

ABSTRACT

The effects of acupuncture on mental wellbeing in chronically ill patients

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Introduction: Demand of patients for the Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) in Czech Republic is raising and therefore it is necessary to critically evaluate its benefit for specific diagnoses, so that it would be possible to draw conclusions about its use in clinical practice.

Objective: To evaluate influence of acupuncture with other methods of TCM on wellbeing and subjective level of pain in patients with musculoskeletal disorders.

Methods: Wellbeing of patients before and after TCM therapy was assessed using validated questionnaire WEMWBS (Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale) and subjective level of pain before and after TCM therapy was determined using VAS (Visual Analogue Scale). The changes of wellbeing and subjective level of pain were evaluated first for the whole set of patients with musculoskeletal disorders and subsequently for the subsets of patients divided by the type of musculoskeletal disorder (according to International Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems) and by the intensity of pain at the beginning of the therapy. Patients underwent the therapy in Czech-Chinese Centre of TCM University Hospital Hradec Králové. Data were processed in Microsoft Excel 2013 and in software SPSS version 18.0.

Results: The WEMWBS score of the whole set of patients statistically significantly raised by 0.92 point and the VAS value statistically significantly decreased by 1.66 cm. Statistically significant improvement happen in subset of dorsopathy – the increase of WEMWBS score by 1.33 points and the decrease of VAS value by 1.74 cm, while in subset of arthropathy was not detected statistically significant improvement. In patients with mild pain does not happen statistically significant improvement, in patients with moderate pain was ascertained statistically significant improvement of WEMWBS

score by 1.96 points and decrease of VAS value by 2.18 cm and in patients with severe pain happen statistically significant improvement only in VAS value – decrease of 2.13 cm, but WEMWBS score did not statistically significantly raised.

Conclusion: Acupuncture and possibly other additional procedures of TCM have positive effect on wellbeing and subjective level of pain in patients suffering from musculoskeletal disorders, and especially in patients with dorsopathy.

Key words: Acupuncture, chronically ill patients, traditional Chinese medicine, wellbeing.