Dysmenorrhea and Acupressure

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Objectives

- Introduction of Dysmenorrhea
  - Primary vs Secondary
- Introduction of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM)
- Specific recommended acupressure points for Dysmenorrhea
- References
- Practice!
DYSMENORRHoeA
Dysmenorrhea

is defined as severe, cramping pain in the lower abdomen that occurs just before or during menses.

(Primary or secondary)

Primary dysmenorrhea occurs in the absence of significant pelvic pathology. Usually develops within the first 2 years of the menarche.
Characteristics of primary dysmenorrhea

- The pain is often intense, cramping, crippling and severely incapacitating so that it causes a major disruption of social activities.
- It is usually associated with the onset of menstrual blood loss but may begin on the day preceding menstruation.
- The pain only occurs in ovulatory cycles, is lower abdominal in nature but sometime radiates down the anterior aspect of the thighs and back.
- The pain often disappears or improves after the birth of the first child.
- Dysmenorrhea is often associated with vomiting and diarrhea.
- Pelvic examination reveals no abnormality of the pelvic organs.
Secondary dysmenorrhea

- **Secondary dysmenorrhea** is caused by organic pelvic pathology and it usually has its onset many years after the menarche.
- Any woman who develops secondary dysmenorrhea should be considered to have organic pathology in the pelvis until proved otherwise.
- Pelvic examination is particularly important in this situation and, if the findings are negative, laparoscopy is indicated.
- Common associated pathologies include endometriosis, adenomyosis, pelvic infections and intra-uterine lesions such as submucous, and fibroids.
ENDOMETRIOSIS
- Cause of Secondary Dysmenorrhea
Acupressure
What is Acupressure?

Acupressure is an ancient healing art developed in Asia over 5,000 years ago that uses the fingers to press key points on the surface of the skin to stimulate the body’s natural self-cenerative abilities. When these points are pressed, they release muscular tension and promote the circulation of blood and the body’s life force energy (Qi) to aid healing. Acupuncture and acupressure use the same points, but acupuncture employs needles, while acupressure uses gentle but firm pressure.
The Advantages of using acupressure

- relieving pain
- balancing the body
- maintaining good health.
- the healing touch of acupressure reduces tension, increases circulation, and enables the body to relax deeply.
- by relieving stress, acupressure strengthens resistance to disease and promotes wellness.
That's odd... my neck suddenly feels better...

EARLY ACUPUNCTURE
Channels or Meridians—The invisible pathways of Qi

- Chinese use the term “Jing Luo” (筋絡) which means: channels, conduit, meridian, etc.
- These are the invisible channels through which Qi circulates throughout the body.
- The acupressure points (or holes as the Chinese term “xue” (穴位) is more aptly translated means) are the locations where the Qi of the Channels rises close to the surface of the body.
There are 12 main meridians—

- 6 Yin are: Heart, Lung, Spleen, Liver, Kidney, and Pericardium.
- 6 Yang: Small intestine, Large intestine, Stomach, Gall Bladder, Urinary Bladder, Triple Burnner.

And numerous minor ones, which form a network of energy channels.

Each meridian is related to, and named after, an organ or function.

There are more than 400 acupoints and there may be as many as 2000 points in use for different treatment.
The Body Meridians

Two Centerline Meridians:
- Conception Vessel
- Governing Vessel

Twelve Principal Meridians:
- Stomach Meridian
- Spleen Meridian
- Small Intestine Meridian
- Heart Meridian
- Bladder Meridian
- Kidney Meridian
- Pericardium Meridian
- Triple Warmer Meridian
- Gall Bladder Meridian
- Liver Meridian
- Lung Meridian
- Large Intestine Meridian
How to Find The Points

- Of the hundreds of acupressure points on the body, most either lie underneath major muscle groups or follow the bone structure, residing in the joints or in the hollows of bone.

- In order to find an acupressure point with your hands, concentrate on feeling for a muscular cord or a hollow in the bone structure.

- Feel for a slight indentation or depression between the tendons and muscles at each point.

- Once you have found a muscular cord, press directly on it; or if you feel a bony hollow, slowly press directly into it.
"Exactly which school of acupuncture are you from?"
How to Press The Points

- Often the point is indicated by some degree of soreness upon pressure. If there is extreme (or increasing) sensitivity or pain, gradually decrease the pressure until a balance is achieved between pain and pleasure.

  You should find that the initial pain you feel from the finger pressure is simultaneously relieving the other pain. When you hold the point long enough, the pain will diminish, indicating that the acupressure is working.

- After repeated sessions with different depths of pressure, you will begin to feel a pulse at the arthritic pain sites; this is a good sign—it means increased circulation. Try to pay attention to the type of pulse you feel.

  If it’s very light and faint, hold the point even longer until you feel the pulse grow fuller and deeper.

  If the pulse is throbbing, continue to hold the point until you feel the pulse become more regular.
How to Use Acupressure to Relieve Pain

Try to find a comfortable sitting or position, hold the painful joints and nearby acupressure points for at least three minutes, breathing deeply into your abdomen; the breathing helps the points release and enables healing energy to circulate into your arthritic joints and throughout your whole body.

Relaxation and feeling of well-being will emerge the more you practice self-acupressure as a daily routine.
‘You’re about to feel the stress just melting away’
Meridians Involved in Uterine Health

- Liver (LIV or LV)
- Spleen (SP)
Dysmenorrhea Point Liver 3

- **Point Localization:** On the dorsum of the foot in a depression distal to the junctions of the 1st and 2nd metatarsal bones.


- **Target area:** Head. Uterus.

- **Point Name and Meaning:** Taichong – Bigger Rushing
Dysmenorrhea Point Liver 4

- **Point Localization:** Anterior to the medial malleolus, midway between SP5 and ST41, in a depression on the medial side of the tendon of tibialis anterior.

- **TCM Actions:** Smooths the flow of Liver Qi in the lower burner. Resolves Dampness in the lower burner.


- **Target area:** Uterus. Genitals.

- **Point Name and Meaning:** Zhongfeng – Middle Seal
Dysmenorrhea Point Spleen

- **Point Localization:** 3 cun directly above the tip of the medial malleolus on the posterior border of the tibia.

- **TCM Actions:** Strengthens the Spleen. Resolve dampness. Stimulates the function of the liver. Smooths the flow of Liver Qi. Tonifies Kidney. Nourishes the Blood (Xue) and Yin. Benefits urination. **Regulates uterus and menstruation.** Moves the Blood (Xue) and eliminates stasis. Cools the blood. **Stops pain. Analgesia. Calms the Mind (Shen).**


- **Point Name and Meaning:** Sanyinjiao – Three Yin Meeting
"On the plus side, you've cured my back pain."


Chinese Acupuncture and Moxibustion, Foreign Language Press, Beijing 1987, Cheng Xinnong
Thank you!!!