

Research article

A clinical study to evaluate the efficacy of Acupuncture for increasing body weight

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ABSTRACT

Loss of weight is a common metabolic disorder seen in clinical practice. Weight management through Acupuncture therapy is more practical because Acupuncture treatment has a quick effect within a short period and small expense. Therefore, this study will give awareness to build up good health. The aim of this study was to evaluate the effect of Acupuncture treatment for weight gain. Forty-five patients of either sex aged between 18-50 years have been included in this study which was conducted in Korean Acupuncture clinic at Ayurvedic teaching hospital, Borella. An interviewer-administered to collect necessary primary and secondary data. The clinical examination of body weight and Body mass index (BMI) was considered as assessment criteria. The patient who had taken a healthy nutritional diet for more than 03 months, body weight between 30-60 kg and BMI lower than 23 were included. The patients diagnosed with short height, hair loss, irregular menses, body weakness and memory loss condition were selected in this study. Patients having complaints of overweight/ obesity, diabetes mellitus, hypertension, heart diseases, liver diseases had been excluded. The results highlighted that the maximum number of patients had a body weight of 45-49.9 kg and BMI 18.5-22.4. Body weight and BMI were considered as significant after the acupuncture and moxibustion therapy. The present study proved to increase body weight and BMI by kidney tonification point of Acupuncture treatment. It can be concluded that kidney tonification points of acupuncture treatment were beneficial to increase body weight.

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INTRODUCTION

Loss of weight is one of a metabolic disorder caused by poor eating of high caloric foods that are powered with carbohydrates, protein and healthy fat. The most natural way to increase weight is to improve digestive system, liver function and appetite naturally by increasing body-oxygen levels. When a person is underweight and struggles with weight gain, he always has low body oxygenation. These abnormalities cause poor perfusion of all organs, a lack of hunger, low levels of energy, horrible of sleep and many other problems (Swash, 1995).

In Ayurveda view, all types of food ingested undergo *Jataragni Paka* at the outset. The function of digestion and absorption has been attributed to *Jataragni Paka* (Sharma and Dash, 2015). *Anna Rasa* absorbed from the *Mahasrothasa* goes in circulation. The circulating *Rasa* is made available to different tissues for nutrition. The nutrients reach the different tissues are acted upon by *Dhatwagni*.

The function of *Dhatwagni* is to participate in the process of metabolism. There is a breakdown of the nutrition; it caused low production of energy (Sharma and Dash, 2015).

The most authentic text of Ayurveda has clearly mentioned eight types of *Ninditha* persons and the too emaciated person is one of them. This disorder seen in the clinical practice and its management through acupuncture therapy is more practical because acupuncture treatment is effective, quick and can be adopted within a very short period and small expense. Acupuncture is a method of the treatment stimulating the human body externally and the medication therapy is stimulating in the internal organs. Acupuncture is one of the oldest commonly used medical procedures in the world. It is on improving the overall well-being of the patient rather than the treatment of isolated symptoms. It is very effective in functional disease and chronic degenerative diseases. Wasting disease recovered by acupuncture treated which has the constitutional elements. Acupuncture

improves digestion by improving motility, the production of digestive enzymes and the absorption of nutrition's substances. It balances metabolism and improves the system of circulation. Treatment frequency depends on individual condition (Gyu-Eon, 2012).

Moxibustion treats and prevents diseases by applying heat to points or a certain location of the human body. Moxa prepare from *Artemisia vulgaris* leaves extraction. Moxa leaf is bitter and acrid, producing warmth when used in a small amount. It can expel cold and dampness, warm the spleen and stomach to remove stagnation. Moxibustion therapy can induce qi and blood circulation of the body and depressed symptoms by warm meridians. Both acupuncture therapy and moxibustion therapy can cure acute and chronic diseases according to the patients (Gyu-Eon, 2012).

Qi, blood and body fluid are the three fundamental substances of the human body. Qi is the vital activities and substances in the human body. The essential Qi of the kidney is the ability to develop and reproduce the body. If the function of kidney qi is abnormal mal-development or underdevelopment of the body will manifest. Qi circulates in the body along energy pathways called meridians. Each meridian is linked to specific body systems and internal organs. Meridians are connected with the acupuncture points. When acupuncture needles are inserted through the body they help rebalance the flow of energy and restored health.

