

A Research Meta-Analysis of Clinical Nursing Combined with Chinese Medicine Appropriate Technology Assisted Treatment

Caiyan Lu¹, Li Feng¹ & Lin Feng¹

¹ Baise Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Baise 533000, Guangxi, China

Correspondence: Caiyan Lu & Lin Feng, Baise Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Baise 533000, Guangxi, China.

doi:10.56397/CRMS.2023.12.04

Abstract

Appropriate technology of Chinese medicine, also known as characteristic therapy of Chinese medicine, is also known as the advantageous treatment of Chinese medicine, which is the diagnosis and treatment under the guidance of the basic theoretical knowledge of Chinese medicine. Most of these methods are purely green, without obvious harm and side effects, easy to be accepted by patients and can be implemented in Chinese medicine to play a supplementary therapeutic effect. This paper reviews the significance of Chinese medicine appropriate technology in clinical nursing, the role and mechanism of Chinese medicine appropriate technology, and the identification and application of Chinese medicine appropriate technology, aiming at promoting the complementarity between clinical auxiliary treatment and Chinese medicine appropriate technology, and providing theoretical basis and new ideas for further accelerating the application of Chinese medicine appropriate technology in clinical nursing.

Keywords: clinical care, Chinese medicine appropriate technology, adjuvant therapy, symptom relief, research meta-analysis

1. Introduction

Appropriate technology in Chinese medicine is known as “special treatment method of Chinese medicine” or “special treatment technique of Chinese medicine”, which refers to the technology based on the basic principles of traditional medicine and used for diagnosis and treatment, such as: hot ironing (fire), rectal fluid injection, bandage, oral herbs, aromatherapy and so on; these techniques are known for their simplicity and affordability. The most common TCM appropriate techniques are as follows:

Chinese medicine enema, Chinese medicine atomised inhalation, acupressure, medicated steam bath, wet compress, injection needle, gua sha and cupping. However, some ancient techniques, such as moxibustion with moxa sticks lit or the use of thin metal rods to stimulate specific parts of the body, are rarely used, especially when it comes to procedures such as needling, which requires deep penetration into the skin or even at the muscle level, and are even rarer. In 2010, the “Guideline Manual for Chinese Medicine Nursing in

Chinese Medicine Hospitals” Shen Qin, Sun Qiu-hua (2012) & Li Qing (2010) explicitly states that moxibustion, cupping, fumigation, acupoint plasters, acupoint pressure, and ear implantation are within the scope of Chinese medicine nursing techniques. In order to enhance the efficacy of the use of such suitable medical tools, this paper provides a comprehensive overview of the progress of the above mentioned six adaptable and powerful TCM therapeutic techniques in clinical nursing practice.

2. Importance of the Implementation of Chinese Medicine Appropriate Technology in the Process of Clinical Nursing Work

As an important part of the field of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), TCM nursing occupies a key role in the progress of modern nursing. Along with the continuous evolution of TCM nursing and the increase in global interactions, it is gradually gaining attention from nursing experts around the world. The role of nursing was recognised early on in ancient Chinese medicine, from the viewpoints of lifestyle, dietary habits and mindset adjustment, such as “qi is laboured, short muscles and heart qi is suppressed” to “taste is too sweet, heart qi is asthmatic and full, colour is dark, kidney qi is unbalanced” and “language is good for its own sake”. Nowadays, the public’s demand for TCM health care and disease prevention continues to grow, but due to the limitations of inadequate medical equipment conditions and treatment costs in China, these have become the focus and challenge of the current medical field (WEI Qiaolan, QIU Jing & XU Zhongqin, 2016; WEN Huifang, LIU Weimei & MOK Ruiqiong, 2016; Hong Li-hong, 2016). According to the eight techniques applicable to Chinese medicine proposed in the Guidelines for Chinese Medicine Nursing Care in Chinese Medicine Hospitals, they possess significant Chinese medicine characteristics, clear effects, low prices, and ease of implementation, which help to solve the above challenges and promote them in practical applications (Kong Wenwen, 2016; Zhang Hongqing, 2016; PENG Tian-Zhong, GONG Hui-Hua, HU Sui-Fa, et al, 2016).

3. Functions and Operating Mechanisms of Appropriate Technology in Chinese Medicine

3.1 Moxibustion

Moxibustion primarily stimulates the body through the heat generated by burning moxa

sticks and transmits chemical and physical factors through the acupuncture point pathways. These signals are received in the central system and then transmitted in an integrated manner.

