland enlargement. Before starting the treatments, the patient tried different medicines like alpha-blockers and antibiotics but without any evidential results. He even felt more uncomfortable in gastric system.

The blood results done on 27.09.2022 are showing the following - PSA 4.53 ng/ml (ref. range for male <4 ng/ml), prostate volume 42.7 ccm, RU 60ml. The therapy prescribed by urology doctor is - Caps.Tamsulosin 0.4mg x 1 morning – 3 months, Tabl. FinasteridPharma S x 1 morning -3 months, Tabl. Levofloxacin 500 mg 1x1 - 28 days, Probiotic 1x1 -28 days. A re-check in one month is recommended for new probable PSA outcome.

The patient started the prescribed therapy but even after one month the symptoms such as frequent urination and incomplete emptying were still present. After taking the medications the patient developed gastric problems and high blood pressure.

A new PSA test was done on 11.11.2022 showing PSA 4.28 ng/ml (ref. value for male <4 ng/ml). With these still high and unchanged values, the patient decided to stop the therapy and start with acupuncture treatment. The acupuncture treatments were made in acupuncture clinic for TCM and acupuncture in Skopje, North Macedonia by doctor specialist in acupuncture. The patient has made 10 acupuncture treatments in a period of one and a half month. The treatment duration is 30-45 minutes. Treatments were done indoor, on a room temperature, with normal acupuncture with fine sterile disposable needles sized 0.25x25mm. Acupuncture points used in the treatments are: Baihui DU20,

Hegu (left and right) L14, Zhongwan RN12, Guanyuan RN4, Tianshu (left and right) ST25, Qūgǔ RN2, Zúsānlí (left and right) ST36, Sanyinjiao (left and right) SP6.

Four acupuncture treatments were done twice per week, when the urinary symptoms disappeared. The patient continued with the treatments once per week until the PSA level normalized to normal range level PSA - 2.16 ng/ml (done on 23.12.2022) and the pelvic pain syndrome disappeared too. The blood results are presented on table 1. Preventively, the patient comes twice a month in the clinic for overall health protection.

Table 1. PSA results before and after the treatment and during taking medications

Ref. value for PSA	< 4 ng/ml
Before acupuncture and medications	4.53 ng/ml
Before acupuncture, on medications	4.28 ng/ml
After acupuncture, without medications	2.16 ng/ml

The effect of acupuncture in the treatment of chronic prostatitis/chronic pelvic pain syndrome (CP/CPPS) is definite, and progress has been made in the studies of its functional mechanism. This article discusses the related studies on the mechanism of acupuncture in the treatment of CP/CPPS from five aspects: regulating immunity, anti-oxidative stress, regulating neural functions, improving urodynamics, and regulating blood circulation. It is found that acupuncture can decrease the level of pro-inflammatory factors, increase the level of anti-inflammatory factors, and regulate the level of inflammatory regulatory factors, thus regulating immunity. Acupuncture can improve the body's ability of anti-oxidative stress, regulate the balance state of oxidation and anti-oxidation, relieve tissue damage and regulate neural functions by modulating neurotransmitters and autonomic nerves. Acupuncture can improve urodynamics and relieve abnormal urination symptoms by regulating the contractions of pelvic floor muscles, also to promote blood circulation to treat the pelvic congestion. [5]

Treatment with TCM takes more time, but the aim is no to intoxicate the organism, but in the most natural way to help the body to heal with its own ability. The treatment has a positive effect not only locally but also generally on the whole well-being. It helps in resolving stagnation, balances the energy, calms the spirit, nourishes the blood, Yin and Yang, relieves the pain, benefits the brain, strengthens the organs and expels all pathogenic factors like wind, cold, heat and dampness. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) dates back more than 5,000 years ago and includes variety of therapies. It is safe, accessible, effective and affordable treatment. A main element of TCM is the holism meaning that the human being is seen as a whole and a part of nature. In TCM each patient is seen as an individual and for each patient the therapy is different. All medicines used in TCM are natural, which is one of the main benefits, which is contrary to Western medicine. Modern medicine generalizes diseases, while Chinese medicine focuses on finding specificities and the root of the problem and treating them. [4]

Conclusion

Acupuncture, as a part of the Traditional Chinese Medicine, in our practice presented very satisfying and positive results in the treatment of chronic prostatitis, resulting in overall health improvement.

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