

# Acupuncture and Massage Techniques Combined to Treat Alcohol Withdrawal Syndrome

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**Abstract:** During the process of alcohol withdrawal, patients may experience withdrawal symptoms such as anxiety, depression, nausea, vomiting, anorexia, headache, chills, sweating, palpitation, poor sleep, tremors, hallucinations and other withdrawal symptoms. Beneficial effects of acupuncture include reducing the need for alcohol, relieving withdrawal symptoms, and increasing energy and relaxation. In this way, the purpose of quitting drinking can be achieved by regulating the balance of yin and yang in the body and the partial prosperity and partial decline of the internal organs. Acupuncture can reduce a patient's need for alcohol, relieve withdrawal symptoms, reduce anxiety, hostility, stress, insomnia and depression, as well as increase energy and relaxation. After patients quit drinking through acupuncture treatment, alcohol withdrawal symptoms are significantly reduced to a tolerable level or even disappear completely. At the same time, massaging Guanchong point can promote the metabolism of water and alcohol in the body, which has a very good sobering effect.

**Keywords:** Acupuncture Techniques; Alcohol Withdrawal; Massage; Combined Therapy.

## 1. Introduction

In August 2018, the world's top medical journal "The Lancet" published an article stating that drinking directly caused the death of 2.8 million people around the world. The safest drinking amount is 0, that is, not drinking is best for health. Increased alcohol consumption will lead to a continued increase in the risk of hypertension and stroke. Long-term drinking can cause inflammation of the digestive tract, irritation, ulcers and even cancer.

Alcohol dependence can cause a series of physical, psychological and social problems. Alcohol dependence refers to dependence on alcohol caused by long-term drinking. Patients will have symptoms such as fixed drinking patterns, characteristic drinking-seeking behaviors, increased tolerance to alcohol, strong desire to drink, and repeated attempts to quit drinking. [5]

Alcohol withdrawal generally refers to alcohol withdrawal syndrome, which refers to the mental, psychological, physiological disorders or physical dysfunction that occur

when alcohol dependants suddenly stop or reduce their drinking. Symptoms of alcohol withdrawal syndrome mainly include tremor, delirium or hallucinations, gastrointestinal symptoms, etc.

1. Tremor: Patients usually have obvious tremor in their hands. They may experience hand tremors when dressing, brushing teeth, eating or performing fine movements. They may also experience hand tremors and tremors at rest. In severe cases, they may manifest as whole-body tremors;

2. Delirium or hallucinations: These are relatively serious symptoms of withdrawal, mainly characterized by confusion, agitation, visual hallucinations, auditory hallucinations, and hallucinations;

3. Gastrointestinal symptoms: main symptoms include loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, etc.;

4. Other symptoms: Mainly include fatigue, upset, insomnia, fever, sleep disorders, elevated blood pressure, rapid heartbeat, etc. Alcohol withdrawal convulsions may also occur, which is also a relatively serious withdrawal symptom.

Table 1. Alcohol withdrawal symptoms

Item	Symptoms	Time since last drink	Note
General alcohol withdrawal syndrome	Insomnia, tremor, mild anxiety, headache, palpitations, sweating, gastrointestinal discomfort, loss of appetite, etc.	6-12 hours	Reach peak within 12-24 hours
Alcoholic hallucination	Patients experience auditory hallucinations, visual hallucinations, tactile hallucinations and other hallucinations	12-24 hours	It usually subsides within 48 hours, but may last for several days.
Alcohol withdrawal convulsions	Tonic-convulsive convulsions	12-48 hours	Symptoms can appear very early, even 2 hours after the last drink, while blood levels are still high.
Delirium tremens	Disorientation, visual hallucinations, tachycardia, elevated blood pressure, low fever, sweating, etc.	48-72 hours	Symptoms peak within 4-5 days, and the patient's mortality rate is high.

Patients must adopt an active treatment plan to alleviate their dependence on alcohol and gradually implement alcohol withdrawal.

## 2. Acupuncture Treatment Plan

### 2.1. Physiological

Generally, long-term alcoholics will have a physiological alcohol withdrawal reaction after they stop drinking, and the symptoms will gradually worsen. The physiological reaction will gradually disappear after 1-2 weeks. However, patients will still experience symptoms such as fatigue and drowsiness, and it will take some time to recover.

### 2.2. Mental Reaction

Patients with alcohol dependence will experience typical alcohol withdrawal reactions 6-24 hours after the last drink. As the patient's abstinence from alcohol increases, the symptoms will continue to worsen, reaching their peak by 30 days. During this period, patients may experience symptoms such as tremor, delirium, confusion, epilepsy, delirium, hallucinations, etc., which are often accompanied by simple physiological withdrawal reactions, and the situation can gradually improve thereafter.

