

Acupuncture Point Relieves Children's' Pre-operative Anxiety

A study published in the September issue of *Anesthesia & Analgesia* found that stimulation of the acupuncture point, Yin Tang, alleviated preoperative anxiety in children.

According to the researchers, this could be of great clinical importance due to the fact that excessive preoperative anxiety contributes to operative delays and heightens the pain response.

Fifty-two children participated in the study, where an adhesive bead was either placed on Yin Tang (located between the eyebrows) or on a sham acupuncture point (a spot above the left eyebrow that hasn't been linked to any clinical effects) before a gastrointestinal endoscopic procedure. The researchers found that stimulation of Yin Tang reduced anxiety by 9% during the preoperative waiting period whereas anxiety continued to rise 2% for children who got sham acupressure. Anxiety levels were measured by the State Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children questionnaire, considered the "gold standard" for pediatric assessment.

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While traditional acupuncture on Yin Tang has been shown to relieve anxiety in adults before surgery, the researchers wanted to study the efficacy of stimulating the point with an adhesive bead which would be much easier to incorporate into a preoperative treatment protocol, especially in children.

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