Pediatric Acupuncture: A Spiritual Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Background: Approaching pediatric acupuncture from a spiritual perspective is the most effective means for providing a valuable holistic relatively noninvasive approach to pediatric acupuncture, as well as preventive treatments for the repulsion of disease and the correction of Qi (i.e., vital energy) imbalances.

Objectives: Parents may be taught to apply acupressure to their children with an excellent response, especially when given with loving kindness.

Materials and Methods: Methods include the use of acupressure, laser techniques, and acupuncture for children who do not display fear toward the shallow insertion of needles.

Results: Owing to the young age of the patients, children will display fast and effective positive responses to therapy, just as they are susceptible to negative effects in similar timeframes. Children will respond faster than adults to such treatments, which can also increase immune system functionality and bolster resistance to invasive forms of Qi imbalances and disease. Such treatments will also relieve pain and distress and improve concentration and mental attitudes in children. Difficult conditions such as attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and attention deficit disorder (ADD) can also be effectively treated through a spiritual approach to pediatric acupuncture.

Conclusions: Pediatric acupuncture from a spiritual perspective provides a specific, safe, and effective therapy for a wide variety of painful and nonpainful conditions through Qi balancing in children. Moreover, parents may be taught to apply acupressure to their children with an excellent response, especially when given with loving kindness. Such techniques not only resolve acute symptoms but also provide preventive measures and enable parent–child relationships to thrive. Overall, medical acupuncture from a spiritual perspective is one of the best complementary therapies in pediatrics.

Keywords: complementary therapies, laser, ADHD, acupressure, Traditional Chinese Medicine

INTRODUCTION

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PEDIATRICS and geriatrics is quite large. Geriatrics tend to deal with a more vocal and less expressive patient, in comparison, pediatrics deal with a nonvocal and more expressive patient. In this lays the beauty of pediatrics, they must focus on all aspects of their patients. The children cannot vocalize their ailments, so they must communicate by other means—their feelings, their conscious, their third eye, and body language.¹ Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is unique when compared with

Western medicine in that TCM approaches each individual patient and treats them according to personality, problems, and body. Pediatrics is divided into 6 aspects, from prenatal to teenager, each within a limited age group. Each age group has its own methods of approach, each has their own milestones and each has their own way of growing up.

Differences Between Children and Adults

Children can be very fragile and can react very quickly to various pathogens. This means that symptoms such as fevers

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and loss of appetite happen very quickly, however, the reverse of this is that children respond quickly and efficiently to treatment, whereas adults tend to have a stronger immunity, but take longer to heal. The reason for children becoming ill easily and recovering quickly is due to their immature spleen that controls the balancing and responding of the immune system.

Since babies are small they have low blood volumes, and their heart beat is less forceful, making them more prone to changes in blood volume that can cause cold symptoms. The most important aspect to remember is children are very delicate, not only physically, but spiritually and mentally as well; compassion is very important. Raw food is another aspect to be mindful of due to the weakness of the spleen; too much raw food can lead to diarrhea and indigestion. Instead, steamed and warm food is ideal for the baby as it is easily digestible and the energy gained from it can then be utilized throughout the child's body.

Intuition is a major strength of children, they are very sensitive to not only themselves but to the parents as well. Therefore, it is very important when dealing with children to be gentle and loving. If there is a family affair, it is of the utmost importance to take a child's intuition into account. If there is a dispute between the mother and father, the child will be aware of it, and will take it very seriously as it has not yet learned how to neutralize those feelings of unrest. Also, children easily obtain contaminations such as White Coat Syndrome; they are very sensitive to doctors and any existing negative energy. Negative energy can have a profound effect on a child causing sleeplessness and colic.

Transfer Therapy

TCM has 2 approaches of importance. The first being transfer therapy. Transfer therapy involves the treatment of the parent to heal the child. In terms of genetics, Western medicine differs from TCM in a number of ways. In Western genetics, the parents' genes are evenly distributed in the child, however, in TCM if the baby is male it carries 60% of the mother's energy and 40% of the father's, and if the baby is female it will have 60% of the father's energy and 40% of the mother's. Therefore, fathers and daughters, sons and mothers are, respectively, closer not only mentally and physically, but spiritually as well.² A large benefit to treating a child this way is that it fosters a greater relationship between parent and child.

