

Abstract

The effects of acupuncture on mental wellbeing in chronically ill patients II

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Introduction: Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), including acupuncture, is widely used in the treatment of chronically ill patients, whose numbers are increasing. This treatment is widely used either alone or as a supplementary method. Though, more attention should be given to the research of TCM effectiveness in studies.

Objective: To assess the effect of selected sociodemographic and clinical variables such as age, gender, size of residence, type of musculoskeletal disorders and concomitant use of Chinese phytotherapy on the alteration in personal well-being and pain in patients with musculoskeletal disorders, who underwent the acupuncture therapy at the Czech-Chinese Centre of TCM University Hospital Hradec Králové (FNHK).

Methods: The Evaluation of patients' personal well-being from the data obtained by using WEMWBS and Visual Analogue Scale (VAS) questionnaires. The patients were undergoing therapy at the Czech-Chinese TCM FNHK Centre. The process of the Data collection from questionnaires took place in the period from 7 April 2017 to 12 November 2018. The statistical evaluation was carried out on the entire data collection as well as on the individual categories that might possibly affect the efficiency of the therapy. The author applied the students' t test as a method of this statistical evaluation. The evaluation was performed in MS Excel 2019 and Statistica on a set of 112 patients who met the inclusion criteria.

Results: According the WEMWBS data, the positive effect of acupuncture on the personal well-being of patients was demonstrated to be statistically significant in patients with dorsopathy and in patients without concomitant therapy with TCM herbs. In patients with dorsopathy, there was a statistically significant improvement in the WEMWBS score in 3 categories. Specifically, in patients without concomitant treatment with TCM herbs, in patients from a community with more than 5,000 inhabitants and in patients over 50 years of age. In the case of arthropathy, there was not any statistically significant improvement in the WEMWBS score calculated according to the Student's t-test. However, the evaluation of the data from the VAS questionnaire was in favour of acupuncture, where the reader can observe the statistically significant effect of acupuncture on patients' pain relief. The correlation between the change in well-being and characteristics such as the duration of therapy, age or size of residence has

not been demonstrated. The correlation between the pain rate and the duration of therapy, age and size of residence was not significant either.

Conclusion: Based on the analyses performed, the technique of acupuncture seems to be the promising and effective method in the treatment of chronic diseases. In most patients with dorsopathy and sociodemographic characteristics, there was a statistically significant improvement in their well-being and the reduction in pain. Yet, the experts believe that more research addressing this issue is needed.

Keywords: acupuncture, chronic disease, musculoskeletal disease, traditional Chinese medicine, well-being