For the circulatory system, immune network, endocrine mechanism and nervous system of the human body, moxibustion can play a role in adjusting them to maintain and optimise the microenvironment of the body to achieve the effects of preventing diseases, strengthening resistance, balancing qi and blood and dredging meridians. By enhancing local blood flow, strengthening the body’s resistance to infection, reducing pain and neuritis, and regulating gastrointestinal activity, moxibustion can effectively slow down the patient’s condition (MENG Fang, DUAN Peibei, HU Qian, et al, 2016; Xue H, Meng AF & Xu DJ, 2016; Chen Hailong, 2016).

3.2 Cupping

Although both acupuncture and cupping are categorised as body surface stimulation methods, they both make use of specific meridian points or areas of the skin to achieve healing. Therefore, there should be some similarity in their basic principles and modus operandi, which may be due to the significant influence of the gut-brain-skin axis between the two (Liu Xianfeng, 2016; CHEN Shengxi & WANG Zhen, 2016; WANG Lei, YU Jiangqi, CAO Yanru, et al, 2023; LI Zhonglin & CHEN Guifeng, 2023). Our team observed in the course of the previous research on the effects of acupuncture that what is initially triggered is the physiological response of the body, i.e., changes in the microenvironment caused by external triggers, which enables the physical information to be transformed into biological information and leads to the interaction and complementation between the relevant signalling molecules, further enhancing their effect chain and ultimately initiating the neuroendocrine-immune system (NEI) in the body to achieve the overall modulation effect. Based on this, we can speculate that cupping may also stimulate the neuro-endocrine-immune system (NEI) inside the human body through the influence on the surrounding cells and factors to achieve the global adjustment effect (Shi Shu, 2022; CHEN Zhi-Qing, CHEN Miao, XIA Xiaoyun, et al, 2022). After in-depth investigation, we came to the conclusion that cupping can influence the energy expenditure status and the regulation of

the neuro-immune system in the vicinity of acupoints. As a result, we believe that the action process of cupping is likely to be achieved by changing the local energy consumption and the regulation mode of the neuro-immune system (Deng Wenhua, Liu Shaohui, Huang Qiuxia, et al, 2022).

3.3 Fumigation

The ancient classic work of Chinese medicine, the “Formulas for Fifty-two Diseases”, describes in detail how to use medicines to cleanse wounds to heal diseases caused by external injuries; and as early as the Spring and Autumn and Warring States Periods, the Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine already mentioned the use of hot water for bathing or soaking. The efficacy of this healing method stems in part from the thermal effect of the medicinal liquid (XU Xiaoqing, PAN Rongrong & WANG Gang, 2022).

By heating the medication, it creates a warm sensation and acts on the surface of the human skin, which triggers the enlargement of the subcutaneous blood vessels, further promoting the flow of blood and lymph in various parts of the body or throughout the body. From the perspective of Chinese medicine, this approach can have the effect of stretching the muscles, unclogging the meridians, and regulating the gases. We have all had such experiences: when suffering from some cold attack, there are often some such as fear of cold, muscle stiffness and other mild symptoms, at this time only need to soak in a hot bath will be significantly improved.

Some researchers have suggested that fumigation therapy mainly possesses two important effects, internal and external. The internal effects include dredging the meridians and activating the flow of qi and blood, while the external effects are clearing heat, removing toxins and eliminating swellings, dredging wind, removing dampness and relieving itching (WANG Ruihua & FU Yongxiang, 2023; Xu Qiong, 2023). The internal effects are mainly manifested in internal diseases, while the external effects are mainly manifested in skin diseases. Of course, these internal and external effects usually do not exist independently, and the effects of fumigation therapy on the human body are usually composite effects, only that each has its own focus.

