

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Does wet cupping on the interscapular region improve depression and anxiety?

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Keywords:

Anxiety; depression; metabolic syndrome; wet cupping

Abstract

Background

Metabolic syndrome is characterised by at least three of the following clinical features: abdominal obesity, dyslipidaemia, high blood pressure and glucose intolerance; it has also been associated with depression and anxiety. Cupping has been shown to benefit psychological well-being by alleviating anger, hostility, depression and anxiety.

Objectives

To investigate the effects of wet cupping on depression and anxiety in patients with metabolic syndrome.

Methods

Altogether 136 patients with metabolic syndrome (aged 18–65 years) were included. Ten patients were excluded owing to a history of haemophilia, systemic disorder, infectious disease, stroke, heart attack, type 1 diabetes, secondary dyslipidaemia, renal dysfunction, epilepsy and drug therapy. Patients were randomly divided into an experimental group ($n=63$), which received dietary advice with wet cupping, and a control group ($n=63$) receiving dietary advice alone. Treatment was administered for 3 months. Depression and anxiety were assessed using the Beck Depression Inventory at 0, 6 and 12 weeks after treatment. Data were analysed using ANOVA.

Results

There were no statistically significant correlations between depression and anxiety and weight, BMI and lipid profile ($P>0.05$). However, there was a statistically significant association between the psychological parameters and blood pressure, age and gender ($P<0.05$). There was a significant variation in scores between assessment points of $P<0.001$ for both anxiety and depression, but these did not differ significantly between groups

($P=0.78$ and $P=0.69$, respectively).

Conclusion

Wet cupping on the interscapular region does not appear to be useful for the treatment of anxiety and depression in patients with metabolic syndrome.

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