

Experience for the Treatment of Hiccups

Hiccup is a common disease. Mild cases may be just because of sudden inhale of cold air which can go away by itself or just be treated by one needle. Severe ones are often related to internal organ diseases such as gastric ulcer, gastritis, abdominal surgery, or stimulation of the diaphragm at the end of some cancers. These severe hiccups often last for long time and easy to relapse.

1. Regulate qi to stop hiccup

Hiccups are related to the rise of middle jiao qi. For ones due to internal organ disorder or simple long-term hiccups, we should regulate Qi as the main treatment. Four points Neiguan(P6), Hegu(LI4), Zusanli(ST36) and Yinlingquan(SP9) will be selected.
Neiguan---relax the chest and ease the diaphragm
Hegu---lower the rise of Qi
Zusanli, Yinlingquan---all He-sea points, indicated to treat “rise of Qi and diarrhea”

For new disease, use reducing technique for all the four points, retain the needles for 10-20 minutes.

For weak patients or chronic conditions, reinforce Hegu and Neiguan, reduce Zusanli and Yinlingquan. Reinforce the upper points and reduce the lower points so as to make the Qi to go down. Moxibustion could be given to each point 10-15 minutes.

For liver and stomach heat or fire, characterized by gastric or hypochondriac fullness and distension, constipation, add Zhigou(SJ6), Yanglingquan(GB34) with reducing technique. Or add Zhangmen(LR13), give acupuncture followed by cupping.

Chronic hiccups with spleen qi deficiency, warming needle therapy at Zhongwan(RN12) and Qihai(RN6).

2. Open the orifices to stop hiccup

Some cases are caused by sudden attack of cold wind or weak body affected by cold. For this type, we should disperse wind cold, disperse lung qi and open the orifice. Here the orifice will be the nose. Ba Dou or pepper was used before to cause sneezing. Points we should use will be Zanzhu(BL2), Tianrong(SI17) and Shousanli(LI 10).

Zanzhu(BL2)---Taiyang meridian point, Taiyang is the surface of the body. This point is used to disperse external pathogens, wind and cold. The point is above the nose and eyes and therefore good to open the orifice. Needling bilateral Zanzhu will often stop hiccups immediately. When needling this point, we should first palpate with thumb or index finger nails to find the most sensitive points between Zanzhu and Yuyao (Extra point), and then puncture perpendicularly with one cun needle. The tip should reach the bone and small amplitude rotation or lifting-thrusting will be applied to make the aching or distending sensation to the orbital area and the nose. It will be specially good if patient's tears coming out because of the sensation. Retain the needle for 5-15 minutes, and remove the needle with slight rotation after hiccup had stopped.

Tianrong(SI17)---a point of the Small Intestine meridian, good to relax the throat and the diaphragm, open the orifice and stop the hiccup. Puncture perpendicularly for 1-1.2 cun

and make the sensation going to the throat and Jianjing(GB21) points. Do not needle too deep. Retain the needle for 5-10 minutes.

Shousanli(LI10)----usually used to treat shoulder and arm pain, aphonia, but also has good effect for stopping hiccups. Puncture perpendicularly 1-1.2 cun causing strong sensation (reducing technique). Retain the needle for 10-15 minutes.

The above three points are used for new and simple hiccups. One point for mild cases and all the three points for severe conditions.

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