3.4 Acupressure Points

“Acupressure” is widely known and used as an important therapy in the traditional Chinese medical system. It is also known as “Paste”, “Moxibustion”, or “Thin Paste”, “Acupuncture Poster”, and its main principle is based on the theory of meridians to select a specific area to apply specific medicines in order to produce a healing effect. This way to use the influence of Chinese herbs on the human meridians, adjusting the balance of the five viscera and six bowels and unimpeded blood circulation system to achieve the purpose of disease prevention and treatment — this is a traditional external treatment of Chinese medicine technology, has now been used in internal and external pathologies such as gynaecology and children’s surgery has significant results. According to ancient records (WU Jing, LIU Tengting & SHEN Cuizhen, 2016), during the Yuan Dynasty, a prescription for mouth ulcers and the pain associated with them — a mixture of Dilong (earthworm) and *Cornus officinalis* ground to a fine powder and then mixed with an appropriate amount of white vinegar and rubbed onto the soles of the feet — worked wonders; this is the earliest Dilong and *Cornus officinalis* paste used to cure swollen gums. Others have tried to make a mask of these ingredients and apply them directly to the face to relieve itching. Recent research (HUANG Kun & HUANG Wenqi, 2016) has shown that when people receive both acupuncture massage and other aids, they feel more comfortable and their quality of sleep improves, which is good news for people who suffer from chronic gastrointestinal discomfort! It has also been noted that if a person is experiencing chest tightness and breathlessness, they may be suffering from asthma or bronchial inflammation, so consider seeing your doctor and following his or her advice to take appropriate measures, such as anti-allergy medication, so that the symptoms will gradually improve or even disappear altogether.

3.5 Acupressure

Acupuncture and moxibustion, which originated in the ancient medical classic, the Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine, is the source of the acupressure technique. The book states that “when cold penetrates our intestines and muscle tissues, it prevents the blood from flowing properly and causes pain; when we apply pressure to these areas, we can make the stagnation in them subside, thus

eliminating the pain”, which is one of the basic principles of Acupressure, the use of pressure to improve the internal circulation of the body and to reduce the likelihood of illnesses occurring. This treatment is based on traditional Chinese medical concepts (such as the balance of yin and yang and the five elements) and relies on specific areas of the body, known as acupoints, to activate the flow of energy within the body to achieve the goal of toning the body and mind. Not only is it easy to use and has no side effects, but it is also possible to pinpoint the exact location that needs to be touched and adjust the selected location to better suit individual needs and different situations. In addition, it is worth mentioning that this method does not use any medication, so it is particularly suitable for post-surgical patients, especially those who are unable to move on their own for various reasons, as they tend to have some discomfort such as swelling in the same abdomen, so choosing a non-pharmacological manoeuvre is undoubtedly a wise choice (Ke Meizhen, 2016).

3.6 Buried Seeds in Ear Holes

As an important practical skill in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), auricular acupuncture is widely used as one of the means of preventing and treating various internal and external diseases. As early as in the ancient Chinese medical classic “52 Disease Formulas”, there is already a description of the “ear pulse”. The Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine further established the connection between the ear and the meridians of the human body. According to historical records, Sun Simiao mentioned the use of ear acupuncture points to cure diseases in his book *Thousand Gold Formula*. This method is to use the seeds of Wang Bu Liuhang (or other items similar to seeds) to apply pressure to specific acupoints or reflex zones on the ear, so as to achieve preventive and therapeutic purposes with the help of the meridians to transmit information. This method has been successfully applied to a variety of diseases in multiple systems. For example, it has been reported in the literature (LIN Xiaoli, CHEN Jingwei, ZHAO Operate, et al, 2016) that when auricular acupuncture points are combined with acupoints, the pain after anorectal surgery can be effectively reduced with relatively few adverse side effects. In addition, some studies have also shown (Hu Xia, 2016) that auricular acupuncture point seed embedding therapy can work in conjunction

with standard care measures to improve sleep quality in patients with insomnia. At the same time, some studies have shown (ZHAO Liu-Rong, LIU Xue-Fang & WANG Shao-Ping, 2016; Liu Xixi, 2016) that auricular acupuncture point seed embedding is effective in lowering blood pressure in patients with hypertension accompanied by dizziness.

4. Evidence-Based Application of Appropriate Chinese Medicine Techniques

The dialectical approach is used in many areas of TCM diagnosis and treatment, covering the analysis of symptoms, diseases and conditions. Therefore, in the actual healthcare process, we should use TCM techniques for specific types of illnesses. For example, stimulation of specific areas of the ear to relieve sleep disorders, application of five times seed powder to the navel to improve sweating, and acupressure points to deal with pain and other problems. For the special case of certain diseases, we can take appropriate measures, such as in the hot summer to choose the right points for hot compresses, as a way to prevent coughing and asthma and other symptoms; or use fumigation to solve the problem of external haemorrhoids. In addition, there are also methods that incorporate the use of traditional Chinese medicine, all of which depend on the nature of the medicines used, their effects, and the acupoints selected. Cupping and Gua Sha are more common and easy to perform, as long as the limitations are understood and followed.

