Background: In Taiwan, approximately 26-35% of older adults living in long-term care institutions have suffered from anxiety perhaps due to changes in the normal patterns of life, family problems, extreme pain, dependence on others or dying process. Such issue can have negative impacts on physical and psychological health, and quality of life among residents. Interventions are required to manage the psychological symptom. Acupressure, a complementary medicine technique, has been documented that it effectively relieved the levels of anxiety, depression and stress among patients with end stage renal disease on hemodialysis. Hence, acupressure could be believed to be one nonpharmacological method that might promote psychological well-being among institutionalized elderly.

Purpose: The aim of this study was to examine the effects of acupressure on anxiety in residents living in nursing homes; therefore, the hypothesis was that acupressure would reduce the levels of anxiety among nursing home residents.

Design: This study was a double-blind randomized control trial with longitude and repeated measures.

Participants: A sample size of 62 participants were recruited from a nursing home in Taiwan and required to verify significant intervention effects at a statistical power of 80% at the end of 8-week intervention, a significant level of 0.05, 2-sided, a medium effect size of 0.5, and a presumed dropout rate of 10%. All participants met the following criteria: 1) age ≥ 65 years; living in the nursing home for at least 3 months; 2) be able to communicate with the research teams; 3) without cognitive impairment (a Mini-Mental State Examination score ≥ 25); 4) a K-10 score ≥ 22; 5) absence of any problems in the pressure point such as fractures, ulcers, skin diseases or inflammation; and 6) be willing to participate in the research. By using random distribution, the participants were assigned to the experimental group (n=31) and control group (n=31).

Method: The 5 selected points for the interventions and instructions were developed by the researchers and a senior licensed Chinese medical expert with clinical acupressure experience. In addition to the routine care, the intervention group received acupressure at bedtime three times a week, 20 minutes per time, and 3-5 kilograms force pressing for 8 weeks. The control group received only the routine care. The outcome measure was the K10. Data at baseline (T0), the end of the intervention (T1) and one month after the intervention (T2) were collected. Statistical analysis was performed using independent t-test to compare the mean K-10 between two groups and post-hoc pair wise comparisons to assess the mean K-10 within the group. This study was approved by the ethics committee of the researchers’ university and permission to conduct the study in the nursing home was obtained.

Results: Both groups contained more females than males. Those aged ≥ 81 years old, widowed, and self-pay for the cost of living at the nursing home constituted the highest proportions in both groups. No significant differences existed between the two groups in terms of baseline date. In addition, there were no reports of adverse effects of the intervention in any participants. The results revealed that the intervention group had significantly lower k-10 scores compared to the control group at T1 and T2 (14.58
vs 19.77, \( p = 0.02 \) and 14.61 vs 22.23, \( p = 0.01 \), respectively). The scores of the K-10 of the intervention group at T0, T1 and T2 were significant differences (\( F = 24.84, p < 0.001 \)).

Conclusion and implication: According to the findings of this study, it is suggested the acupressure may act as a mean to alleviate anxiety for elderly people in nursing homes, which may enhance quality of life. Acupressure has been considered as a simple and inexpensive way; therefore, it is recommended that acupressure may be provided and incorporated into health education programs for nurses or staff members in long-term care institutions.

Title:
Acupressure on Anxiety in Nursing Home Residents: A Randomized-Controlled Trial

Keywords:
Acupressure, Anxiety and Nursing home

References:


Abstract Summary:
A high prevalence rate of psychological distress among institutionalized elderly has been reported and is associated with a decreased quality of life. Acupressure may be considered as an alternative therapy for improving psychological distress among nursing home residents.
Content Outline:

I. Introduction
   A. Background
   B. Purpose

II. Methodology
   A. Design
   B. Participants
   C. Method
   D. Results

III. Conclusion
   A. Conclusion and implications

IV. References

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