



Taipei

A Stroke Lady Regained Body Movement Function with Acupuncture

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Mrs. Hwang suffered a stroke for four years. After a rigorous rehabilitation, she survived the critical phase of rehabilitation. Her left limbs remain paralyzed. She could not walk freely on her own. Her left hand suffered convulsion, unable to lift or hold small objects. The quality of life had been drastically reduced since the affliction. It had passed the golden rehabilitation period of two years following a stroke. Still, Mrs. Hwang came to Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital to seek treatments. She was hoping for a smooth recovery with the help of traditional Chinese medicine and treatments. Dr. Lee Chang-Ti of Traditional Chinese medicine Dept. treated her by acupuncture twice a week for two years. Now Mrs. Hwang could walk slowly with the help of a cane, raise her left hand over the shoulder. As a result, she was able to resume her normal life.

Stroke is one of the major causes of death and disability in the world. It severely affects the quality of life of victims as well as caregivers.



Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital Dr. Lee Chang-Ti explains his treating methods for the stroke patient Mrs. Hwang.

Consequently, rehabilitation period is crucial for stroke patients. Once stroke patients passed the initial phases, they would show different symptoms. Common symptoms include sudden weakness or numbness in the limbs, soreness in the shoulder and neck, difficulty in mobility, speech and indigestion, etc. Although these symptoms may not necessarily be the causes of the stroke per se.

Dr. Lee Chang-Ti explains that stroke patients have different degrees of damage to the brain. For example, a

damage in the sensory and coordination section of the cerebellum would result in weakness of the limbs and mobility difficulty. On the other hand, the side effects caused by stroke include tense muscle and soreness, it surely hinders the effectiveness of rehabilitation. Dr. Lee points out that the path to recovery for stroke victims is long and no guarantee for a full recovery. The advantage of the traditional Chinese medicine is that it amends and improves the vicinity (peripheral) of the affected areas. If a stroke patient can be treated with acupuncture simultaneously, it can ease and sooth the pain (discomfort) in the affected areas. This surely boosts effectiveness as well as the level of confidence in patient's recuperation. In the long run, the odds are favorable that core symptoms will be alleviated.

As a case of reference, two years ago before Mrs. Hwang came to Taipei

Tzu Chi Hospital , not only did she have difficulty moving, she also had headache, difficult bowel movement and numbness in the limbs. Dr. Lee successfully treated her with acupuncture. First, he started by improving Mrs. Hwang's quality of living. Before treatment, she could not raise and extend her left hand; and her legs were not strong enough to stand up on her own. Dr. Lee applied acupuncture and concentrated on her exercise and sensory sections of her scalp. To shore up her legs and tranquillize her tension, he also treated different acupuncture points: Da-bai on the hands, San-guan, Four-Limbs and Foot-three-mile on the legs. Mrs. Hwang felt that her distress was reduced after each acupuncture session. She was proactive on her rehabilitation efforts when she received two sessions per week uninterrupted for two years. Now she can raise her arm, hold objects with her hand and walk



Research indicates an overall 60% reduction of re-occurrence if combined with Eastern and Western medicine.

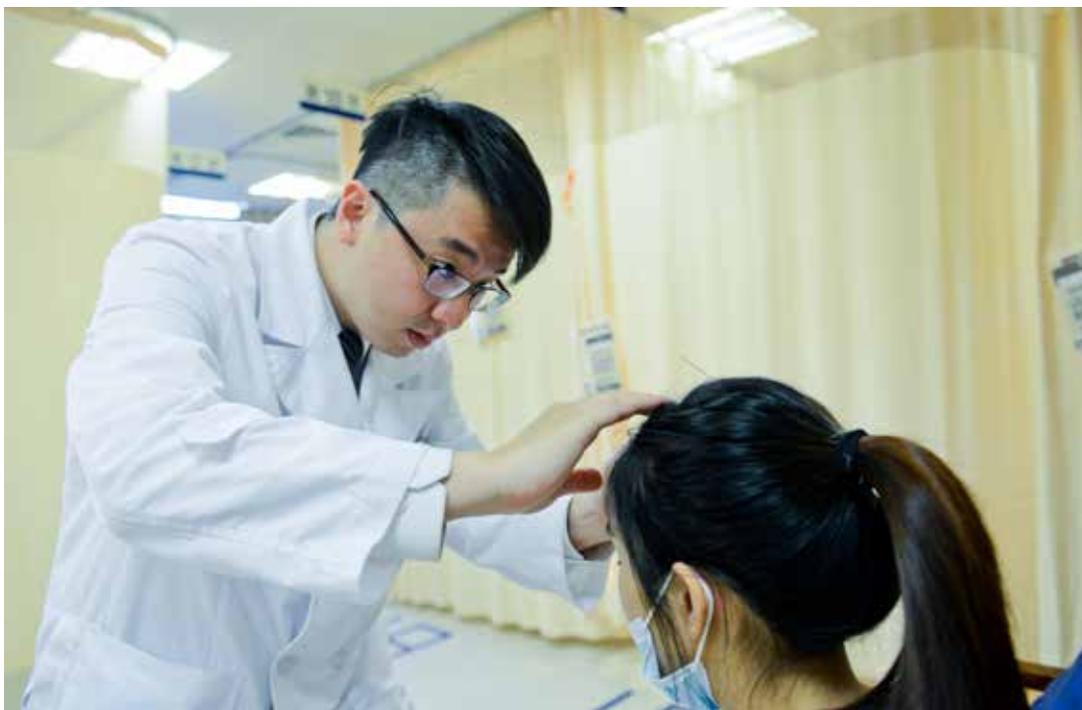
with a cane. Her quality of life has been improved tremendously.

Research indicates that the chance of relapse can be reduced by 58% for stroke victims if they are treated by only modern western medicine. On the other hand, if they are treated by Chinese medicine alone, then the chance of relapse can be reduced by 50%. The rate increases to 61% if combined with Eastern and Western medicine.

Dr. Lee indicates that neither acupuncture nor rehabilitation can be substituted for the other. However, combining both treatments simultaneously can produce a more

desirable result. If a stroke patient has already passed the first three months of golden rehabilitation period, the odds are good they can be treated and improved if they seek therapy and rehabilitation. Stroke patients should never give up easily.

In addition, he reminds us that it is vital to have strict diets and manage unexpected factors in order to prevent stroke and to reduce the chance of relapse if already a stroke patient. Preparation and management techniques followed by acupuncture treatments should produce a more positive result in rehabilitation.



Dr. Lee Chang-Ti emphasizes the importance of diet in connection to acupuncture treatment for stroke patients.