5. The Significance of the Combination of Chinese Medicine Appropriate Technology and Clinical Care

By integrating the applicable skills of TCM into actual medical care, we can effectively improve the quality of medical care management in the wards, enhance the ability to promote and educate patients on TCM health, thereby promoting improved behavioural habits of patients in following doctors’ recommendations, increasing their understanding of TCM health knowledge and reducing the probability of complications. This leads to greater patient satisfaction with our services. We need to implement targeted TCM-approved nursing training so that healthcare professionals can better understand TCM concepts in surgery, become proficient in the use of these appropriate techniques, and continue to improve their TCM diagnostic and therapeutic nursing skills as a

means of providing better services to patients; we should also establish a set of standardised operating procedures for TCM-approved techniques. We should carry out Chinese medicine appropriate technology, improve patients' knowledge and compliance, implement Chinese medicine appropriate technology nursing service, and give full play to the advantages of Chinese medicine appropriate technology nursing service concepts in the management of internal medicine diseases, so as to reduce the occurrence of complications, and make the patients more satisfied with the work of nursing service in the wards.

Overall, the use of appropriate Chinese medicine techniques in the implementation of clinical care can better enhance the level of care management and the quality of Chinese medicine health education. This approach has obvious advantages in areas such as enhancing patients' compliance with healthcare services, further improving their knowledge of TCM health and its ability to reduce the incidence of complications, which can lead to greater patient satisfaction.

6. Conclusion

As a legacy of traditional Chinese medicine, therapies such as acupuncture and moxibustion, fire cupping, medicinal baths, acupressure, acupressure and auricular acupressure are popular for their simplicity and high efficiency, which makes them ideal for use in healthcare practice. However, it is important to note that these therapies need to be applied flexibly according to the patient's specific situation in order to maximise their effectiveness and enhance the patient's quality of life.

Due to its good efficacy and easy operation, TCM appropriate technology is increasingly favoured by medical personnel at all levels of hospitals. It is hoped that medical personnel at all levels will give full play to the characteristics and advantages of TCM appropriate technology through continuous research and practice, so as to improve the quality of patient care and nursing satisfaction.

References

Chen G. (2016). Gua sha therapy for 52 cases of frozen shoulder. *China Clinical Research*, 8(10), 109-110.

Chen Hailong. (2016). Reflections on postoperative nursing intervention of

Chinese medicine fumigation combined with microwave physiotherapy for patients with mixed haemorrhoids. *China Clinical Research*, 8(10), 136-137.

CHEN Shengxi, WANG Zhen. (2016). Observation on the efficacy of cupping combined with herbal fumigation on phlegm-heat-depleted lung type chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. *Shanghai Journal of Acupuncture and Moxibustion*, 35(6), 650-652.

CHEN Zhi-Qing, CHEN Miao, XIA Xiaoyun, et al. (2022). Observation on the clinical efficacy of stabbing and cupping combined with local vibration method in treating upper limb spasm after stroke. *China Modern Physician*, 60(26), 6-9, 22.

Deng Wenhua, Liu Shaohui, Huang Qiuxia, et al. (2022). Clinical observation of electroacupuncture combined with stabbing bloodletting and cupping in the treatment of frozen shoulder. *Guangming Traditional Chinese Medicine*, 37(15), 2791-2794.

Hong Li-hong. (2016). Nursing efficacy of moxibustion and cupping in the treatment of blood stasis and qi stagnation type lumbar intervertebral disc herniation. *China Traditional Chinese Medicine Modern Distance Education*, 14(11), 121-123.

Hu Xia. (2016). Analysis of the effect of auricular acupuncture point buried seed care in analgesia after anorectal surgery. *Everybody's health*, 11(18), 220-221.

HUANG Kun, HUANG Wenqi. (2016). Application of acupoint dressing in the recovery of gastrointestinal function after geriatric intertrochanteric femur fracture. *China Traditional Chinese Medicine Modern Distance Education*, 14(3), 114-115.

Jiao H, Yi W. (2016). A preliminary study on the clinical spectrum of modern gua sha in China. *New Chinese medicine*, 48(2), 216-218.

Ke Meizhen. (2016). Application of acupressure in orthopaedic bedridden patients with urinary retention. *Medical Equipment*, 29(11), 178-179.

Kong Wenwen. (2016). Clinical observation of auricular pressure bean combined with acupoint cupping for post-stroke constipation. *China Urban and Rural Enterprise Health*, 31(2), 54-56.

