

Chinese medicine study finds acupuncture treatment effective for autistic children

A study conducted at the School of Chinese Medicine has shown that acupuncture is useful for treating children with autism.

The study was conducted by Ms. Ann Yau, Lecturer in the Division of Continuing and Professional Education at the School. Ms. Yau used acupuncture on the heads and tongues of autistic children. She observed that the treatment was more useful for younger children.

Of the 30 cases of two to six years old autistic children who received 30 treatments from 2007 to 2010, over 90 percent of the two and three year olds showed “marked improvement” and 10 percent showed “improvement”. The “marked improvement” rate dropped to 50 percent for three and four year olds, and 25 percent for four and five year olds. For the five and six year olds, the “marked improvement” rate was zero but the “improvement” rate was 90 percent.

Ms. Yau was satisfied with the results, saying that the golden period for treating autism is before three years old. She said that autism is a disorder of neural development characterised by impaired social interaction, communication, interest and behaviour, and acupuncture treatment could bring obvious improvement to the social skills, attention span and intelligence of autistic child patients.

(From Hong Kong Baptist University)