Can Acupuncture Help With Liver Cancer Symptoms?

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Acupuncture for Liver Cancer

The answer to this question is multifaceted; if you are currently undergoing treatment for liver cancer, it's important to tell your primary care physician and oncologist that you would like to try acupuncture to relieve your symptoms.

For centuries, Chinese Traditional Medicine experts have used acupuncture to treat the symptoms of cancer such as lack of appetite, nausea, vomiting, low red blood cell, low white blood cell count, low platelets, hot flashes, lack of energy, pain, weight loss, insomnia, depression, anxiety, constant fatigue, headache and many others.

Medical studies have been done that demonstrate the results of acupuncture on reducing the symptoms cancer patients commonly experience.

In one study done at the Changhai Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine in China, sixty patients with primary liver cancer were treated either with wrist-ankle acupuncture or morphine for their pain after chemotherapy. The results of acupuncture were equal to, or greater than, morphine. There were other advantages associated with the acupuncture treatments; abdominal bloating experienced by the patients with cancer decreased.

In another study, scientists in China treated sixty patients who had cancer of the liver from metastasis with several different points. Here are some acupressure points and their location in the body:

ST 36 (Stomach 36, called the Three Mile Point)

To locate this point, find the bottom of your kneecap first and use it as a marker. Place your hand underneath your knee and point your fingers horizontally. Count four fingers down. The point is located in a depression on the fibula. Hold the point for between one and five minutes.

SP 6 (Spleen 6, called the Three Yin Intersection)

This is an important acupressure point at the intersection of the kidney, liver and spleen meridians. SP 6 is used as an important acupressure point for many diseases.

Here's how to find the SP 6: find your anklebone (medial malleolus) on the inside of your foot. Then follow the tibia bone up with your fingers, three finger widths up from the medial malleolus.

PC 6 (also known as the Neiguan spot)

The Chinese believe that this point modulates the autonomic nervous system. It's a good point for anxiety and heart pain. This point is located in the center of the forearm close to the wrist, two finger widths above the wrist crease between the tendons in that area.

ST 37 (Stomach 37, called the Upper Great Hollow)

Touch the point where your tibia connects to your femur in the joint space, on the side of the small lower leg bone called the fibula. Once you've found this point, measure six finger widths down. The point is in the center of the leg on the shinbone. This point is used in targeting abdominal pain, bloating and distention.

LI 4 (Large Intestine 4, called Joining Valley)

This point is located on the back of the hand, between the first and second metacarpal bones. It lies in the middle of the second metacarpal bone, on the thumb side.

This acupressure point helps liver cancer in that it alleviates constipation, diarrhea, abdominal pain, body aches and pains, strengthen immunity and expel gas.

KI 3 (Kidney 3, called The Great Stream)

This point is on the foot, between the medial malleolus (ankle bone on the inside of your foot) and the calcaneal tendon (the very back of your foot leading up towards your calf). There's a depression in this area, and this is exactly what you're looking for.

This acupressure point is used for those with low back pain, toothache, insomnia, the frequent need to urinate, impotency, headache and dizziness.

LV 3 (Liver 3, called The Great Surge)

Between the first and second toes lies the metatarsal bone. By following the line from the toes to the metatarsals, you'll drop downward; this is the point you're looking for.

This point is for red, swollen, painful eyes, PMS, nausea, vomiting, constipation, and swelling in the armpit area.

SP 9 (Spleen 9, called Yin Mound Spring)

This acupressure point is located in the knee region. The tibia bone has a bony protuberance on the medial side. Locate this area and find a depression in the skin that is behind and below the medial condyle of the tibia.

This acupressure point helps to heal hepatitis and jaundice for patients with liver cancer.

GB 34 (Gall Bladder 34, called Yang Mound Spring)

This acupressure point is located in a depression that lies in front of, and below the head of the fibula. For patients with liver cancer, it used for hepatitis, jaundice, vomiting, nausea, indigestion, weakness, and cramping.

Each of these points should be held for one minute, but when you have a serious condition such as liver cancer, obtain the professional services of an acupuncturist.