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Nursing Experience of Chinese Herbal Pillow Combined with Auricular Therapy for Insomnia in a Patient with Chest Bi-syndrome (Postprint)

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Date: 2023-05-12T00:00:00+00:00

Abstract

This article summarizes the nursing experience of one case of insomnia in a chest bi-syndrome patient treated with a herbal medicine pillow combined with auricular therapy. Through scientific nursing assessment to evaluate the severity of the patient's sleep disorder, targeted administration of this combined therapy resulted in significant improvement of the patient's insomnia symptoms.

Full Text

Traditional Chinese Medicine Pillow Combined with Auricular Acupoint Therapy and Nursing Management of Insomnia in a Patient with Chest Bi-Syndrome

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Abstract

This paper summarizes the nursing management of insomnia in a patient with Chest Bi-syndrome treated with a traditional Chinese medicine pillow combined with auricular acupoint therapy. Through scientific nursing assessment, the severity of the patient's sleep disorder was evaluated, and targeted treatment with a traditional Chinese medicine pillow combined with auricular acupoint therapy was administered, resulting in significant improvement of the patient's insomnia symptoms.

Keywords: Traditional Chinese medicine pillow; auricular acupoint therapy; Chest Bi-syndrome; insomnia; Traditional Chinese medicine nursing

Chest Bi-syndrome is characterized by precordial discomfort as its typical clinical symptom, often accompanied by a sense of impending death and palpitations. Patients experience significant psychological stress, which can easily lead to adverse emotions such as fear and anxiety, with most patients developing various forms of insomnia. Insomnia is a common sub-health condition, ranking first among sub-health disorders, seriously affecting patients' daily life, work, and study. With the acceleration of life pace and increased work pressure, the incidence of insomnia is rising. Common symptoms of insomnia include difficulty falling asleep, decreased sleep quality and duration, and impaired memory and attention. This article summarizes the nursing experience of treating insomnia in a patient with Chest Bi-syndrome using a traditional Chinese medicine pillow combined with auricular acupoint therapy, as reported below.

1. Clinical Data

The patient was a male, admitted due to Chest Bi-syndrome (coronary heart disease). The patient complained of precordial pain described as stabbing, radiating to the shoulder and back, lasting several seconds each episode, occasionally accompanied by palpitations, fatigue, easy sweating, dry mouth, bitter taste, and poor sleep. The tongue was dark and dull with a yellow greasy coating, and the pulse was deep and thready. Upon admission, the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI) was used for assessment, yielding a score of [], indicating very poor sleep quality. On [] day, the patient underwent coronary angiography in the catheterization laboratory, which showed subtotal occlusion of the mid-left anterior descending artery and segmental stenosis of the mid-circumflex artery. A stent was placed in the mid-left anterior descending artery. Postoperatively, the patient reported decreased sleep quality and exhibited nervousness. Re-assessment with PSQI showed a score of [] points, and the Hamilton Anxiety Scale (HAMD) assessment scored [] points, indicating very poor sleep quality with significant anxiety. The patient was then treated with a traditional Chinese medicine pillow and auricular point pressing therapy. After [] weeks of treatment, the patient's PSQI score was [] points and HAMD score was [] points, showing improved sleep quality. After discharge, the patient received regular auricular therapy at the outpatient clinic with ongoing effect evaluation. Following [] weeks of treatment, the patient's PSQI score was [] points and HAMD score was [] points, with insomnia symptoms markedly improved.

2. Nursing Care

2.1 Assessment Scales

PSQI: The Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index is primarily used to evaluate sleep quality in patients with sleep disorders and mental disorders. The total score ranges from [] to [] points: [] points indicates acceptable sleep quality; [] points indicates poor sleep quality; [] points indicates very poor sleep quality. Higher scores indicate worse sleep quality.

HAMD: The Hamilton Anxiety Scale is mainly used to assess the severity of anxiety symptoms in patients with neurosis and other conditions, with the total score effectively reflecting anxiety severity. A total score of [] points indicates possible anxiety; [] points indicates definite anxiety; [] points indicates significant anxiety; [] points indicates severe anxiety; and [] points indicates no anxiety symptoms.

2.2 General Nursing Care

General nursing measures include maintaining a comfortable and quiet environment, avoiding triggering factors such as tension and anxiety that may worsen insomnia symptoms, and instructing patients to avoid consuming stimulating foods and beverages such as strong tea and coffee before bedtime.

2.3 Traditional Chinese Medicine Characteristic Nursing

Traditional Chinese Medicine Pillow: The formula includes chrysanthemum [] g, silkworm excrement [] g, cassia seeds [] g, and rose [] g. Usage: During bed rest, the patient assumes a comfortable position with the pillow placed under the head [].