In oriental medicine each of the major organ systems in assigned the elements (wood, fire, earth, metal and water). Certain elements produce and control other elements. The five elements are arranged in the circle in a particular order (Fig. 1). According to the five elementary theories, wood promotes fire, fire promotes earth, earth promotes metal, metal promotes water and water promotes wood (Gyu-Eon, 2012).

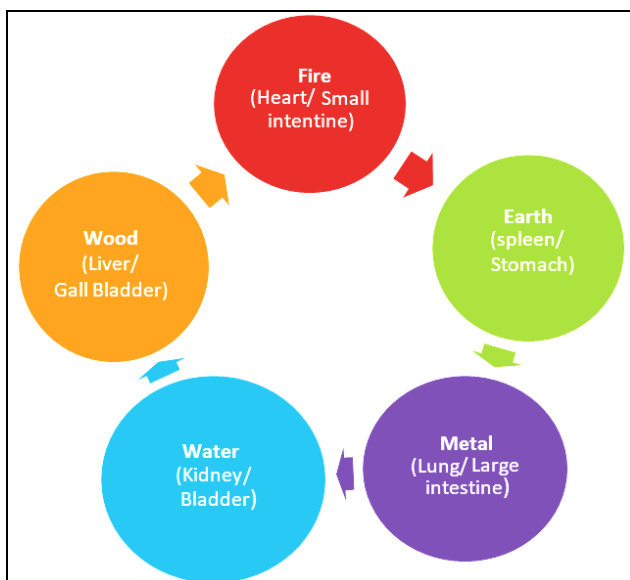


Fig. 1. The cycle of mutual production

Certain elements control or inhibit another element. Water controls fire, Wood controls earth, Fire controls metal and Earth controls water. Earth Zang organ is the spleen. Earth related to spleen and water related to the kidney. The flow of water can be stopped by earth, thus earth destroys water (Fig. 2).

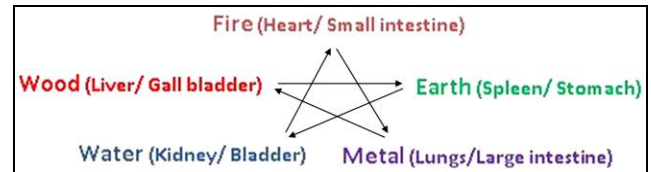


Fig. 2. The cycle of mutual control

In Yin –Yang theory kidney is the main organ to develop & reproduce of the body. Loos of weight persons are included in lesser yang constitutional type and organ of the kidney also weak in these persons (Gyu-Eon, 2017). The aim of this study is to evaluate the effect of acupuncture treatment for weight gain.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study design and setting

This was a general clinical study conducted in the Korean acupuncture clinic of Ayurvedic teaching hospital, Borella, Sri-Lanka.

Duration of the study

This study was planned for 6 months including 3 months treatment and 3 months follow-up.

Study population and sample size

Age between 18-50 years of 24 male patients and 16 female patients in Colombo district were included.

Inclusive criteria

The patient who had taken a healthy nutritional diet for more than 06 months, body weight between 35-55 kg and BMI less than 18.5 were included for the study.

Exclusive criteria

The patient who had overweight, obesity, diabetes mellitus, hypertension, heart diseases, liver diseases were excluded from the study.

Data collection

An interviewer was administered to collect necessary primary and secondary data related to the study. The clinical examination of body weight

and body mass index (BMI) was considered as assessment criteria.

Treatment procedure

Patients were treated in kidney tonification points of acupuncture with moxibustion in CV6 (Gihae). Sterile disposable needles were administered in both sides of the body with connected electric acupuncture apparatus for 25 minutes per day, 3 days per week for 3 months.

Kidney Meridian tonification points

Tonifying metal

1. Water meridian - metal - KI 7 (Buryu)
2. Metal meridian – metal - LU 8 (Gyeonggeo)

Reducing Earth

1. Water meridian – earth - KI 3 (Taegyae)
2. Earth meridian – earth - SP 3 (Taebaeg)

Moxibustion

1. CV6 (Gihae)

All the kidney meridian tonification points are given in Fig. 3.