### 2.3. Acupuncture Treatment

Acupuncture can reduce a patient's need for alcohol, relieve withdrawal symptoms, reduce anxiety, hostility, stress, insomnia and depression, as well as increase energy and relaxation. After patients quit drinking through acupuncture treatment, their alcohol withdrawal symptoms are significantly reduced to a tolerable level, or even disappear completely. Acupuncture can relieve withdrawal symptoms, reduce anxiety, hostility, stress, insomnia and depression, in addition to increasing energy and relaxing the body and mind.

### 2.4. Methods

Acupuncture for alcohol withdrawal uses a combination of auricular acupuncture and body acupuncture. The auricular acupoints are selected on Shenmen, endocrine, subcortical, sympathetic, mouth, stomach, throat, and liver.[1]

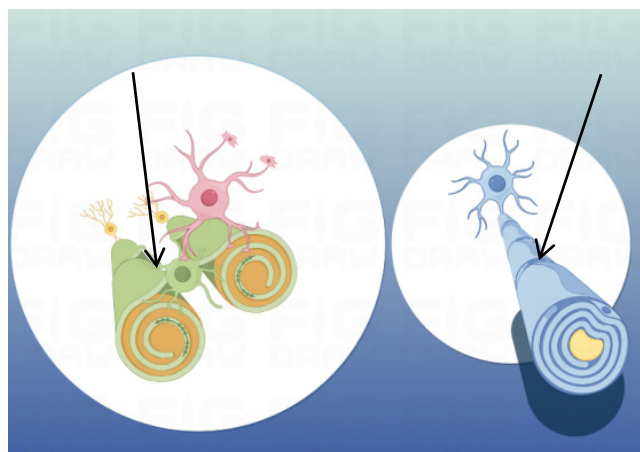


Figure 1. Acupuncture stimulates brain nerves

The patient's first treatment was with acupuncture at Zuanzhu (BL2), Sibai (ST2), Yingxiang (LI20), Zhongfu (LU1), Quchi (LI11), Shousanli (LI10), Xiyangguan (GB33), Sanyinjiao (Leave the needle in SP6), Taichong (LR3), Yifeng (TE17), Fengchi (GB20) and other points for 20 to 25 minutes, and perform one needle operation in the middle; after removing the needle, bury the needle at the sensitive point of the tragus.[4]

During the second treatment, the acupuncture patients'

Quyuan (SI13), Tianzong (SI11), Fengmen (BL12), Feishu (BL13), Jueyinshu (BL14), Xinshu (BL15), and Dushu (BL16), Geshu (BL17), Ganshu (BL18), Zhishi (BL52), Huantiao (GB30), Weiyang (BL39), Chengshan (BL57) and other points.

The third treatment repeated the first treatment, and added electroacupuncture stimulation at the sensitive points of the scaphoid fossa and triangular fossa. The fourth treatment was repeated as the second treatment, and electroacupuncture stimulation was added at 7 backshu points from Fengmen (BL12) to Ganshu (BL18). The interval between each treatment is 2 to 3 days.

Operation: The patient takes a sitting position, sticks Wangbuliuxing seeds on the ear points and presses for 1 minute. When patients experience withdrawal symptoms such as irritability, dizziness, headache, insomnia, and worry, they can press on their own for 3-5 minutes.[2]

There are many factors that affect the effect of acupuncture on alcohol withdrawal, such as ethnicity, education level, drinking frequency, alcohol dependence score, drinking age, own willingness and willpower, etc. Therefore, we should provide individualized acupuncture treatment to patients based on different influencing factors. In short, acupuncture has a certain inhibitory effect on reducing the psychological craving caused by physical discomfort and emotional disorders in alcohol-dependent patients.

## 3. Massage Therapy

Massage can relieve discomfort caused by drinking, such as dizziness, headache, abdominal discomfort, nausea and vomiting, etc. It can press Guanchong point, temple point, Baihui point, Fengchi point and Zusanli point, etc. Massaging the Guanchong point can promote the metabolism of water and alcohol in the body, and has a very good sobering effect.[3]

Massage has a certain therapeutic effect on the treatment of chronic superficial gastritis and small superficial ulcers in the stomach or duodenum.

1. Commonly used techniques include pressing, dotting, kneading, holding, rubbing, rubbing, etc.

2. Commonly used acupuncture points and locations are Zhongwan, Liangmen, Pishu, Weishu, Neiguan, Zusanli and Shao Abdomen.

Method:

The patient lies in a supine position, and the doctor sits on the right side and gently massages the epigastric area of the upper abdomen for 1 to 2 minutes. Then take thenar kneading method for about 15 minutes. During this period, you can also cooperate with the Zhongyuan and Liangmen acupoint finger-kneading methods. For gastric ulcers, the focus of the kneading method should be on the left side of the upper abdomen; for duodenal ulcers, the kneading method should focus on the right side of the upper abdomen. Those with a long course of disease or weak constitution can rub the lower abdomen for about 5 minutes, and finally end with pushing the thumbs of both hands along the rib arch to both sides 3 to 5 times. After abdominal operation, you can rub the Zusanli, Neiguan and Neiting points 30 to 50 times each.

