

Acupuncture in the rehabilitation of cancer patients

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BACKGROUND: Cancer is characterized by abnormal and uncontrolled cell proliferation, which can affect various parts of the body and consequently harm their functional capacity. Acupuncture comes from the stimulation of points and meridians on the foundations of Chinese Philosophy, it is a simple, effective and low cost treatment method, which has been increasingly used as a way to help the cancer patient for relieving symptoms of the disease and treatment.

HYPOTHESIS: Considering that the use of acupuncture produces beneficial effect on the patient's rehabilitation process with cancer, this study aimed to identify the effects of this therapy for these patients.

METHODS: This is a quantitative, descriptive, cross-sectional study developed with patients participating in the rehabilitation group from a private clinic in Ribeirão Preto - SP. The rehabilitation group of this study is a research and extension Group with the participation of a multidisciplinary team for customer service, and acupuncture, in turn, held by a specialist doctor in the area. To characterize the sample, variables of socio-demographic, clinical and therapeutic data we investigated, involving them the conduct of acupuncture and its effects. Results were expressed as mean and standard deviation of the descriptive analysis of the data.

RESULTS: During 2014 and 2015, 11 patients aged greater than or equal to 18 years participated in this study. Patients preserved cognitive ability and the diagnosis of cancer. Most patients were female (73%) between 42-80 years old. The most frequently reported symptoms during acupuncture sessions were: pain, anxiety, dyspnea, constipation, stress, hot flashes, urinary incontinence, numbness in the upper and lower limbs, diarrhea, nausea, changes in taste and fatigue. Special piping for all cases have been established, for example, VC3 + VC4 + VG20 points in cases of urinary incontinence and Baxie points and-ankle cuff technique for numbness in the lower and upper limbs; having been also made some acupuncture points in common, such as connection points yin and yang, high and low (LI-4 + IG-11 + E-36 + F-3). The results indicated momentary improvement and long-term some of the symptoms reported by the participants, highlighting the importance of the use of acupuncture during the process of rehabilitation of cancer patients. Thus, according to this study and literature, it emphasizes the importance of studying and understanding the benefits of using acupuncture for cancer patients, since this understanding helps us care and interventions during the patient's rehabilitation process and, consequently enables the improvement of their quality of life.

