

Acupuncture treatment on a dog suffering from muscle tremors



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SUMMARY:

Acupuncture was successfully used to treat a dog suffering from muscle tremors since she was born. Currently, just 2 sessions have been carried out, showing a 100% improvement lasting for 12-24 hrs. The tremors then gradually come back afterwards, getting an overall of 50% improvement after the 1st session and 50-60% improvement after the 2nd session.

Besides acupuncture treatment every 10-14 days, pen laser Qi-pulse was led to the owners to use it every 3 days in specific points that were explained.

HISTORY:

Gem, 6-year-old neutered bitch, Flat-coated Retriever, came to us for acupuncture treatment on the 23/06/2018 due to suffering from muscle tremors in all her 4 legs since she was born. When she was young, the tremors were mild, but they have been getting gradually worse over time. Her parents and siblings also suffer from the same problem, but not as severe as in Gem.

Last year Gem also had a stroke. MRI and CT were carried out on the whole body without any conclusive findings to explain the stroke or the muscle tremors. Since the stroke occurred, the tremors have been getting worse, being present almost 24 hours a day, even when the animal is sleeping. These tremors get worse when Gem gets excited.

When Gem was 1 year old, she suffered from colitis, that lasted over a week.

Gem also has a very sensitive skin, which gets very itchy all over her body. Her coat is shiny, and the skin is not dry. She is always hot and looking for the cooler place in the house to nap and rest.

Gem vomits if she eats or drinks very fast.

She is a very friendly and excitable dog, getting on with other animals and people and eats high-quality dry food combined with raw food.

CLINICAL SIGNS – WESTERN DIAGNOSIS:

At her first session, Gem was very excited. The owner reported that was her normal behaviour. Body condition was excellent, good muscle tone and shiny coat. She was showing severe muscle tremors in all her legs. Her muscle tremors always get worse when she gets excited.

In 20017, after a stroke, CT and MRI were carried out without any conclusive findings of any pathology that could explain the stroke and the muscle tremors.

CLINICAL SIGNS – TCM DIAGNOSIS:

Very excitable dog (fire constitution). Excellent body condition and shiny coat. Tongue is very dry and slightly red. On the pulses, Kidney and Bladder are very weak, almost imperceptible. Liver and Gall Bladder Back Shu are very reactive.

Diagnose of Jing deficiency and internal wind due to extreme heat caused by Kidney Yin Deficiency.

WESTERN TREATMENT:

Gem received treatment for the stroke, but she never had any treatment for the muscle tremors due to inconclusive results of the diagnosis tests carried out. Therefore, her muscle tremors were considered from idiopathic cause.

TCM TREATMENT:

The aim of this treatment is to expel the internal wind, that is responsible of the muscle tremors, reason for the consultation. The internal wind is the symptom of the extreme heat generated by the chronic Kidney Yin deficiency.

My treatment strategy is:

- Expelling the internal wind.
- Promotes flow of Qi.
- Tonifying Kidney yin.
- Expelling the heat.

The selection of the acupuncture points was the same on the first 2 sessions, but they will change in the next ones if the muscle tremors decrease.

In both sessions dry needling was used, with needles 0.22X15mm for 10 min in these points:

POINTS	LOCATION	INDICATIONS
Liv3 - Taichang	On the medial aspect of the second toe, proximal to the metatarsophalangeal joint.	Source point. Promotes Flow of Qi, dispels interior wind, calm mind and spasms.
GB20 - Fengmen	Between the occipital bone and the atlas wings.	Dispels internal wind and wind heat, clear the mind.
LI4 - He gu	Between the 1st and 2 nd metacarpal bones, approximately in the middle of the 2 nd metacarpal bone on the radial side.	Source point. Expels wind heat, anti-spasmodic reaction, stimulates Qi.
GV20 - Bai Hui	Highest point of the poll.	Strong influence on Yang, stimulates Qi, eliminates interior wind, clears the mind.
Yin Tang – Seal Hall	Middle line between the eyes	Eliminates heat and wind, calms the mind, stops convulsions

After 10 minutes, these points were treated with low-level laser therapy in both sessions:

POINTS	LOCATION	INDICATION
Bl18 - Gan Shu	1.5 cun lateral to the caudal border of the spinous process of the 10th thoracic vertebra.	Back Shu of the Liver, stimulates the flow of Qi, eliminates internal wind, clears the mind, stimulates Xue.
Bl19 - Dan Shu	1.5 cun lateral to the caudal border of the spinous process of the 11th thoracic vertebra.	Back Shu of the Gall Bladder, stimulates the flow of Qi.
Bl23 - Shen Shu	1.5 cun lateral to the caudal border of the spinous process of the 2 nd lumbar vertebra.	Back Shu of the kidney, tonifies Kidney Yin, strengthens the brain, bone and marrow, benefits the mind, Xue and the essence.

