Qi Therapy (External Qigong) for Chronic Fatigue Syndrome: Case Studies

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Abstract: The aim of this study was to examine the effects of Qi therapy (QT) on the symptoms of chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS), including fatigue and complications. QT affected the experience of mental and emotional relaxation in the subjects of these case studies, who also gained strength to overcome their pain and fatigue. Although the results of these two case studies may not constitute conclusive evidence, they provide a foundation for the exploration of QT as a complementary therapy in the reduction of negative symptoms of chronic fatigue syndrome.

Keywords: Qigong; Chronic Fatigue Syndrome; Energy; Case Studies.

Introduction

Chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) is characterized by abnormal mental and physical fatigue associated with distress and functional impairment, with no evident physical or psychological disorder that sufficiently explains the symptoms (Weatherley-Jones et al., 2004). These symptoms are largely subjective, with no definitive physical markers or pathognomonic signs. The syndrome is diagnosed by the exclusion of other candidate diseases. There is no management regime for CFS that has been found universally to be beneficial and no treatment can be considered a cure.

From the Asian perspective, energy or vital strength is called “Qi,” and this denotes both the essential substances of the human body that maintain its vital activities and the functional activities of organs and tissues. The application of Qi (vital energy) by a Qi master causes a...
flow of energy to the subject and gives that person the strength to overcome his or her fatigue. Our previous studies showed that Qi therapy (QT; external Qigong) affects the health of normal subjects and patients psychoneuroimmunologically (Lee et al., 2001a). In particular, QT reduces the symptoms of fatigue in both younger and older subjects. Qi therapy might be a potential treatment for CFS (Lee et al., 2001a and 2003a). The following two cases are from the Ki Health International Centers in Seoul, Korea and Sydney, Australia, with whom the author collaborated at their own center.

**Case 1**

A 30-year-old Japanese-American female had suffered for 18 months CFS that no Western doctor had been able to cure. She would sleep for 12 hours; awaken feeling tired, and then be exhausted by 3pm. She began to lose weight as well as color from her cheeks. Medical examination found that her liver was jaundiced, inflamed and malfunctioning. After 18 months, the liver disorder had cleared but she was still constantly tired. The subject’s body was not absorbing nutrients properly because her Qi pathways were blocked by stress. She was treated with QT three times (for about 15 minutes per visit) by a Qi master (a 45-year-old man who had undergone Chun Do Sun Bup Qi training for ten years). The morning following her second QT treatment, she was no longer fatigued and slept a little. The color in her cheeks had improved and she subsequently gained some weight. Apart from QT, nothing else had changed in her eating habits, exercise regime or other health routines to account for the differences in her health. She received QT only three times and remained normal and healthy.

**Case 2**

A 36-year-old female had suffered CFS for six years and was two years into her recovery. She was bedridden, too weak to hold a book and too confused to read it. She experienced allergic reactions to all food, except a predigested rice preparation, and suffered from a range of opportunistic infections. She had tried alternative medicine; herbal remedies had given some relief, as had meditation and Ayurvedic medicine. Naturopathy, chiropractic, chelation, oxygenation, megavitamins and other remedies were unsuccessful. Finally, she began receiving Qi therapy. On her first visit to the Ki Health International in Sydney, she nearly fell down the steps and could not walk alone because her CFS symptoms were so severe (complete lack of energy). After three weeks of treatment (twenty QT treatments, 15 minutes per treatment), she ran up the steps and walked without a wheelchair. Her CFS symptoms and other complications were completely cured after eight months of QT (about 52 QT treatments in total — once a week after first 3 weeks, average treatment time of 10 minutes) combined with self-healing Qi training.
Discussion

These two cases demonstrate that QT treatment can have beneficial effects on the symptoms of CFS, including fatigue and complications. The chronic nature of the patients’ conditions was improved with only three treatments. According to our unpublished data, just one QT treatment improved the psychological symptoms, pain and fatigue of cancer patients. Our previous reports have shown that QT modulates psychological, neurohormonal and immunological functions in vivo and in vitro (Lee et al., 2001a, b and 2003b). The improvements in the symptoms of the subjects in these two case studies may have arisen from this holistic connection of body function with mind.

The participants in these case studies showed, through their written responses, the impact of QT on their feelings of inner peace and their hopes for a cure. They experienced relaxation of mind and emotions. They also felt the energetic power of Qi and gained strength to overcome their pain and fatigue. Qi therapy also made them strong enough to fight disease with their own energies by enhancing their own Qi.

Although these results cannot be extrapolated to patients with CFS or other diseases, these case studies provide a foundation for the exploration of QT as a complementary therapy in the reduction of the symptoms of CFS. Despite these promising findings, more objective clinical measures are required to confirm the general efficacy of QT. In future studies, we intend to measure the efficacy of QT in detail and the underlying mechanisms with well-controlled clinical trials.

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References


