

Acupuncture Treatment in a Case with Equine Conjunctivitis

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Abstract : One male Arabian horse, 5-year-old, reared in Gort, Co Galway, Ireland was diagnosed as conjunctivitis. Acupuncture and aquapuncture with dexamethasone were done at BL01, BL02 and ST01, twice a week, and oculo-acupuncture was done into Shangjiao area using with oculo-acupuncture needle for human use. At session 3, there were no lacrimation, ocular discharge and hyperemia in the eye. The present patient was a case with equine conjunctivitis which showed favorable therapeutic response by acupuncture treatment.

Key words : acupuncture treatment, equine, conjunctivitis.

Introduction

Conjunctivitis occurs due to bacterial, viral and fungal infections in all animals. Treatment may use topical ointments or sprays that contain antibacterial agents (antibiotic and sulphonamide), combined with corticosteroid (1,3,4,6,10,11,14,15).

It is well known that the acupuncture (AP), aquapuncture, laser-AP and electro-AP have therapeutic effects in human and animal diseases. Especially, AP was effective for treatment of human ocular disease (5,7,13). Oculo-acupuncture (OA) is a new form of AP therapy. It has good therapeutic effects on vomiting, acute muscular sprain, apoplexy, hemiplegia and pain (18). As for the therapeutic effect by OA on human ocular diseases, Ye (17) reported that blepharo-paralysis was treated by OA in 20 cases: 17 cases were cured, 3 were effective, the total curative rate was 85%, and the effective rate was 100%. However, there were only a few reports about therapeutic effect by AP treatment for ocular disease in large animal were described till now (16).

Accordingly, the authors report a case with equine conjunctivitis which showed favorable therapeutic response by AP treatment.

Case

History

A 5-year-old male Arabian horse, reared in Gort, Co Galway, Ireland was diagnosed as conjunctivitis. The symptom had been present for 3 weeks. A local veterinarian treated the horse with antibiotics and corticosteroids but the symptoms did not improve.

Clinical findings

Lacrimation, mucopurulent ocular discharge and hyperemia were detected in the left eye. In addition, this horse was diagnosed as excess condition by diagnostic method of traditional oriental medicine (12).

Treatment

The eye was flushed with saline. aquapuncture with dexamethasone (Voren, Boeringer Ingelheim, Ltd., UK, 1 ml diluted with 1 ml of saline) was done twice a week at acupoints BL01, BL02 and ST01 after AP for 20 minutes. Also, OA was used at Shangjiao area above the lateral canthus (18) using a needle for human OA use (Fig 1). A solution of bee-venom (Apitoxin[®], Guju Pharmacological Co., Korea; 200 µg) was diluted (1:1) with 2% lidocaine (Huons, Korea) for intramuscular injection into the cervical muscle, twice a week.

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Fig. 1. Needle and oculo-acupuncture in a patient with conjunctivitis.

Outcome

At session 2, the ocular symptoms were improved. At session 3, they were much improved; lacrimation, ocular discharge and hyperemia had disappeared. Treatment ended after session 3.

Discussion

In general, drug therapy including antibiotics, sulphonamide and anti-inflammatory drug can be used for treatment of conjunctivitis (12,16).

As for treatment of ocular diseases by traditional oriental medicine, ocular disorders including keratitis, conjunctivitis and periodic ophthalmia are caused by an invasion of exogenous wind heat and upward disturbance of hepatic heat in traditional Chinese medicine theory (12). Bladder meridian (BL01, BL02, BL18 and BL28), stomach meridian (ST01 and ST02), gallbladder meridian (GB01, GB02, GB20, GB37 and GB38), triple heater meridian (TH02 and TH23) and other acupoint (LIV03, LI11, GV20, tip of ear and Tai Yang) are effective for treatment of ocular disorders (12). Treatment techniques are AP (for 20 minutes), aquapuncture, laser-AP (for 1-2 minutes per acupoint) and hemo-AP (300-500 ml from GB01) (12).

Favorable therapeutic effect can be obtained by ocular flushing with saline, aquapuncture with dexamethasone at BL01, BL02 and ST01 after AP, OA at Shangjiao region, and intramuscular injection with apitoxin in this case with conjunctivitis. McCormick (9) reported that five AP treatments, one every 3 days at BL01, BL02, GB01, GB02 and ST02 improved the clinical symptom after the third treatment, and by the fifth treatment the ulcers were healed without further medical attention in a case with equine bilateral corneal indolent ulcer unresponsive to medication for 10 weeks. Aquapuncture with dexamethasone at the same acupoints was also applied after AP in the present case. There were many reports about the therapeutic effect by aquapuncture (5,7,13). Because

dexamethasone is a kind of anti-inflammatory drugs, it was assumed that the present aquapuncture with dexamethasone might play a role for acceleration of treatment in the present case with conjunctivitis.

In recent, it was reported that OA, applying needle at orbital area had good effects on vomiting, acute muscular sprain and pain control in human (18). Accordingly, it was assumed that OA might also play a role for treatment of this patient like aquapuncture with dexamethasone.

On the other hand, it was known that apitoxin injection was effective in various human inflammatory diseases and in pain control (2), and the cortisol level was increased by melittin, the main component of the apitoxin (8). It was assumed that apitoxin might help to improve the clinical symptom in the present case. Because some kinds of AP methods were applied concurrently in this case, its precise mechanism for treatment was not clear. Considering about no successful therapeutic response by conventional treatment including antibiotics and anti-inflammatory drug for 3 weeks, present result by AP method was thought to be contentable. Further researches need to be done for clarification of treatment mechanism by OA.

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말 결막염에 대한 침 치료 1례

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요 약: 아일랜드 고르트주에서 사육중인 5살, 수컷, 아랍종말이 결막염으로 진단되었다. BL01, BL02 및 ST01에 자침 및 텍사메타손 수침(2회/주)을 적용하였고, 동시에 상초 영역에 안침을 실시하였다. 본 환축은 3회 침 치료 후, 눈물, 안 분비물 및 충혈이 소실되었다. 본 환축은 침 치료에 양호한 치료반응을 보인 말 결막염의 증례이었다.

주요어: 침 치료, 말, 결막염