

Acupuncture And Herbs Regenerate Hair For Alopecia Areata Patients

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Researchers conclude that acupuncture combined with the herbal formula Huoxue Shengfa is safe and effective for alleviating alopecia areata. This condition is a type of hair loss typically characterized by round bald patches. In recent clinical experiments, 62 outpatient cases with alopecia areata were randomly and evenly distributed into a treatment group and a control group. The treatment group was treated with acupuncture combined

with Huoxue Shengfa decoction. The control group received treatment with acupuncture combined with Compound Glycyrrhizin tablets.

The 31 outpatients from the treatment group consisted of 16 male and 15 female patients ranging from 18 to 40 years old with an average symptom duration of approximately 7.5 months. The control group was comprised of 16 male and 15 female patients ranging from 18 to 37 years old with an average symptom duration of approximately 7 months.

Inclusion criteria included:

- Sudden loss of hair that happened rapidly
- Hair loss areas were primarily round or oval shaped
- Widespread alopecia patches
- Symptoms were discovered inadvertently
- Affected areas had no conspicuous symptoms of organic disease
- Mental stress, persistent worrying, insomnia, forgetfulness
- Dark tongue color with white patches
- Pulse readings reveal stasis
- Positive hair pull test result

Exclusion criteria included:

- Infectious hair loss
- Serious nerve or mental illness
- Hemorrhage tendency
- Serious coagulation dysfunction

Treatment Methods

Both groups received 7-star (plum blossom) acupuncture twice per week at hair loss areas, moving from the outer edge of each alopecia patch towards the center, in a clockwise direction. Acupuncture was applied lightly, rapidly, and accurately until flushing appeared.

The treatment group patients orally consumed the Huoxue Shengfa decoction 3 times per day, 200 ml each time. The ingredients of the formula are:

- Dang Gui 30g
- Dan Shen 30g
- Yu Jin 15g
- Ling Xiao Hua 15g
- Bai Shao 10g
- Tian Ma 10g
- He Shou Wu 15g
- Wu Shao She 10g
- Gan Cao 9g

The control group patients consumed Compound Glycyrrhizin tablets (also known as Shuai Neng, manufactured by LePu YaoYe GuFen Company) after their meals at a rate of 3 times per day, 75 mg each dosage. The treatment period was 4 weeks and the results were observed and recorded 12 weeks after 3 treatments were implemented on both groups.

Degree of Efficacy

Fully recovered: Fully grown hair with normal thickness and color, negative hair pull test

Full efficacy: 70% of new grown hair with thickness and color approaching normal state

Notable efficacy: 30% of new grown hair, hair loss reduced after treatment

No efficacy: Less than 30% of new grown hair and hair continued to fall out after treatment

Total recovery rate: fully recovered, full efficacy, notable efficacy combined

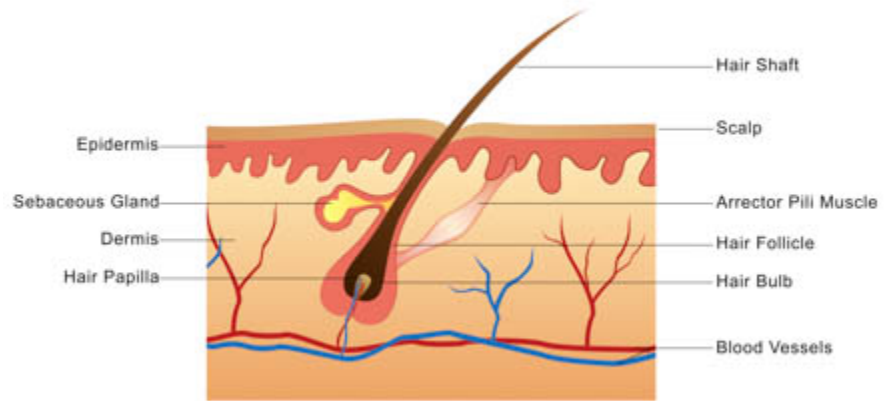
Test Results

Researchers document that the total recovery rate for the treatment group was 90.32% with a recurrence rate of 9.68%. The total recovery rate for the control group was 67.74% with a recurrence rate of 32.36%. Also, 1 case of an adverse reaction, mild dizziness, was observed in the treatment group. A total of 5 minor adverse reactions occurred in the control group. Both groups obtained an adverse reaction rate of 3.23% and 19.35% respectively. All adverse symptoms were minor and disappeared after the patients were treated accordingly.

History of TCM

The researchers gave a historical precedent for initiation of the investigation. Alopecia areata caught the attention of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) doctors since the ancient Warring States Period in China. Ancient medical scholars once concluded it is best to start by treating blood stasis problems in order to treat alopecia areata. Researchers also agree that dissolving blood stasis helps to promote qi and blood circulation, thereby supplying nutrients to the hair. The Huoxue Shengfa decoction was prescribed by Cheng Ganlu, where Dang Gui and Dan Shen are important herbs for the enhancement blood circulation.

Modern researchers discovered that Dang Gui helps to strengthen the immune system and promotes haemopoiesis. Dang Gui has also been shown to regulate blood platelet aggregation and benefits circulation in blood vessels. Dan Shen helps to promote blood circulation and repair tissues. All other ingredients mentioned in the prescription are used to complement and assist one another to create the best treatment results.



The researchers note that acupuncture is one of the most significant treatment methods in TCM for the treatment of alopecia areata. Research demonstrates that acupuncture promotes blood circulation, especially to the skin. As soon as blood flow increases, nutrient levels at different areas of the skin are replenished to encourage hair growth. Additional research demonstrates that acupuncture regulates the neuroendocrine system and benefits the immune system. The researchers concluded that acupuncture is safe and effective for alopecia areata treatment when it is combined with the Huoxue Shengfa decoction.

Reference:

Cheng Ganlu, Clinical effects of acupuncture plus the Huoxue Shengfa decoction on alopecia areata, Clinical Journal of Chinese Medicine, 2015(13).