Abdominal Acupuncture: Mechanisms and Formula

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Abdominal acupuncture, created by Dr. Zhiyun Bo, is a curative system of healing that utilizes the abdomen to regulate the function of the zangfu organs and meridians. This type of acupuncture can treat the whole body, including internal, difficult and complicated disorders, and also chronic degenerative disorders.

According to the theory of abdominal acupuncture, the umbilicus has a known circulatory system and a close relationship with qi and blood flowing throughout the body. The abdomen also has an advanced regulating/controlling system for the whole body that was formed during the embryological period. This regulating/controlling system is a substantial foundation for abdominal acupuncture.

In the past, old qigong masters imagined a three cun taiji (yin/yang) symbol centered around the umbilicus. Embraced in the center were two fish, one being yang and one being yin. From this they produced the yin and yang, the ascending/descending, and entering/exitng of qi and blood through the body.

Zangfu Organ Relationships

According to TCM, humans are divided into three portions by the sanjiao. Both the middle and lower jiao are located on the abdomen and contain all the zangfu organs and inner generative organs, except the lungs and heart. But, the lungs and heart have a direct or indirect relationship with the other zangfu organs located in the middle and lower jiao. This means that the abdomen has a direct or indirect relationship with all the jingluo and zangfu organs.

Abdominal Holograms

Abdominal acupuncture is a micro-system of the whole body. The three different levels are similar, but different to the heaven, human and earth sequence of the standard meridian system.

The superficial level is pictured as a hologram of a pronated tortoise. Although a tortoise, all its parts correspond to the human body. The neck begins to extend from bilateral Shanggu points (Kid 17) and extends up to Zhongwan (Ren 12). The tail begins from bilateral Qipang Points (0.5 cun lateral to Ren 6)
and extends to Guanyuan (Ren 4). The upper limbs (shoulder area) start from Huaroumen (St 24), flex at the Upper rheumatism point (0.5 cun lateral and superior to St 24), and end at the upper lateral rheumatism points (1 cun lateral to St 24). The lower limbs (hip) begin at bilateral Wailing points (St 26), extend across the lower rheumatism points (0.5 cun lateral and inferior to St 26), and end at the lower lateral rheumatism points (1 cun lateral and inferior to St 26). This top superficial layer relates to disorders of the head, torso, upper and lower limbs, disorders of the periphery, meridian and collateral disorders, and acute disorders.

The medial layer consists of the standard abdominal meridian system. It is the connection between the superficial and deep levels. The deep level is represented by the bagua figure. The bagua begins at the umbilicus and extends upward to Ren 12, down to Ren 4 and laterally to the Leg Taiyin meridian. The deep level corresponds to the zangfu organs and is chosen for the treatment of the internal viscera and long-term chronic disorders.

Cautions

Examination of the abdomen is required. Avoid puncturing into the abdomen, great vessels, or organs in the abdominal cavity. Abdominal acupuncture is contraindicated in acute abdominal disorders, venous dilation of the navel, celiac tumors, and on pregnant women.

Needle applications

Needle depth is generally 0.5-1.5 cun deep and is performed by a 1.5 cun, 32-gauge needle. Needle retention is approximately 20 minutes and manipulation is preformed by hand every five minutes or by electrical stimulation.

Abdominal Prescriptions

1. Abdominal Four Gates: Bilateral Huaroumen (St 24) and Wailing (St 26)
   Function: Promote the circulation of qi and blood, dredge meridians, and distribute zangfu organ qi through the body.

2. Sky-Ground: Sky-Zhongwan (Ren 12), and Ground-Guanyuan (Ren 4).
   Function: Invigorating the spleen and tonifying the kidney.

3. Guiding Qi to the Source: Zhongwan (Ren 12), Xiawan (Ren 10), Qihai (Ren 6), and Guanyuan (Ren 4).
   Function: It can promote the acquired foundation to strengthen and benefit the congenital foundation.
4. Regulating Spleen Qi: Bilateral Daheng (SP15)
   Function: Regulate the spleen and invigorate its function to eliminate dampness and smooth the joints.
5. Rheumatism Prescription: Upper rheumatism points, upper lateral, lower, and lower-lateral rheumatism points.
   Function: Dredge meridians and collaterals, facilitate joints, eliminate swelling, and alleviate pain.

Sample Prescription: Cervical Spondylosis

The prescription Sky-Ground (Ren 12/Ren 4) is selected for cervical spondylosis with additional bilateral points such as Shangqu (Ki 17), Huaroumen (St 24), and Qipang (0.5 cun lateral to Ren 6). Zhongwan (Ren 12) corresponds to the neck according to abdominal acupuncture and can also regulate the spleen and stomach. Guanyuan (Ren 4) is the meeting of three leg yin meridians and benefits the kidney. Together these points can invigorate the spleen and tonify the kidney to benefit the neck. Shangqiu (Ki 17) corresponds to the neck and will treat it directly. Huaroumen (St 24) corresponds to the shoulder area and will also benefit the neck. Extra Qipang corresponds to the low back and sacrum, and can treat the neck indirectly. These points function to dredge the channels and collaterals, strengthen the root, and nourish blood to strengthen bone and benefit the neck.

References: