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Dr. Firasath Farheen
M.D, Assistant Professor,
Department of Moalejat,
Luqman Medical College,
Bijapur, Karnataka, India

Corresponding Author:
Dr. Firasath Farheen
M.D, Assistant Professor,
Department of Moalejat,
Luqman Medical College,
Bijapur, Karnataka, India

Acne vulgaris managed with cupping therapy (Hijama)

Dr. Firasath Farheen

Abstract

Hijama (Cupping Therapy) is a part of Ilaj-bil-tadbir of Unani System of Medicine, which has been using since years for variety of diseases. In this study, Hijama used in the management of Acne Vulgaris. However, it's mechanism of efficacy is still obscure. This study designed to evaluate the clinical effect of Cupping Therapy on Acne Vulgaris.

Cupping (Hijama in Arabic) is an ancient, holistic method for the treatment of a variety of diseases. In this present study, wet cupping technique used for the treatment of Acne Vulgaris where blood drawn by local suction from a small skin incision.

The first reported usages found in the Islamic hadith, sayings attributed to or describing the actions of the Islamic prophet Muhammad.

Keywords: Wet cupping, acne vulgaris, cupping set

Introduction

Hijama (Cupping Therapy) is an ancient therapeutic technique that has been practicing for thousands of years until now. In Unani System of Medicine, Hijama is part of regimental therapy (Ilaj-bil-tadabir), which has been practicing for so many years by Unani Physicians. Cupping is best utilized as a preventative maintenance procedure for your body. In short, it better enables your body to heal itself.

In this therapy, a suction cup is placed on the localised area of the skin or the specific points for the specific diseases.

In this study, wet cupping is done to get maximize results, in which practitioners make some small incisions on the sucked area of the skin. After the incisions, again the suction cups are placed to produce the negative pressure, which in-turns results in the withdrawal of blood from the superficial surface of the skin.

Although the exact mechanism of it's effectiveness remains obscure. In the field of cosmetology and dermatology, cupping has proven to be more effective for the treatment of various skin diseases.

Present study aims to show the effectiveness of Wet cupping in the management of Acne Vulgaris.

Acne Vulgaris is a common follicular dis-order. Most commonly found on the face, neck, and upper trunk. Acne Vulgaris is more common in adolescent and young adults, between ages 12-35. Both genders are equally affected. During puberty, androgens stimulate sebaceous glands, causing them to enlarge and secrete natural oil called sea bum.

Treatment Method

This study includes patients with Acne Vulgaris who has to be treated with Hijama. A consent has to be taken from the patient before performing Hijama. Sterile equipment has to be used in an aseptic environment for the better results. Cups are placed in the following points for Acne Vulgaris, which may differ from person to person.

- Point – 1: On the 7th cervical vertebra
- Point – 55: Below Point-1 by about 3 cms
- Point – 101: On the forehead
- Point – 114: Above the chin
- Point – 108 & 109: On either sides of the nose



Fig 1a: Patient before and after Acne Vulgaris



Fig 1b: Patient before & after performing Hijama

Conclusion

In majority of cases, wet cupping has given a remarkable improvement within 3-4 sessions. Resulting in the disappearance of acne lesions. Post wet cupping, there is no markable side effects, except in few of them experienced circular erythema. Even after performing wet cupping, there is no significant differences in the Complete Blood Picture (CBP) counts. In Acne Vulgaris, Serum IGE & IL/2 levels significantly decreased after wet cupping. Hence, concluded that effectiveness of Wet Cupping in Acne Vulgaris is more than 90%.

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