

## 50. Acute Soft Tissue Injury

GB-20 Fengchi  
GB-39 Xuanzhong

Acute soft tissue injury refers to sprain or contusion of the soft tissues, including the muscles, tendons, ligaments, or joint capsules. It usually occurs on the neck, shoulder, elbow, wrist, fingers, limbs, hip, knee, or ankle, clinically marked by swelling, pain, and limitation of the joint movement. According to TCM, acute soft tissue injury is classified into Shang Jing (impairment of the tendon).

Among acute soft tissue injury, lumbar sprain, wrist sprain, and ankle sprain are introduced respectively in "52. Acute Lumbar Sprain", "53. Acute Wrist Sprain", and "54. Acute Ankle Sprain" because they are commonly seen in clinics and there is a necessity to discuss them separately.

### I. STANDARD TREATMENT

Acute soft injury is generally diagnosed in differentiation as syndrome of stagnation of qi and blood.

#### Stagnation of Qi and Blood

**Manifestations:** Abrupt attack of pain, swelling and impaired joint movement of the local region after external injury.

**Tongue:** Normal.

**Pulse:** Wiry and tight or normal.

**Treatment Principle:** Activate blood and resolve blood stasis, dredge the meridian and activate the collateral, promote circulation of qi and relieve pain.

#### Point Prescription & Manipulation:

*According to the different injured place, points are selected as the following:*

Neck:

BL-10 Tianzhu  
BL-11 Dazhu  
SI-3 Houxi

Shoulder:

LI-15 Jianyu  
SJ-14 Jianliao  
SI-19 Jianzhen

Elbow:

LI-11 Quchi  
SI-8 Xiaohai  
SJ-10 Tianjing  
LI-10 Shousanli  
SJ-9 Sidu

Hip:

GB-30 Huantiao  
BL-54 Zhibian  
BL-36 Chengfu  
GB-39 Xuanzhong  
LR-3 Taichong

#### Explanation:

Three to four points are selected at each treatment session. Firstly, insert the filiform needle into the point, lift, thrust and rotate it to induce arrival of qi, and retain it in the points for 20-40 minutes. Then, apply moxibustion on the painful spot of the injured region for 10-15 minutes, or tap the spot with seven-star needle and apply cupping on it to make bleeding. Generally speaking, after withdrawing the needles in the diseased area, the needles in the distal points should be twisted greatly to induce strong stimulation, while the patient is asked to move the diseased part in a gradual increasing amplitude. If it is done, the pain will be milder immediately in most cases. The treatment is given once daily, and about 5 treatments are needed.

Neck:

- BL-10 Tianzhu, BL-11 Dazhu, and GB-20 Fengchi, located at the diseased region, warm the meridians, promote blood and qi movement, activate the collaterals, remove blood stasis, and arrest pain;
- SI-3 Houxi, at the diseased meridian, promotes qi and blood circulation of the meridian;

- GB-39 Xuanzhong, the Influential Point of Marrow, strengthens the bone.

*Shoulder:*

- LI-15 Jianyu, SJ-14 Jianliao and SI-19 Jianzhen, located at the diseased region, warm the meridians, promote blood and qi movement, activate the collaterals, remove blood stasis, and arrest pain.

*Elbow:*

- LI-11 Quchi, SI-8 Xiaohai, and SJ-10 Tianjing, located at the diseased region, warm the meridians, promote blood and qi movement, activate the collaterals, remove blood stasis, and arrest pain;
- LI-10 Shousanli and SJ-9 Sidu, at the diseased meridians, promote qi and blood circulation of the meridians.

*Hip:*

- GB-30 Huantiao, BL-54 Zhibian, and BL-36 Chengfu, located at the diseased region, warm the meridians, promote blood and qi movement, activate the collaterals, remove blood stasis, and arrest pain;
- GB-39 Xuanzhong, the Influential Point of Marrow, and at the diseased meridian, promotes qi and blood circulation of the meridian.

