

Acupuncture Treatment For Shoulder Bursitis

Jihe Zhu¹, Blagica Arsovska², Nevenka Velickova³,
Kristina Kozovska⁴ & Karolina Nikolovska⁵

^{1,3,4,5} Faculty of Medical Sciences, University Goce Delcev – Shtip, Republic of Macedonia;

² Institute of Biology, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics – Skopje, Republic of Macedonia;

Abstract - Inflammation of the mucous bags or bursitis is very common clinical picture. In the human body there are about 160 bursas. Shoulder bursitis is inflammation of the shoulder bursa. Bursas can be superficial and deep. Deep bursas are present at birth, while surface bursas develop for several months to years after birth, in places where there is friction. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) suggests that bursitis can be treated with Chinese herbs, acupuncture or a combination of both.

Key words: bursitis, bursa, traditional Chinese medicine, acupuncture, shoulder

Introduction

A bursa is a fluid-filled sac that reduces friction between moving parts of the body, such as around the joints of the shoulder, elbow, hip, knee, and adjacent to the Achilles tendon in the heel. [1,2] Bursitis is inflammation of the bursa. It can be acute and chronic and can be caused by trauma, infection or deposition of microcrystals. [3]

Shoulder bursitis is inflammation of the shoulder bursa. Shoulder bursa is a fluid filled sac that helps to reduce friction in shoulder spaces. The most commonly inflammation of the shoulder bursa is subacromial bursa (separates the supraspinatus tendon from the overlying bone and deltoid muscle). Shoulder bursitis commonly presents with the following symptoms: pain with overhead activities, pain while sleeping at night, joint stiffness, swelling and erythema. [4,5,6]

The TCM philosophy is totally different from the Western philosophy and the theory is based on the flow of the Qi energy and to understand how its balance and flow can be affected by lifestyle, illness or constitution. [7]

The complex structure of shoulder joint is allowing an incredible range of motion, but on the other side it has relatively poor blood supply, so when injured it is healing slow. It is important to treat the symptoms, but more important is to treat the underlying root cause. That is why in Chinese

medicine the person is always treated as a whole. [5]

Aim

The aim of this work is to present and explain the shoulder bursitis syndrome and the effectiveness and function of the acupuncture treatment for this condition.

Work methods

Shoulder bursitis can be treated with acupuncture. When a patient is experiencing pain, first step in evaluating that person is to determine which of the meridians are affected, of the ones which cross over the areas of pain (pain from an acupuncture perspective is a blockage in the meridian), so acupuncture is applied to remove those blockages. [5]

The acupuncture treatments are made in a clinic for Traditional Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture by a doctor specialist in acupuncture. The therapies are made with sterile needles for single use or with fire needles. The effects with the fire needles are faster than the effects of normal needles.

The treated point on the shoulder is Lu2.

Discussion

Traditional acupuncture is a healthcare system. It looks at pain and illness as signs that the body is out of balance. The aim of acupuncture treatment is to restore the body's equilibrium. [8] Inflammation is an essential function of the immune system designed for 3 main reasons: Detoxification, Repair and Protection. If your immune system has been compromised or there is toxic, the inflammation is inefficient and you will experience symptoms of pain, swelling, redness or heat in the affected area.

Acupuncture works in the way that stimulates the inflammation, the circulation of the Qi and blood, detoxifies the body and clears all the symptoms in a natural way. [9] The treated point is Lu2 on the meridian of the Lung. It can be treated with normal

needles for single use or with fire needles. When treated with needle for single use five punctures are made in the point, one in the center of the point and four punctures around the point but in the same area. The same point is treated with fire needles too, but the process is different. With the fire needle 5 punctures are made very fast with a hot needle and afterwards a cup is putted into the treated area. The both treatments are effective in a way, but the difference is that the treatment with fire needles is more effective and gives better results for a shorter time, because the exudate that results in an extracellular fluid of high protein content and is harmful for the body, is physically removed from the body. The treatment with needles for single use is effective and gives results too, but the treatment takes more time.

Lu2 (Yunmen) is located on the Lung meridian on the upper lateral chest, above the acromioclavicular joint. Needles should not be punctured deep to avoid puncturing the lungs. The insertion of the needle should be 0,5 to 0,8 cun lateral. The point is treated when there is Lung Qi deficiency, shoulder tension and pain, frozen shoulder, injuries and other issues. Its action is to move and disperse the Qi energy in the Lungs, to clean all the external factors like heat, cold, damp or wind, to remove the pain and balance the energy.

Many studies have been done already and the results show that acupuncture is an effective treatment for shoulder pain indeed. [10, 11]

Conclusion

With the acupuncture treatment we aim to reduce pain and restore shoulder function. These treatments as part of the TCM are effective and give positive results in the treatment of shoulder bursitis. Sometimes a few acupuncture treatments will be enough to cure bursitis.

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