The patient can change to a prone or sitting position, and massage the Beishu points, especially the Pishu and Weishu points, for 1 to 2 minutes per point. The Pishu and Weishu acupoints can also be treated with the Xiaothetar rub method using heat. Finally, end the treatment by holding the shoulder well and rubbing the back.

Guanchong point is located on the ulnar side of the ring

finger, 0.1 inch away from the corner of the nail. Baihui point is located at the intersection of the midline of the head and the line connecting the tips of the two ears. The Fengchi point is placed with the palms of both hands against the ears, the ten fingers are naturally spread out to hold the head, and the thumbs are pushed up. There is a depression at the junction of the neck and the hairline. Zusanli is located on the front and outside of the calf, three inches below the calf's nose and one finger across from the front edge of the tibia.

Head massage can promote blood circulation in the brain and has the functions of refreshing the brain and improving eyesight, stopping dizziness and hair growth, calming the mind, enhancing memory and preventing brain aging. And prevent and treat hypertension and other diseases.

Method:

1) Rouyintang and Shenting. Use your index finger or middle finger to massage the Yintang point in the middle of the eyebrows, and then rub the Shenting point 0.5 inches above the middle of the hairline for 1 minute each time.

2) Push the forehead. First, use your fingers to push upward from Yintang to Shenting point, then center on the midline of the forehead, and push upward from Yintang to the front hairline in order on both sides, for 1 minute each.

3) Massage the sun. After the forehead is pushed separately, the fingers stop at the temples, and massage both sides for 1 minute each.

4) Rub the side of the head. After massaging the sun, use the food, middle, and ring fingers to massage the temporal parts of both sides, upward first, then around behind the ears, and massage the mastoid processes for 1 minute.

5) Rub Baihui. Use your fingers to rub the Baihui point in the middle of the head (the continuous intersection between the front midline and the two ear tips behind the folded ears) for 1 minute.

6) Mob the head. Use three fingers to rub along the midline of the head from the front hairline to the back hairline for 1 minute.

7) Rub the occipital bone. Use three fingers to rub the lower edge of the occipital bone for 1 minute.

8) Sparse the Five Classics (comb hair). Separate the five fingers appropriately, comb along five lines along the bladder meridian and Shaoyang meridian from the front hairline to the back hairline for 1 minute.

9) Rub the wind pool. Use the thumbs or index and middle fingers of both hands to massage the Fengchi points on both sides for 1 minute.

10) Kowtow. Use the ten fingertips of both hands to tap the entire head vertically downward for 1 minute.

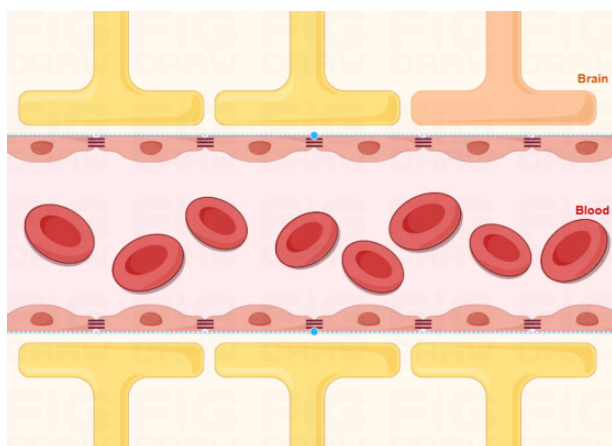


Figure 2. Head massage promotes blood circulation

At the same time, massaging the patient's Guanchong point can promote the metabolism of water and alcohol in the body, which has a very good sobering effect.[6]

Massage technique: Use fingernails or thumb pads to press Guanchong point firmly for 5-10 seconds each time, then relax for 2 seconds and repeat the operation. Acupuncture points on each side were operated 5 times. The massage intensity should be even and it is appropriate to feel slight soreness. Neiguan point is also called Xingjiu point. It is on the inside of the arm, two finger widths downward from the middle of the wrist crease, that is, between the two tendons.

## 4. Conclusion

Acupuncture and massage techniques for withdrawal have many effects, such as relieving the patient's desire for alcohol-addictive substances, promoting detoxification, relieving anxiety and nervousness, balancing the body's Qi movement, promoting the movement of Qi movement, supporting the immune system, and improving systemic symptoms. Improve your sense of well-being. At the same time, it improves sensory functions (such as vision, smell, taste, touch, intuition, etc.), promotes concentration and other psychological functions, relieves inflammation, eliminates or reduces pain and discomfort, etc.

In addition, acupuncture and massage techniques have special effects on adjusting patients' mental and emotional states, including relieving sudden anxiety, stopping or reducing long-term use of phenothiazines, controlling sudden schizophrenia symptoms, and eliminating long-term depression and stress reactions. and other symptoms.

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