

Class Notes for Winter 2001 Quarter

Nine reasons for using a pressing hand:

1. Finding points more precisely
2. Reducing the sensitivity of skin for less painful insertion of needles.
3. Preparing points by separating the tendons and vessels.
4. Reducing the muscle movement to keep point more stabilized.
5. Helping puncture hand with insertion of needle and manipulating.
6. Checking the Qi arriving from muscle jumping activity
7. Directing the Qi flow to the expected area of treatment.
8. Promoting the sensation.
9. Training the puncture hand to produce certain effects, such as, warming (tonification), cooling (sedation) sensation.

Reinforcing and Reducing Methods

Method	Reinforcing	Reducing
Needle Direction	With course	Against course
Handle Scraping	Downward	Upward
Stimulation Intensity	Mild	Strong
Rotation Direction	Clockwise	Counter-clockwise
Lift-Thrust Rate	Rapid Thrust & Slow Lift	Rapid Lift & Slow Thrust
Needle Retention	Short	Long
Technique Duration	Short	Long
Respiration	Withdrawal with Inhale	Withdrawal with Exhale
Point Covering	Pressure on Withdrawal	No Pressure on Withdrawal
Withdrawal Rate	Rapid	Slow

Clinical Application of Traditional Techniques

I. Feeling the Point with the Hand

1. Locate the correct point on the surface of the skin.
2. Press or palpate the point, with either the thumb or the index finger of the left hand to feel the thickness of the muscle and the width of the cleft or depression.
3. Feel the tendons or vessels and sensation area at the locus of the point to be punctured in order to confirm the angle and depth of insertion.

II. Manipulation Methods:

1. Aiding needle insertion with pressure of the fingers of the left hand.

Press beside the acupuncture point with the nail of the thumb or the index finger of the left hand to stabilize the point. This helps the right hand to insert needle. This method is suitable for puncturing thin muscle areas.

2. Inserting the needle with the fingers stretching and pressing the skin.

Press and stretch the skin where the point is located with the thumb and index finger of the left hand. This method is suitable for the points on the abdomen where the muscle is thick or the skin is loose.

3. Separation Method.

Use left hand fingers to separate any tendons or vessels, which may be the obstacles to the needle insertion.

4. Rotation Method:

Have the patient bend their elbow with palm toward the face.

5. Rolling and Shaking Method:

After fixing the point with the left hand, the right hand is used to hold the patient's limbs for rotation, swaying, flexion and extension to ensure the point can be exposed. This method is suitable for the points in the wrist joints area.

6. Ascending and Descending Method:

With the left hand holding the point the right hand is used to hold the patient's limb for ascending and descending to expose the point. This method is used for shoulder or ankle joints area.

III. Manipulation and Arrival of Qi

A. Methods for awaiting arrival of the Qi

1. Search Method:

If Qi doesn't arrive when the needle is inserted to a certain depth, withdraw the needle under the skin then change the direction and insert it again; repeat until Qi arrives.

2. Following Method:

Follow the meridian or channel with your hand and massage or palpate around the point to help Qi arrive quickly.

3. Plucking Method:

Pluck the handle of the needle lightly, causing it to tremble, this will strengthen the stimulation to obtain Qi.

B. Methods for manipulations of the Qi

1. Lifting and Thrusting:

After the needle is inserted, continue lifting and thrusting, keeping the needle tip within 0.1-cun area until Qi arrival.

2. Twirling or Rotating:

After the needle has reached its desired depth, twirl and rotate the needle backward and forward continuously. Generally, the needle is rotated with an amplitude range of 180 to 360 degrees.

3. Pad-moving Method:

IV. Tonify and Sedation Methods:

A. Setting the mountain on fire

1. Patient inhalation by nose and exhalation by mouth.
2. Quickly inserting the needle aided by the pressure of the finger of the pressing hand to the “Tian” (heaven) position when the patient inhales.
3. Right thumb quickly rotates to the right (clockwise) three or nine times, then quick-thrusting and slow-lifting three times.
4. Quickly inserting the needle to the “Ren” (human) position. Manipulation like #3 above.
5. Quickly insert the needle to the “Di” (earth) position. Manipulation like #3 above.
6. Right thumb pushes to the front to “hold Qi” about 4-5 seconds.
7. Slowly withdraw the needle, then quickly cover the needle puncture.

B. Penetrating-heaven coolness

1. Patient exhalation by nose and inhalation by mouth.
2. Without rotation, slowly insert the needle, aided by the pressure of the finger of the pressing hand, to the “Di” (earth) position while the patient exhales.
3. Thumb rotation to the left (counter-clockwise) three or six times.
4. Quickly lifting the needle to the “Ren” (human) position when you feel a tight and heavy sensation under the needle.
5. If the needle loses the sensation, slow-thrusting and quick lifting three or six times; then right thumb rotation to left (counter-clockwise) three times.
6. Quickly lifting the needle to the “Tian” (heaven) position when you feel a tight and heavy sensation under the needle. Use manipulations like #5.
7. Right hand push the needle go to back to “hold Qi” about 4-5 second.
8. Quickly withdraw the needle without covering the needle puncture.

V. Heat-Reinforcing Method

While pressing the point tightly with the left index finger, quickly insert or twirl and rotate the needle into the point with the right hand, moving from shallow to deep. Lift slowly and press heavily to promote the arrival of Qi.

On the basis of the soreness and distention, insert the needle downward, 0.1 cun to 0.2 cun, then twirl and rotate the needle with the thumb moving forward 3 to 5 times or nine times, then there will be a heat-distention. If such a sensation fails to appear, use the same procedure once again two to three times. Most patients will feel the heat-distention.

After the needle is withdrawn, knead and press the point. In the process of the needling, if the patient's sensation is dull, he should be ordered to inhale with the nose and to exhale with the mouth five to six times.

Additionally, the needle-scraping method can also be added, in which the needle handle is scraped downward with the thumb for one minute. This method is usually used for deficiency and cold syndromes of Zang-Fu organs and meridians.

VI. Cold-Reducing Method:

Press the point tightly with left index finger and quickly insert or twirl and rotate the needle into the point with the right hand, moving from shallow to deep. Promote the arrival of Qi with heavy lifting and slow pressing.

On the basis of a numbness and distention, lift the needle upward 0.1 to 0.2 cun, and then twirl and rotate the needle with the thumb, moving backward 2 to 3 times or 6 times. A cold-numbness sensation will then appear. If the sensation does not appear, repeat the procedure two to three times. Most patients will have the cold-numbness sensation.

There is no need to knead and press the point after the needle is withdrawn. For the patient with a dull sensation, he should be ordered to inhale with the mouth and to exhale with the nose five to six times.

Additionally, the needle-scraping method can also be added; that is, to scrape the needle handle upward for one minute. This method is applicable to the excess and heat syndromes of the Zang-Fu organs and meridians.