## II. EXPERIENTIAL TREATMENT

### 1. Puncturing with Shallow Insertion and Gentle and Slow Manipulation

**Indication:** Acute soft tissue injury at early or medium stage.

**Point Prescription:**

Local points or Ashi Points.

**Manipulation:** One or two points are selected each treatment session. After insertion of the needle, push the needle deep with slow rotation until arrival of qi. Then, rotate the needle with small amplitude to strengthen the needling sensation, retain the needle for about 30 minutes, and manipulate it 3 minutes every 10 minutes. If the patient has aversion to cold and prefers

warmth in the local region, warming needling method should be applied as well. The treatment is given once daily, and usually within 3 treatments pain will disappear.

### 2. Puncturing the Corresponding Point

**Indication:** Acute sprain of limbs.

**Point Prescription:**

The point on the healthy limb but at the diseased side corresponds to the most painful spot of the injured region. Namely, if the injury is on the lower limb, the point on the upper limb of the same side corresponding to the most painful spot is selected and vice versa.

**Manipulation:** Insert a 1-cun long needle into the Corresponding Point horizontally at 15 degrees to 0.8 cun, rotate the needle for 15 seconds gently, inducing no needling sensation or little to the patient. Then, retain the needle in the point for 20 minutes. Ask the patient to move the diseased part during the retention. The treatment is given once daily, and usually within 3 treatments the pain will disappear.

### 3. Puncturing EX-UE-14 Xiadu

**Indication:** Acute neck sprain.

**Point Prescription:**

EX-UE-14 Xiadu of the diseased side, extraordinary point, located on the dorsum of the hand, between the 4th and 5th metacarpal bones, and proximal to the metacarpophalangeal joint.

**Manipulation:** Insert a filiform needle obliquely 1-1.2 cun deep to induce arrival of qi. Then, lift, thrust and rotate the needle with large amplitude 1-2 minutes, and ask the patient to move the neck at the same time. Retain the needle in the point for 10-15 minutes, and manipulate it twice during the retention. Usually, only 1 or 2 treatments are needed to cure this disease.

#### 4. Puncturing ST-38 Tiaokou Toward BL-57 Chengshan

**Indication:** Acute or chronic shoulder sprain.

**Point Prescription:**

ST-38 Tiaokou of the diseased side.

**Manipulation:** Insert a 3-cun or 4-cun long needle into ST-38 Tiaokou of the diseased side, rotate and push the needle deeply with the needle tip towards BL-57 Chengshan until the tip reaches the area under the skin of the BL-57 Chengshan. Then, rotate, lift and thrust the needle with large amplitude for about 5 minutes, and ask the patient to move the shoulder joint in the same time. The treatment is given once daily, and usually within 3 treatments the pain will be relieved.

#### 5. Ear Acupuncture

**Indication:** Acute soft tissue injury.

**Ear Point Prescription:**

The tender point, Shenmen, Liver, Spleen, Heart.

**Manipulation:** See page 255-256.

**Comment:**

Zhenjiu is effective in the treatment of acute soft tissue injury. In most cases, it can be cured by Zhenjiu treatment. In clinics, usually, Zhenjiu can be taken as the first choice of treatment. It is always important in the treatment that one has the patient's cooperation by moving the diseased part when the needle in the distal point is twisted, thrust and lifted.

**Notes:**

## 51. Stiff Neck

Stiff neck refers to rigidity, pain and limited movement of the neck. It is usually caused by improper posture when sleeping or exposure to dampness or cold during sleeping. It is clinically marked by rigidity of the neck and pain which usually radiates to one or both shoulders and upper arms, accompanied by muscular tension of the neck, extreme tenderness on the medial angle of the scapula, and impairment of movement of the neck. According to TCM, stiff neck, called Luo Zhen in Chinese, is caused by improper sleeping position, strain, sprain, or attack by wind-cold, resulting in obstruction of qi and blood in the meridians.