- Li Qing. (2010). Discussion on the Effective Application of Chinese Medicine Nursing Technology in Key Specialties of Chinese Medicine. *Journal of Chinese Medicine Management*, 18(11), 983-984.
- LI Zhonglin, CHEN Guifeng. (2023). Observation on the therapeutic effect of Lin's orthopaedic bone combined with modified stabbing and cupping method in the treatment of cervical cervical spondylosis. *Journal of Neck and Low Back Pain*, 44(4), 694-695.
- LIN Xiaoli, CHEN Jingwei, ZHAO Operate, et al. (2016). Clinical study on acupoint massage to promote the recovery of gastrointestinal function after cardiac surgery. *World Journal of Integrative Chinese and Western Medicine*, 11(5), 682-684.
- Liu Xianfeng. (2016). Randomised parallel controlled study of Chinese medicine fumigation medicinal bath and acupressure combined with identification and typing in the treatment of stroke. *Journal of Practical Chinese Medicine Internal Medicine*, 30(7), 92-94.
- Liu Xixi. (2016). Observation on the effect of auricular acupuncture point burying seeds in the treatment of hypertensive vertigo. *Contemporary Nurse*, (5), 112-113.
- MENG Fang, DUAN Peibei, HU Qian, et al. (2016). Observation on the effect of gua sha therapy for perimenopausal insomnia patients. *Journal of Nursing*, 31(12), 49-52.
- PENG Tian-Zhong, GONG Hui-Hua, HU Sui-Fa, et al. (2016). Clinical observation of gua sha combined with walking jar method for the treatment of neck and shoulder syndrome. *Shanghai Journal of Acupuncture and Moxibustion*, 35(5), 713-715.
- Shen Qin, Sun Qiuhua. (2012). Investigation and analysis of the current situation and development prospect of Chinese medicine nursing in Zhejiang Province. *Journal of Zhejiang University of Traditional Chinese Medicine*, 32(2), 215-218.
- Shi Shu. (2022). Observation on the clinical efficacy of cupping combined with plum blossom needle percussion in the treatment of liver depression and fire type insomnia. *Modern Nutrition*, 22(23), 2053-2055.
- WANG Lei, YU Jiangqi, CAO Yanru, et al. (2023). The application of dorsal stimulation and Yang acupuncture and cupping in the rehabilitation care of patients with peripheral facial paralysis. *Qilu Nursing Journal*, 29(16), 134-137.
- WANG Ruihua, FU Yongxiang. (2023). Effects of Chinese medicine fumigation combined with acupressure on TCM evidence score and nerve conduction velocity in patients with diabetic peripheral neuropathy. *Heilongjiang Medicine*, 47(15), 1904-1906.
- WEI Qiaolan, QIU Jing, XU Zhongqin. (2016). Observation on the efficacy of moxibustion in treating patients with oedema of spleen and kidney yang deficiency type in nephropathy. *Nursing Research*, 30(6), 2233-2235.
- WEN Huifang, LIU Weimei, MOK Ruiqiong. (2016). Application of moxibustion therapy in patients after anterior cruciate ligament reconstruction of the knee joint. *Nursing Practice and Research*, 13(12), 59-61.
- WU Jing, LIU Tengting, SHEN Cuizhen. (2016). Study on the antihypertensive effect of acupoint compresses in patients with phlegm-damp congestive hypertension. *Journal of Nursing*, 23(10), 8-11.
- Xu Qiong. (2023). Evaluation of the effect of Chinese medicine fumigation on limb function rehabilitation in patients with cerebral infarction. *Modern Health Care*, 23(14), 1087-1089.
- XU Xiaoqing, PAN Rongrong, WANG Gang. (2022). Application and effect observation of electroacupuncture combined with traditional Chinese medicine fumigation in patients with rheumatoid arthritis. *Journal of Mudanjiang Medical College*, 44(04), 97-100, 108.
- Xue H, Meng AF, Xu DJ. (2016). Clinical study of Gua Sha to relieve nursing staff fatigue. *Shanghai Journal of Acupuncture and Moxibustion*, 35(5), 549-551.
- Zhang Hongqing. (2016). Application of combining Gua Sha and cupping in caring for patients with frozen shoulder. *Chinese medicine guide*, 14(12), 259-259.
- Zhang Ji-mei. (2016). Observations on the therapeutic effect of acupoints compression with nursing care on patients with chronic gastritis accompanied by insomnia. *Chinese medicine clinical research*, 8(10), 137-139.

ZHAO Liu-Rong, LIU Xue-Fang, WANG Shao-Ping. (2016). Therapeutic efficacy observation and nursing care of auricular acupuncture point buried seeds applied to patients with insomnia. *Contemporary Nurses*, (7), 99-100.