

## Acupuncture plus Point-injection for 32 Cases of Obstinate Urticaria

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In order to observe the therapeutic effects of acupuncture plus point-injection for obstinate urticaria, 64 cases of obstinate urticaria were randomly divided into the following two groups. 32 cases in the treatment group were treated with acupuncture at the points of Quchi (LI11), Xuehai (SP10), Zusanli (ST 36), Sanyinjiao (SP6) and Fengchi (GB20) plus point-injection at the points of Zusanli (ST36) and Quchi (LI11). 32 cases in the control group were treated with antihistamines (such as Acrivastine, Cinnarizine or Ranitidine). The results showed that the therapeutic effect in the treatment group was obviously better than that in the control group ( $P<0.05$ ), with a much lower relapse rate in the former than that in the latter ( $P<0.01$ ).

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From 2002 to 2003, the author used acupuncture plus point-injection to treat 32 cases of obstinate urticaria, with good therapeutic effects as reported in the following.

### Clinical Materials

The cases in this series were selected according to the criteria for diagnosing obstinate urticaria described in *Acupuncture-Moxibustion Therapeutics* (针灸治疗学).<sup>1</sup> The illness course should be no less than 2 months (with frequent attacks or daily episodes); and the patients had been treated with more than two therapies of the western medicine without obvious therapeutic effects, or the illness could be controlled or improved when taking western medicine but it recurred when the treatment was suspended.

### General Data

The 64 cases selected were randomly divided into 2 groups by the single blind method. Among the 32 cases in the treatment group were 17 males and 15 females, aged 12-68 (51 on the average), with the illness course ranging from 2 months to 10 years (7 years on the average). Among the 32 cases in the control group were 13 males and 19 females, aged 15-62 (52 on the average), with the illness course ranging from 2 months to 8 years (6 years

on the average). There were no statistically obvious differences ( $P>0.05$ ) in general data between the two groups, hence comparable.

### Methods of Treatment

The treatment group was given acupuncture plus point-injection. Acupuncture was performed bilaterally at Quchi (LI11), Xuehai (SP10), Zusanli (ST36), Sanyinjiao (SP6) and Fengchi (GB20) by the uniform reinforcing-reducing method. During 30 minutes of retention, the needles were twirled 2-3 times to strengthen the stimulation. After acupuncture, cupping was performed at Geshu (BL 17) and Xuehai (SP10) on both sides. Point-injection was carried out at Zusanli (ST36) and Quchi (LI11) on both sides. The skin was routinely sterilized. A No.6 needle on a 2ml syringe with 0.4ml of benadryl was used. After vertically inserted into the points, the needles were lifted and thrust until achievement of the needling sensation, and then 0.2ml of benadryl was injected to each point, once a day for 10 times as a course of treatment. The patients were treated for 2 courses of treatment with an interval of 2-3 days between courses.

The patients in the control group orally took

Xinminle 8mg each time, 3 times a day; Cinnarizine 15mg each time, 3 times a day; and Ranitidine 0.15g each time, twice a day, with the same courses of treatment as in the treatment group.

The patients in the two groups were asked to increase physical exercises so as to strengthen their resistance against disease. Attention was also paid to looking for the sensitinogens to avoid contacting them once again.

Statistical method: Redit analysis was used for comparison of the curative effects between the two groups and  $\chi^2$  test for comparison of the relapse rate.

### Criteria for Curative Effects

The criteria for curative effects were worked out in reference to that on obstinate urticaria in *The Latest Acupuncture-Moxibustion Therapeutics in 165 Diseases*.<sup>2</sup> Being cured means that urticaria disappears without relapse in a follow-up visit for half a year. Being effective means that urticaria disappears with relapse in half a year but symptoms vanish after treated again. Being ineffective means no obvious change before and after treatment.

### Results of Treatment

Comparison of curative effects between the two groups:

After the treatment, 19 cases were cured, 10 effective and 3 ineffective with a total effective rate of 90.63% in the treatment group. In the control group, 10 cases were cured, 12 effective and 10 ineffective with a total effective rate of 68.75%. Redit analysis showed that the curative effect in the treatment group was obviously higher than that in the control group ( $P<0.05$ ).

2. Comparison of the relapse rate between the two groups:

In a follow-up visit for half a year, there was 1 case of relapse (3.45%) in the treatment group, and 13

cases of relapse (59.10%) in the control group.  $\chi^2$  test showed that the relapse rate in the treatment group was much lower than that in the control group ( $P<0.01$ ).

### Discussion

Urticaria, the result of temporary increase in vascular permeability of skin mucosa and edema, is often caused by food, drugs, microbes, insect bites, mental factors, chemical factors, mechanical stimulation and general diseases. It is believed in traditional Chinese medicine that urticaria is mainly caused by congenital defect, weak *ying* and *wei* system, as well as combination of wind and cold or heat in the skin surface. Acute urticaria can heal after a short-term attack while chronic urticaria is very difficult to cure, often with repeated fits for several months or longer. Urticaria is mainly treated by replenishing *qi*, nourishing blood, expelling wind, consolidating superficial resistance and strengthening the body resistance to eliminate pathogenic factors. Xuehai point is used to "treat blood to expel wind". Zusanli point can regulate *qi* and blood, foster vital *qi* and strengthen body resistance. Fengchi point can expel wind and eliminate pathogenic factors. Quchi, a point of Yangming Channel, can expel wind and clear away heat. Sanyinjiao, belonging to the Spleen Channel of Foot-taiyin, can replenish *qi* and nourish blood. Geshu is used to treat disease of the blood system. Cupping can expel wind and promote blood circulation. Point-injection of benadryl can strengthen the antiallergic effect with fewer side effects. Therefore, acupuncture plus point-injection has better curative effect than Western drugs for obstinate urticaria, and can markedly reduce recurrence rate.

### References

1. 杨长森. 针灸治疗学. 上海: 上海科学技术出版社 1985:121.
2. 张仁. 165种病症最新针灸治疗学. 上海: 文汇出版社 1987:732.

(Translated by Duan Shumin 段树民)