Ancestor Points

Another method of approach in TCM that is of importance is ancestor points. One may use the ancestor points to prevent the child, as well as the parents, from contamination attachment of their ancestors. Contamination from the ancestors can be problematic as it can allow ailments from past generations to affect both the child and parents. Treating the parents utilizing the Small Intestine (SI 9 and SI 11) can be helpful. SI 9 is used for immediate family acupoints, this

includes parents, brothers, sister, uncles, and aunts. SI 11 acts on a different ancestor point, this one associated with grandparents and great grandparents. SI 9 tends to be the most effective point because of its close genetic relation to the parents and other close relatives.

Karma

Karma is the consequence of one's past life that is residually left behind in the current life, and in this way it is closely tied to ancestor points. In relation to pediatrics, karma can be seen as the cause of some ailments in children. Babies born with eczema are associated with burns, choking is thought to be caused by the babies hanging themselves in a past life, and congenital heart disorders are associated with damage to the heart in a past life.

Parent and Child

Different techniques and points in acupuncture and acupressure are very effective in treating children. In pediatrics, father and mother are asked to perform acupressure on their own child. As with the principle of energy in which systems neither lose nor gain energy but simply transfer from high to low, healing acts in much the same manner, wherein the healthy/high energy of the parent transfers to the sickly/low energy of the child. The reason a child's mother or father is asked to perform acupressure on their child is due to genetic cross, allowing the child to be very responsive to the treatment. Parents tend to be more compassionate with their children, as opposed to therapists who take a more responsive approach, due to this, children who are treated by their parents gain a greater benefit than those treated by therapists. Therefore, the best approach is for the therapist to give a proper diagnosis and then allow the parent to administer the acupressure therapy with loving kindness and compassion, in other words positive energy.

Prenatal Period

The period during pregnancy is known as the prenatal period. The goal during this stage is to ensure the mother is well in mind, body, and spirit, as well as keep the forming fetus healthy through transfer therapy. One thing to keep in mind is that mothers generally respond the best to transfer therapy because of the 9 months spent carrying the child during pregnancy. The umbilical cord acts as a major connection between the child and mother from the very beginning.

To treat the mother during pregnancy, there are some acupuncture points that have far more contraindication such as LI 4, SP 6, pelvic points, and lower abdominal points. In general, it is important to treat a kidney point to strengthen kidney energy.³ This should all be done before 16 weeks as all the organs will start forming after the zygote stage; the sex of the baby is established by this point. Once the 16-week period is over, according to TCM, it is possible

to determine the sex of the baby by feeling which side of the body the pulse is strongest. If the left pulse is stronger than the right pulse, it is a baby boy, and if the right pulse is stronger than the left, it is a baby girl.

Also, for the prenatal period, it is always wise to treat KI 6 in all patients to avoid congenital abnormality. KI 6 is important for mothers of low constitution, at risk of premature birth, with a history of medical problems, and whether there is a chance of low body weight in the baby. By treating KI 6, genetic factors can be lessened. After treating KI 6, it is wise to give treatment to physical, mental, and spiritual acupuncture points; this helps balance and harmonize by stabilizing the system (Table 1).

One of the most common problems during the prenatal period is the induction of labor. Before having induction, it must be made sure that the baby is ready for the due date. Stimulation of SP 6 improves contraction of the uterus. Other common problems during the prenatal period are sciatica, carpal tunnel, and trigeminal neuralgia.

Acupuncture is a natural painkiller for labor. It aims to ensure the smooth flow of energy, specifically positive energy, to ensure a similarly smooth delivery of a spiritually positive baby. To improve the regularity of contractions, the use of needleless acupuncture, mental exercises, and control during labor can be implemented.

Neonatal

Acupressure is one of the most effective ways to treat a neonatal patient. There is a routine neonatal acupressure practice that has proven useful in returning a baby to good health. This routine can be done by either the mother or the father; however, the previously discussed crossing of genetics from son to mother and father to daughter once again plays an important role. The treatment is as follows:

- Bottom of the foot for the genetical factor
- Behind the propietia falsa for the growth
- Below the medial malleolus for genetical factor
- Back of the neck for immune system
- Back of the back for spiritual enhancement

TABLE 1. PRENATAL PERIOD: TREATMENT OF MOM FOR FETUS (TRANSFER)

Genetically	KI 3x2, KI 7x2, KI 10x2 KI 6x2 (kidney essence)
Physically	LI 11x2, SP 21x2, TMJx2 (TE 21, SI 19, GB 2)
Mentally	EXHN 1x4 PC 6x2 TE 5x2
Spiritually	BL 17x2, BL 46x2, GV 9 GB 41x2 GV 4, GV 20 CV 5

- Above the forehead for concentration
- PC 6 for hiccups
- Conception Vessel (CV) 12 for the appetite
- CV 17 for the energy

Postnatal

For the postnatal period, it is important to keep both the parents and child physically, mentally, and spiritually well. Milestones take a precedent for the developing child at this stage. It is of utmost importance to ensure that the child is at the correct levels physically, mentally, and spiritually at the right times.