### I. STANDARD TREATMENT

Stiff neck is always manifested as the syndrome of obstruction of the meridians by attack of wind-cold. Points of the Small Intestine, Gallbladder and Urinary Bladder Meridians are frequently selected in its treatment.

#### Obstruction of Meridian due to Attack of Wind-Cold

**Manifestations:** Sudden onset of spasm, rigidity, soreness and pain in one side of the neck, limitation of neck movement, accompanied with pain and tenderness in the shoulder, upper back and arm.

**Tongue:** Normal or white coating.

**Pulse:** Wiry and floating or normal.

**Treatment Principle:** Disperse wind and cold, dredge the meridians, and relieve pain.

**Point Prescription & Manipulation:**

*Primary points:*

- Ashi Point - ^
- BL-10 Tianzhu - ^
- SI-14 Jianwaishu - ^
- SI-3 Houxi -
- GB-39 Xuanzhong - ^

**Explanation:**

Generally speaking, after withdrawing the needles in the diseased area, the needles in SI-3 Houxi and GB-39 Xuanzhong should be twisted greatly to induce strong stimulation, while the patient is asked to move the diseased part in a gradually increasing amplitude. If it is done, the pain will become milder immediately in most cases.

- Ashi Point, BL-10 Tianzhu and SI-14 Jianwaishu, located at the diseased region, warm the meridians, promote blood and qi movement, activate the collaterals, remove blood stasis, and arrest pain;
- SI-3 Houxi, Shu-Stream Point of the Small Intestine Meridian and one of the Eight Confluent Points communicating with the Du Meridian, promotes qi and blood circulation of the meridian, activates the collaterals, and relieves pain and stiffness of the neck;
- GB-39 Xuanzhong, the Influential Point of marrow, strengthens the bones.

**Secondary points according to conditions:**

1□ Headache — GB-20 Fengchi [-].

**II. EXPERIENTIAL TREATMENT****1. Puncturing LI-4 Hegu, SJ-5 Waiguan, SI-3 Houxi, or GB-41 Zulinqi**

**Indication:** Stiff neck.

**Point Prescription:**

LI-4 Hegu, SJ-5 Waiguan, SI-3 Houxi, or GB-41 Zulinqi of the diseased side. Only one of them is punctured, which is at the meridian where the most painful or tender spot locates.

**Manipulation:** Puncture perpendicularly 1-1.5 cun deep, rotate the needle quickly at a frequency of 200 turns per minute, retain the needle for 30 minutes, and manipulate it 2 times during the retention. Ask the patient to move the neck as much as possible during the manipulation and retention. Usually, one treatment is effective to cure this disorder. If not, repeat this course next day.

**2. Puncturing PC-6 Neiguan**

**Indication:** Stiff neck.

**Point Prescription:**

PC-6 Neiguan of the diseased side.

**Manipulation:** Puncture perpendicularly 1.2 cun deep to induce arrival of qi, rotate, thrust and lift the needle for 5 minutes, and remove the needle. Ask the patient to move the neck during the manipulation. Usually, only one treatment is effective to stop pain. If not, repeat this course next day.

**3. Moxibustion on Ashi Point and SI-11 Tianzong**

**Indication:** Stiff neck.

**Point Prescription:**

Ashi Point and SI-11 Tianzong of the diseased side.

**Manipulation:** Apply moxibustion with moxa stick on each point for about 10 minutes. The treatment can be given twice a day. Usually after one or two days of treatment, the disorder will be cured.

**Comment:**

Zhenjiu is very effective in the treatment of stiff neck. In most cases, it can be cured by Zhenjiu treatment. It is always important in the treatment that one has the patient's cooperation in moving the diseased part when the needle in the distal point is twisted, thrust and lifted. In clinics, usually, Zhenjiu can be taken as the first choice of treatment.

**Notes:**