

Acupuncture treatment for irregular menstrual period

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Abstract

Every woman gets their period every 21 to 35 days, and a period usually lasts 3 to 7 days. Menstrual period is still regular even if it varies slightly from cycle to cycle. Irregular period includes: periods that occur fewer than 21 or more than 35 days, period does not come more than three months or at all, bleeding is heavier or lighter than usual, period last shorter or longer than usual, bleeding (spotting) between periods or after sexual intercourse. Many things can cause irregular menstruation like some medical conditions or lifestyle factors. In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) the cause of irregular menstruation is related to blood stagnation, liver qi stagnation, or spleen qi deficiency. In this article is presented a case of 18 years old girl with irregular menstruation in the last 6 years. She gets her period on every 3 or 4 months. She got her first period when she was 11 years old. She made 10 acupuncture treatments once weekly and continued with two more every second week. She got her period after the 9th treatment and again after the 12th treatment regularly . Before she started with acupuncture she was taking Orgametril tablets, Agnes tablets and some nature tea. Acupuncture as a part of Chinese medicine has a long history in the management of irregular period. It's a natural method that encourages woman's body to re-establish regular ovulation and to get hormones back in balance.

Key Words: Irregular menstruation, menstrual period, acupuncture, treatment, TCM

Introduction

Every woman gets their period every 21 to 35 days, and a period usually last 3 to 7 days. Menstrual period is still regular even if it varies slightly from cycle to cycle. Irregular periods include: periods that occur fewer than 21 or more than 35 days, period does not come more than three months or at all, bleeding is heavier or lighter than usual, period last shorter or longer than usual, bleeding (spotting) between periods or after sexual intercourse. [1]

There are many different causes for irregular menstruation like: Polycystic ovary syndrome, pregnancy or breast feeding, eating disorders, extreme weight loss or too much exercising, uterine fibroids, pelvic inflammatory disease, premature ovarian failure. Also, there are life factors like stress, travel, viruses or other health conditions, some medicines etc. [2]

Treating an irregular menstrual cycle will depend on the underlying cause. Treatments can include: Gonadotropin-releasing hormone (GnRH) agonists, intrauterine device (IUD),

hormonal birth control, pain management: nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs like ibuprofen or Aleve, normal exercise, meditation, health diet adequate rest and etc. There are some tests to determinate what is the cause for irregular menstruation like: blood test, pelvic exam, vaginal cultures and pelvic ultrasound. If the patient develops some of the following symptom like high fever, severe pelvic pain, foul-smelling vaginal discharge, unusually heavy bleeding, bleeding between periods, periods that last longer than seven days, they should speak with the doctor. [3]

Case report

In this article is presented a case of 18 years old girl with irregular menstruation in the last 6 years. She gets her period on every 3 or 4 months. She got her first period when she was 11 years old. Before she started with acupuncture she was taking Orgametril tablets, Agnes tablets and some nature tea. She is a sports active person. She got her period after the 9th treatment and again after the 12th treatment regularly. When she got her period, on the third day she did a hormonal test, the results were fine, only estrogen was little lower (11,8) and cortisol was slightly elevated (876,54).

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. Acupuncture points used in the treatments are: Du20, Du19, Du22, Bl10, Rn10, Rn15, Ki11, St30, Li4, St36, Sp6, Lr3.

Chinese medicine has a long history of treating patients with irregular menstruation. Traditional Chinese medicine is a medical knowledge system developed by the Chinese people. The practice is defined by the holistic concept of 'harmony between man and nature', thus, it encompasses use of the natural resources inside and outside the human body. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) introduces various philosophical concepts, such as, yin and yang, qi energy and the 'five elements'(water, metal, earth, fire and wood). Acupuncture as a part of TCM, involves needle insertion into the human body at a dependable angle. There are hundreds of acupoints in TCM and they do not refer to the anatomical physical organs, but to a system of human physiological functions based on the human physiology and attributes of the human body. To achieve the treatment purpose, acupuncture techniques are used, such as twirling and lifting to stimulate specific parts of the human body. [4]

According to Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) principles, irregular menstrual cycles are frequently attributed to diminished blood production, stemming from exhaustion in both blood and essence, thereby weakening the body. This condition may be linked to factors such as Blood stasis or Dampness, leading to the stagnation of blood flow and blockage in the body's channels. Additionally, TCM views irregular periods as a manifestation of imbalances between Yin and Yang, particularly involving the Spleen, Kidney, and Liver. Acupuncture offers assistance with irregular periods through multiple mechanisms. Initially, it engages the "energy gateways" to alleviate Qi stagnation and clear blockages within the body's meridians. This, in turn, enhances blood circulation, particularly in the pelvic region where the uterus is situated, as acupuncture promotes the stimulation of energy and blood supply. Additionally, acupuncture has the potential to bolster the body's energy levels and immune system, facilitating the removal of pathogens that contribute to internal disharmony. Also, acupuncture can help to regulate Ying and Yang harmony. [5]

Conclusion

Acupuncture as a part of the TCM is one of the most effective and natural treatments to ease the menstrual problems. Acupuncture will help to restore body's natural balance and brings in harmony.

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