Toddler to Teenager

Toddlers pose their own new set of problems as at this stage they begin to be more mobile and able. This leads them to get injured by falling down, eating foreign objects, etc. As well as this mobility they are exposed to other children in school that allows for the spread of viruses, infection, diarrhea, constipation, etc. Teenagers again have their own problems with skin care, hormone levels, new social structures, etc. Pediatrics is such a diverse and fluid field that one must always be able to adapt to changing circumstances.

ANCESTOR POINTS USED IN POSTNATAL PERIOD

Acupuncture

Acupuncture works well for older children (4–5 years of age) as they tend to respond better than their adult counterparts (Table 2 and Table 3). Acupuncture is one of the main modalities of TCM, it has been used for >4,000 years. The basic idea of acupuncture is to energize, sedate, and balance the flow of energy to the meridian of the organ systems while balancing the physiologic parameter of the

TABLE 2. POSTNATAL PERIOD: TREATMENT OF MOM FOR INFANT (TRANSFER)

Mom's healthiness = infant's healthiness

Physical health	LI 1, SP 21x2 SP 10x2, LR 3x2, LR 13x2 ST 36x2, SP 6x2 CV 6, CV 12, CV 17
Mental health	EX-HN 1x4 PC 6x2, TE 5x2
Spiritual health	BL 17x2, BL 46x2 GV 20, GV 4, GB 41x2, CV 5
Ancestor connection	SI 9 (immediate/present life family) SI 11 (deceased/past-life ancestors)

TABLE 3. FREQUENTLY USED TECHNIQUES/POINTS

<i>Acupressure/laser for infants and young children</i>	
<i>Acupuncture for older children</i>	
For general well-being	KI 1x2 LI 11x2
Intellectual well-being	EX-HN 3
For immune enhancement	LI 11x2—localized SP 6x2—hormonal SP 10x2—environmental ST 36x2—Food GV 14—generalized
For gastrointestinal	PC 6x2, ST 41x2 BL 21x2, GB 31x2, ST 36x2
For growth/development	KI 3x2, KI 6x2, KI 7x2, KI 10x2 SI 6x2 GV 7, GV 9

human body. The beauty of pediatric acupuncture is that one only needs to touch the acupoints on the meridian and it will take action immediately and balance the internal meridian, organ systems, the 6 senses, and the energy senses. The needle has a tarnished view being seen as a symbol of pain, because of this practitioners have a tendency to not use the needle even though it is the most effective treatment instead opting for acupressure.

Acupressure

In China, recent studies have shown that acupressure for a child from the neonatal stage to 4 years of age improves the child physically, mentally, and spiritually. Physically it keeps them healthier and encourages better growth. Mentally the child develops better sleep patterns and its mood becomes more stable. Spiritually, the child becomes more intuitive, learns faster, and is able to pay better attention.⁴

One advantage of acupressure is when dealing with touch medicine, the parents always have loving kindness and good intentions to make their kids healthy, happy, at peace, and balanced. According to Chinese acupressure, both parents are effective, however, the genetic cross still is important to remember. Acupressure should be appreciated for the baby as it is similar to using needles but less painful. However, if a physician is administering, needles are more effective, but if it is the parents, the touch with good intentions is equally as effective as the needles.

If the mother is administering acupressure, she uses the middle finger of her right hand, and if the father is administering, he uses the middle finger of his left hand for the tonification by touching with good intentions and then rotating the finger clockwise in a small circular pattern for the duration of ~3 minutes; at the end of this 3 minutes with love, gently push with direct pressure 3 times. For sedation, the middle finger is also used, again by touching with good

intentions and then rotating the finger counter-clockwise in a small circular pattern for the duration of ~3 minutes; at the end of these 3 minutes with love, gently push with direct pressure 3 times. This technique shows how parents are useful in pediatrics, as well as the difference between adult acupuncture and pediatric. The main difference being pediatrics involves the deep love that accompanies a family, and the family's positive energy.