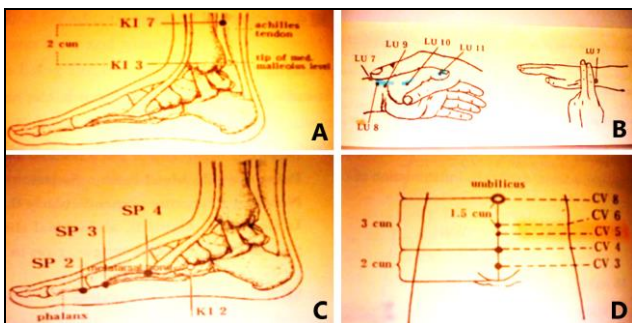


Fig. 3. Kidney meridian tonification points (A: KI 3 & KI 7; B: LU 8; C: SP 3; D: CV 6)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The observation based on the major complaints is given in Table 1. It has been found that out of total participants, 42.2% were found to have short height whereas 15.5% of patients were found to have weakness complaint.

Table 1. Complaints presenting of the sample

Major complaints	No.	Percentage
Short height	19	42.2
Hair loss	05	11.1
Irregular menses	03	6.6
Body weakness	07	15.5
Memory loss + Anxiety	11	24.4

In this study, the body weight was significantly different after the treatment. After acupuncture therapy, the body weight of 45-49.9 kg group was increased from 28.8% to 46.6%. The therapy increased body weight of 40-44.9 kg group from 26.6% to 42.2%. It has been found that the treatment did not show any effect on the patients of 35-39.9 kg group. The overall result is shown in Fig. 4.

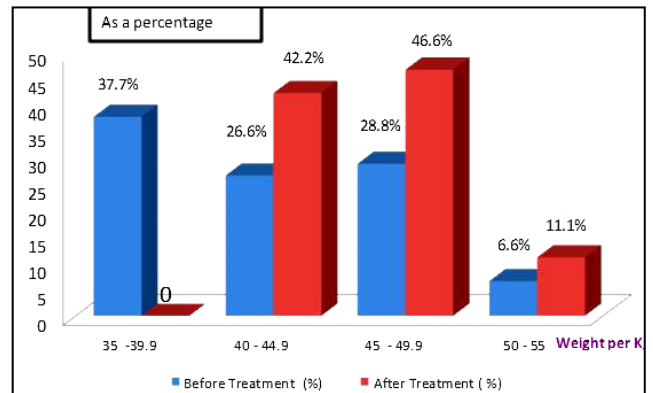


Fig. 4. Distribution of body weight in patients

The acupuncture therapy was able to increase the BMI which was found statistically significant. Before acupuncture treatment, 33.3% in BMI range 17.5-18.4 was decreased to 15.5%. After therapy, BMI 18.5-19.4, 19.5-20.4 and 21.5-22.4 was increased by 31.1%, 26.6% and 26.6%, respectively (Fig. 5).

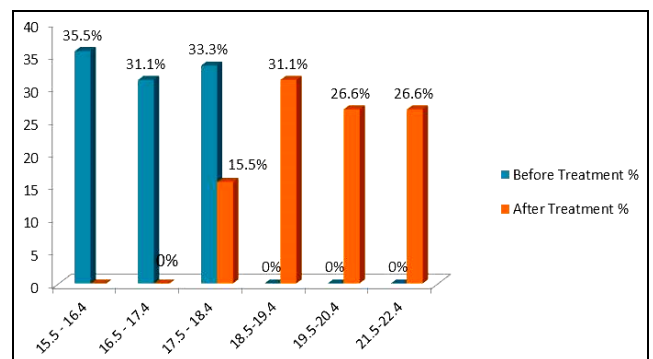


Fig. 5. Distribution of BMI in patients

From the present results, body weight and BMI have been considered to be significantly increased after the acupuncture and moxibustion therapy.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that kidney tonification points of acupuncture were beneficial to increase body weight.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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