The bilateral combination of “Liv3+LI4” is called “the 4 gates” and is used to eliminate the internal wind and to clear the mind.

During and after the treatment Gem was very relaxed.

On the first treatment the 23/06/2018, right after removing the needles, the muscle tremors had stopped completely on the legs. Owners were very shocked, because in 6 years the tremors had hardly ceased. After a couple of minutes, the dog lied down to rest. Not even the noise or other dogs around could wake her up. The muscle tremors came back very gradually after 12 hours. 10 days after the 1st session, the tremors were 50% less intense than before, having long periods of time where the tremors were not present.

On the 04/07/2018, a second session was carried out on the same points used in the 1st session. This time Gem was more relaxed. The tremors were present, but they were less intense. After the insertion of the 1st needle, the tremors stopped completely for almost another 12 hours. Gradually the muscle tremors came back, but less severe than that after the 1st session.

After the 2nd session, the laser Qi-pulse was lent to the owners for its use every 3 days on bilateral “Liv3+LI4”. 3rd session will be in 10 days and the plan is to introduce new points more specific to tonify Kidney Yin and eliminates internal heat. Good points might be:

POINTS	LOCATION	INDICATION
Ki6 - Zhao Hai.	Medial side of the talus, distoplantar to the medial malleolus.	Coupled point for the Ren Mai, nourishes Yin, calms the mind, cools blood.
GB39 - Xuan Zhong	3 cun proximal to the tip of the lateral malleolus, on the caudal border of the fibula.	Influential point for marrow. Benefits the essence.
Sp6 - San Yin Jiao	3 cun proximal to the tip of the medial malleolus, on the caudal border of the fibula.	Where all 3 leg Yin channels cross, benefits the Spleen function of T&T.

6VC – Qihai	On the ventral midline, 1.5 cun caudal to the umbilicus.	Regulates and tonifies Qi, benefits the essence.
St36 – Zu San Li	3 cun distal to St35 y 0.5 cun lateral to the cranial border of the tibial tuberosity.	Benefits the Stomach and Spleen. Tonifies Qi.
Lu9 – Tai Yuan	On the medial side of the carpus, distopalmar to the most medial prominence of the radial styloid process	Tonification point, influential point of blood vessels, tonifies Qi.
GB34 – Yang Ling Quan	In the depression craniodistal to the head of the fibula.	Influential point for sinews, benefits the Flow of Qi.
Ht7 – Shen Men	In the depression of the transverse crease of the carpal joint.	Eliminates the heat, calms the mind, clears the channel.
SI3 – Hou Xi	In the depression proximal to the metacarpophalangeal joint on the lateral side of the 5 th metacarpal.	Expels interior wind, clears the mind, benefits the sinews.

DISCUSSION:

Owners sought for alternative treatment because they were desperate to help their dog and the western medicine couldn't find the cause or the treatment for the muscle tremors. Gem was gradually getting worse with new symptoms as serious as a stroke.

After taking the history and considering the genetic factor of the problem, owners were informed about the difficulty of the case, due to the difficulty to influence the pre-heaven essence. Despite that difficulty, we decided to start acupuncture treatment to prevent another stroke or any other symptom related to this deficiency.

It was a great surprise when the muscle tremors stopped completely for a few hours after just one treatment. After the 2nd session with the same positive results our expectations to completely restore the energy balance and stop the tremors are very high. Probably Gem will need periodical acupuncture treatment for the rest of her life to keep that balance.

Gem's owners sought acupuncture as a last resort and due to the failure of western medicine, that described the case as idiopathic. Thanks to the TCM, we can find and treat the cause and the symptoms.

Due to her constitution, the symptoms and the examination based on TCM, the diagnosis of internal wind for extreme heat for chronic Kidney Yin Deficiency was established.

The treatment is not finished yet and a 3rd session will be done in 10 days. Depending on the evolution of the symptoms, the treatment will focus more on the cause (Kidney Yin deficiency) rather than the symptom (internal wind)

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