

Insomnia - Auriculotherapy

46 Cases of Insomnia Treated with Semiconductor Laser Irridiation on Auricular Points

*by Yao Shuying
(Institute of Acupuncture and Moxbustion, China Academy
of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Beijing 100700)*

Insomnia is a commonly encountered symptom in clinical practice. The author has treated it with semiconductor laser irradiation on auricular points with satisfactory therapeutic results. A report is presented as follows.

General Data

In this series, there were 46 cases of insomnia. 19 cases were male and 27 female, ranging in age of 23-55 years, averaging 38 years. The course of disease ranged from over 1 month to 12 years. 15 cases were differentiated as disharmony between the heart and kidney, 18 cases deficiency of both the heart and spleen, and 13 cases liver-fire upward invasion.

Method of Treatment

Bilateral auricular points of Shenmen, Endocrine, Subcortex, and Brain were selected. Add Heart and Kidney for disharmony between the heart and kidney; Spleen and Stomach for deficiency of both the heart and spleen, and Liver and Kidney for liver-fire upward invasion.

PU-I semiconductor laser apparatus developed by the Physics Department of Qinghua University was used to irradiate on the above-mentioned auricular points, with a wave length of 820 nm, output power 3 mw and facula 2 mm in diameter. Each point was irradiated for 1 minute till a local warm sensation was felt. The treatment was given once daily, 12 treatments constituting one therapeutic course with a 5-7 day interval between courses. The clinical results were evaluated after 1-3 courses of treatment.

Therapeutic Criteria

Cured: Able to sleep for more than 7 hours. Improved: Able to sleep for 5-6 hours.
Ineffective: Able to sleep for less than 3 hours.

Therapeutic Results

Of the 46 cases treated, 32 cases (69.5%) were cured, 13 cases (28.3%) were improved, and 1 case (2.2%) failed. The total effective rate was 97.8%.

Typical Case

Ms. Zhao, 52 years old, presented herself on Oct. 5, 1998, with a chief complaint of insomnia for 9 years. She often couldn't fall asleep or had dream-disturbed sleep because of heavy mental stress. She could hardly fall asleep for the whole night if the condition worsened. The accompanying symptoms included palpitation, shortness of breath, dizziness, tinnitus, general lassitude, and poor appetite. The tongue was pale with white coating, and the pulse thready and weak. It was diagnosed as deficiency of both the heart and spleen. The treatment was aimed at tonifying the heart, reinforcing the spleen, nourishing blood and tranquilizing the mind. The points selected were Heart, Spleen, Kidney, Endocrine Shenmen, Brain, and Subcortex, on which semiconductor laser irradiation was applied.

After 3 sessions of treatment, the patient was able to sleep intermittently, and palpitation and shortness of breath were relieved. After 1 course of treatment, the patient could sleep quietly for 4 hours or more, and general lassitude was improved. After 2 courses of treatment, the patient could sleep quietly for about 6 hours, and all the other accompanying symptoms were relieved. After 3 courses of treatment, she could sleep for 7 hours every night, and all the other symptoms disappeared.

Comment

The photochemical, magnetic and warming effects of semiconductor laser on the ear points may promote the circulation of Qi and blood in the meridians, regulate the functions of the Zang-Fu organs, thus obviously improving the physiological functions. In view of modern science, semiconductor laser irradiation on the auricular points is able to regulate the nervous system and tranquilize the mind, suitable for treatment of insomnia. This therapy is well accepted by the patients for the satisfactory results with no pain and no side effects.