Auricular Acupoint Therapy: - **Auricular Massage:** “Step 1” involves massaging from the outer edge of the earlobe to the helix for [] minutes. “Step 2” involves massaging both the anterior and posterior aspects of the ear for [] minutes each. “Step 3” involves massaging from the intertragic notch along the lateral surface of the antitragus to the antihelix body, then from the inferior crus of the antihelix to the sympathetic point and up to the superior triangular fossa for [] minutes. “Step 4” involves massaging the cavum conchae and cymba conchae for [] minutes, focusing on areas representing the five viscera and six bowels []. - **Auricular Point Pressing:** The auricle is disinfected with 75% alcohol. Vaccaria seeds are taped to corresponding points: thalamus point, subcortex point, Shenmen point, occiput point, and heart point. The points are pressed and kneaded, followed by enhanced stimulation. Press for [] minutes per session, [] times daily, with replacement every [] days [].

3. Discussion

Traditional Chinese medicine holds that the head is the confluence of all yang meridians and the residence of intelligence, where qi and blood converge, and is closely connected with meridians and acupoints throughout the body. Sleep is a physiological brain function and a necessity for life, playing a crucial role in the operation and stability of all major body systems. Patients with insomnia, troubled by long-term sleep disorders, are prone to depression, anxiety, and other negative emotions, requiring psychological counseling to guide them in eliminating negative feelings []. Under the national strategy and policy of comprehensive health and population aging, the demand for traditional Chinese medicine nursing services has increased significantly [].

The traditional Chinese medicine pillow is made by filling a pillow with corresponding herbs, which slowly act on acupoints in the head area through contact time. Li Shizhen of the Ming Dynasty mentioned the therapeutic principle of medicinal pillows multiple times in *Compendium of Materia Medica*. Wu Shangxian of the Qing Dynasty proposed in *Li Yue Pian Wen*: “The principle of external treatment is the same as internal treatment; the medicine is the same, only the method differs.” The renowned ancient physician Sun Simiao recorded the concept of “fragrance therapy for disease removal.” Traditional Chinese medicine pillows are an important measure for improving sleep. Their use allows medicine to directly act on the head to treat disease, expel pathogenic factors, balance qi and blood, and regulate yin and yang. As an external treatment method of traditional Chinese medicine, it acts through the skin and head acupoints, demonstrating good sedative and hypnotic effects for insomnia patients. Through the pressure of the head and body temperature, combined with the volatile components of the herbs inside the pillow, the medicine slowly acts on corresponding acupoints in the head. Chrysanthemum, silkworm excrement, cassia seeds, and rose have effects of dispelling wind, calming the liver, and regulating qi, which can clear the liver, harmonize the stomach, and calm the mind []. The pillow also works through inhalation, utilizing the rich blood supply of the nasal mucosa to increase the effective area for drug absorption, allowing medicinal effects to rapidly enter the body and generate biological signals that inhibit the activity of hypothalamic arousal neurons, thereby promoting sleep [].

Auricular acupoint therapy is one of the characteristic techniques of traditional Chinese medicine and has been widely applied in treating insomnia in recent years. *Lingshu • Kouwen* records: “The ear is where all the meridians converge.” Auricular points are closely related to the viscera and can harmonize qi and blood, coordinate organ yin and yang []. Auricular massage can stimulate essence, dredge meridians, and regulate internal functions using techniques such as pressing, rubbing, kneading, twisting, pinching, pointing, and nipping on the anterior, posterior, and auricular points according to individual conditions []. Both the anterior and posterior aspects of the auricle have rich distributions of nerves and meridians, with the anterior aspect being yin and the posterior aspect

being yang. Massage of both sides can regulate the viscera, dredge meridians, and balance yin and yang. Auricular massage can also unblock the meridians of the entire ear, promote microcirculation, and mobilize the overall function of the ear []. During auricular point pressing, stimulation of various points on the ear can better dredge the meridian tissues in the ear area, improve local blood circulation, stimulate the cerebral cortex, alleviate insomnia symptoms, prolong sleep duration, shorten sleep onset time, and improve sleep quality []. Combining auricular point pressing with overall auricular massage not only provides holistic regulation but also increases stimulation to sensitive areas of the ear to enhance therapeutic effects []. Traditional Chinese medicine believes that the five viscera and six bowels are reflected in corresponding positions on the auricle, and visceral diseases often manifest as reactions at related auricular points. Stimulating these corresponding reaction points and acupoints can prevent and treat disease. Auricular point pressing generates sensations of soreness, numbness, distension, and pain through appropriate kneading, pressing, and pinching, thereby improving blood circulation at corresponding points. Auricular point pressing has a bidirectional regulatory effect on the excitation and inhibition of cerebral cortex function, regulates autonomic nervous activity, promotes Chong and Ren qi and blood, balances yin and yang in the body, enables the brain reticular system to activate and inhibit in an orderly manner, clears the heart and calms the mind, and connects the heart and kidney, thereby transforming pathological sleep states into normal physiological sleep []. The thalamus point regulates the sleep center; the subcortex point regulates cerebral cortex excitation and inhibition; and the heart, Shenmen, and occiput points have sedative, mind-calming, and sleep-benefiting effects []. Selecting these corresponding points for auricular seed pressing can regulate sleep. The combination of traditional Chinese medicine pillow and auricular therapy demonstrates significant effects in improving sleep onset time and quality, with high patient acceptance, and is worthy of clinical promotion.

Conflict of Interest Statement: The authors declare no conflict of interest in this article.

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