Laser Therapy

Another treatment that has not yet been touched upon is the usage of lasers. Laser treatment uses light beams to shine on acupuncture points. Lasers use a single monochromatic light beam usually in the visible light spectrum with popular frequencies corresponding to red and green emissions. Even low-power lasers in the range of 0.005 W can be effective especially on auricular points.

The stimulation of acupuncture points with low-power lasers is not only painless but also has the advantage of being a noninvasive therapy, atraumatic, and easily administered by a qualified professional. Moreover, it also consists of a technique with reduced risk of infection, clinical chair time, and may be indicated for patients with fear of needles.⁵ These benefits are ideal for children owing to the fact that the children are more prone to infection, have less patience, and can easily adapt to fear of needles. The response to this form of treatment is good; however, acupuncture tends to have a better response because of its personal energetic connection. It should be noted that one must be careful to avoid shining the laser into the eyes because retinal damage may occur.

Electrical Acupoint Stimulation

Electrical acupoint stimulation is useful for older children to balance the meridians, inner organ systems, and acupoints. It is useful for these older age groups because it has more stimulation power. Electrical acupoints stimulation is very useful in the treatment of chronic diseases.

Spiritual Ailments

Among the mental, spiritual, and physical problems a child may suffer, those that find the best results are the spiritual, that is, attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and other behavioral disorders. Behavioral disorders such as these are often seen in Western medicine as a complex neurodevelopmental disorder. However, in TCM, they are due to an insufficiency of inner and outer spirit instability, as well as disconnected spiritual energy that can cause all these problems.⁶ Inner spirit is located in the gallbladder and is responsible for intellectualness and consciousness. Outer spirit is located in the meridian and acupoints and is responsible for communications. To reconnect the inner and outer spirit, GV 9 is

used, GB 41 is also useful for this. It is always good to use a more aggressive therapy opposed to heavy medication.

Sometimes people are unable to remember the memories of their childhood due to experiencing abuse or other traumatic events that have significantly impacted them either mentally, physically, or spiritually. To access these repressed memories, CV 5 may be used, this holds great therapeutic value as it allows the memory to be brought forward and erased by either hypnotism, meditation, or acupuncture. If the desired results from CV 5, subconscious gate, are not manifesting TE 5x2, a ventilation gate can be used. PC 6 is used for opening deeper inner gates. It is always important to check that their right energetic alignment is aligned, think of a camera lens trying to focus on a particular subject, so that it can be easily manipulated to get the right results from the subconscious level.

Low Risk

It is always good to treat babies with a natural approach and with an understanding of the spiritual aspects of the human body. All previously discussed methods strive to achieve this. TCM is noninvasive, very safe, and allows for more than just one aspect of a person's health to be improved. Mental, physical, and spiritual aspects should always be considered when treating children.

DISCUSSION

Although this article discusses common uses of TCM and integrative medicine, it approaches these techniques from a spiritual perspective. As such, the author first acknowledges that there has been very little research done in this area, and the little that has been done has either been misconstrued due to mistranslation of ancient texts or has gone unused for many years. However, the author testifies that he has used every technique discussed within this article to great effect in his own practice. It is the author's hope that more research is funded and performed in this area.

Modern medicine does not always work, and it is during these times that looking to the past for answers may be most beneficial. Transfer Therapy and Ancestor Points can each be found in the great medical texts of Chinese Medicine in various forms and names. With regard to pediatrics specifically, integrative medicine holds many treasures for pediatrics and their patients. Many of the modalities promoted from a spiritual perspective are noninvasive and promote a compassionate bond between parent and child. This bond between parent and child is essential for a child to develop healthily and to become balanced physically, mentally, and spiritually.

The author believes it to be the duty of practitioners of integrative medicine to not only be healers, but, in a sense,

historians as well. Much of what integrative medicine is now is owed to texts that have long been lost to time. The ancient medical gifts of ancestors should be rediscovered and shared with peers, colleagues, and contemporaries, so that those who come later may also reap the benefits of the past.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, most of the pediatrics' patients respond quickly to therapy. It is better for the parents to be involved in the process of compassion and loving kindness. The bond between a child and its parents is incredibly balanced and has extreme closeness. Children are like a brand new car—they often will not have existing damage, however, sometimes their karmic balance is tipped unfavorably. Luckily, because their systems are so new, they are very quick to respond to treatment. Overall, children are very receptive to the Traditional Chinese Medical approach, especially acupuncture, laser, acupressure, and good intentions.

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