

Abstract

Chronic insomnia is highly prevalent in the general population and inevitably causing considerable distress to a person. Besides pharmacological treatments on insomnia, Cognitive-behavioral therapy for insomnia (CBT-I) is one of the major well established psychological and behavioral treatments, but it remained underutilized because of high cost, time-intensive nature and requirement of active participation for effective implementation. Individuals with insomnia who refuse pharmacological treatment and have no access to CBT-I may remain untreated. On the other hand, Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), a form of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM), has been widely used in a Chinese population, while acupuncture is identified as a therapy with the principle of healing to deal with sleeping problems. 40 individuals with self-report of insomnia who completed online preliminary screening were randomized to CBT (CBT), CBT cum acupuncture (Combined group) and Control (Waitlist control group). The first two groups participated in 6-session of CBT-I in a group setting for a period of approximately 6 weeks for 2 hours per sessions, while CBT cum Acupuncture group only received 4.5 sessions on CBT. This study examined psychotherapy and tradition Chinese medicine (TCM) treatments for insomnia. Mixed-effects analyses found non-significant effects among different treatments on improving sleep quality and time spend in bed among CBT group, CBT cum Acupuncture group and Waitlisting control group. Although all participants have reported better sleep quality and less time in bed upon a within-group comparison, however, it doesn't provide basis for claiming that different therapeutic approaches had different effects. Nevertheless, this research help shed more light on this topic and the derived implications would be beneficial in future research leading to a more comprehensive understanding of insomnia.