Acupuncture Restored Ageustia and Anosmia after Heart Surgery- A Case Study

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Female, 61 years old

Chief complaint: lost her taste and smell two months after triple by-pass surgery.

History: Two months ago, she received a triple by-pass surgery. After that, she had no appetite, no hungry, and almost stopped eating. Her tongue was red with no coating. There was a crack in the middle of the tongue. The pulse was fine, slippery. The TCM pattern was Yin deficiency with stomach heat. The main treatment points were Ki6, Lu7, LI4, and PC6, etc. The auricular points were nose, tongue, and heart.

Result: After the first treatment, she got a little smell back, "wanted to eat". The following two treatments, she could smell and 'got some taste back'. She felt "hungry". After the fourth treatments, all of her taste and smell came back except sweet and bitter taste, and then she could live normally. The total course of the treatment was two weeks.

Discuss: Ki6 and Lu 7, as a group, help internal organ disease. The kidney channel connects to heart channel and ascends along the throat to terminate at the root of the tongue. Therefore the Ki6 nourishes Yin and benefits the tongue. Heart opens to the tongue; the pericardium channel connects with heart, communicates with the Three Jiao, and ascends across the throat. So the ear point heart and the PC6 benefit tongue and stomach. LI4 is a good point for benefiting the nose, helping improve the smell dysfunction.

Conclusion: In this case, acupuncture promoted the rehabilitation after the heart surgery.

The Author:

Dr. Xiaojing Zhou is a professor at National University of Health Sciences, Department of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine since 2014. She was an associate professor, nephrologist, and integrative medical doctor from China and has more than 20 years' experience in integrative medical practice. She presented at several conferences in China and the United States regarding the application of Chinese medicine, acupuncture and herbs. Her publications include: Chinese herbs treating chronic kidney disease, kidney stone, and lingering cough after common cold. Hemodialysis, and gene transfer research are also involved in her publications.