

## Complementary medicine in the restoration of male sexual health

L.G. Agasarov, A.A. Nikitin

(Russian Association of Reflexotherapists, Moscow, Course of Traditional Treatment Methods  
FPPOV GOU VPO MMA them. THEM. Sechenov, Moscow)

### SUMMARY

A distinct decrease in the level of "normal" sexuality, detected in about a third of conventionally healthy men, dictates the need for correction (restoration) of the sexual activity of the latter. Proceeding from this, the subject of this study was the analysis of the application for a similar purpose of a complex of physiological and "soft" methods of complementary medicine - homeopathy and acupressure.

The results of the work confirmed that the proposed treatment of 90 men under the age of 35 is superior in effectiveness (dynamics of subjective and objective characteristics) and stability to the two compared treatment options - homeopathic or acupressure in isolation against the background of placebo therapy.

Key words: sexual activity, sexual constitution, complementary medicine, homeopathic method, acupressure.

### Introduction

Modern analysis of the state of men's health shows [1, 2] that more than a third of the so-called healthy men show a distinct decrease in the level of "normal" sexuality. Such shifts, although not limiting the realization of sexual functions, reduce their quality and are, moreover, a prognostically unfavorable sign.

Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority of known studies are devoted to the study of already formed sexual pathology and hence the development of treatment programs. For example, clinical trials of specific drugs, including aphrodisiacs, are stereotypically performed on a contingent of patients with erectile dysfunction [3, 4]. To a disproportionately lesser extent, the possibilities of correcting sexual activity have been determined in that already mentioned part of conventionally healthy men, who are distinguished by a decrease in the main indicators of sexuality. Hence, the problem of developing treatment programs for improving (restoring) the quality of sexual functions in this category of men becomes urgent.

In this regard, the use of certain methods of complementary medicine, differing in the physiological nature of the effect, should be recognized as promising. Among these, the homeopathic method stands out, characterized by a "mild" therapeutic effect. In addition, based on the peculiarities of the functioning of the segmental apparatus of the genital area, it seems advisable to supplement the homeopathic approach with acupressure - as the most natural reflexotherapy technology for the body.

This moment determined the goal of the study - to reveal the main therapeutic links and analyze the effectiveness of the combined use of complementary medicine methods in restoring the level of sexual activity in a certain category of conditionally healthy men.

### Material (contingent), methods of examination and treatment

Initially, there were 243 apparently healthy men aged from 24 to 35 years old under observation (average age - 31 years), who did not present significant somatic complaints. The program of their examination was comprehensive. The use of the scale for determining the sexual constitution [5] made it possible to assess both genetic and behavioral aspects of male sexual activity. In parallel, in accordance with the existing recommendations [6], an assessment was made (in the range from 0 to 4 points) of sexual entrepreneurship, mood before intercourse, the degree of tension of the penis and the duration of intercourse.

The level of sexual constitution and activity of patients was correlated with indicators of the state of the pituitary-gonadal system - by determining the content of gonadotropic hormones, testosterone and estradiol in the blood serum using standard test kits. In the course of the psychopathological examination, we used the questionnaire methods of "multilateral personality research" and "well-being - activity - mood".

The electrophysiological research unit included analysis of the parameters of the M-response of the bulbous-cavernous muscle (Sapphire apparatus, Medelec, Great Britain) and Doppler assessment of hemodynamics in the hypogastric (SAL-50A apparatus, TOSHIBA, Japan) and penile (Versaton apparatus, USA) arteries. As a result of the analysis, a group of 90 men (37% of all subjects) was identified, characterized by a significant decrease in the level of sexual activity. These men were divided into three randomized treatment groups, each of 30 individuals. In the 1st group, the corrective method was the intake for 6 weeks of the homeopathic remedy "Adam" (LLC "Homeopathic Pharmacy", Russia), approved for medical use. In group 2, homeopathic treatment was supplemented by massage of suprapubic acupuncture points, the lumbosacral region and the inner surface of the lower extremities - a total of 10 procedures performed 2 times a week. In the 3rd, comparison group, a similar acupuncture was performed against the background of placebo therapy, i.e. using an indifferent product.

The studies were carried out in dynamics, with computer-statistical analysis (T - Student's criterion) of the level of changes in clinical and additional characteristics.

#### results

In the course of the sexological examination, it was found that the assessed indicators (sexual enterprise, penis tension, etc.) ranged from 2.0 to 2.4 points (Table 1) in relation to the optimum of 4 points. At the same time, in 59% of these men, a weakening of the sexual constitution was found, correlating with a decrease in the level of "peripheral" sex hormones in the blood and inversion ( $p < 0.05$ ) of the ratio of these and tropic hormones of the pituitary gland. On the other hand, according to the data of stimulation electroneuromyography, the preservation of the neuromuscular structures of the segmental apparatus of the genital area was confirmed in all individuals.

Table 1

Average parameters of sexual activity in the surveyed group (in conditional points - by in relation to the optimum of 4 points)

Параметры	Уровень
Половая предприимчивость	2,4
Настроение перед сношением	2,1*
Напряжение полового члена	2,2
Длительность сношения	2,2*

*Примечание: \* – достоверность изменений*

In addition, in 54% of observations, signs of astheno-neurotization were revealed, confirmed by the deterioration ( $p < 0.05$ ) of the characteristics of the psychological profile. A typical, although not reliable, was also a tendency to a decrease in volumetric blood flow (from  $1.68 \pm 0.08$  to  $1.48 \pm 0.05$  l / min.) in the basin of the hypogastric arteries - if it was preserved in the penile vessels.

This phenomenon, most likely due to mild vertebral (lumbosacral) influences, can have a negative impact on the level of sexual function. The revealed interlacing of pathological links determined, in turn, the need for restorative correction of the state of these persons. As a result, in the 1st group, i.e., in the case of an isolated intake of a homeopathic remedy, an improvement in sexual activity was noted by 47% of men, mainly with a strong sexual constitution. At the same time, indicators of sexual activity on average increased to 2.8-3.1 points (Table 2).

table 2

Dynamics of the average characteristics of sexual activity in the course of various treatment options

Параметры	Группы больных					
	1-я (n=30)		2-я (n=30)		3-я (n=30)	
	А	Б	А	Б	А	Б
Половая предприимчивость	2,4	3,1	2,3	3,4*	2,4	2,7
Настроение перед сношением	2,2	2,8	2,1	3,0	2,1	2,6
Напряжение полового члена	2,1	2,8	2,2	3,3*	2,2	2,9
Длительность сношения	2,2	2,9	2,1	2,9	2,2	2,8

*Примечание: n – количество наблюдений в группах; \* – достоверность изменений ( $p < 0,05$ ); А, Б – уровень оцениваемых параметров исходно и по завершению лечения.*

In parallel, there was an improvement in the hormonal profile - an increase in the concentration of testosterone in the blood and the restoration (in 40% of cases,  $p < 0.05$ ) of the balance between the level of "peripheral" and tropic hormones of the pituitary gland. On the other hand, more than half of the persons who reported an improvement in sexual performance retained the basic psychopathological tendencies. In addition, in this group, there were no significant changes in the regional blood circulation in the small pelvis.

In the third - the comparison group - in response to a combination of acupressure and placebo exposure, an improvement in sexual functions was noted in only 36% of men, with an increase in their sexual performance indicators up to 2.6–2.9 points (Table 2). At the same time, there were no obvious ( $p > 0.05$ ) changes in the activity of the pituitary-gonadal system. In the mental state of the subjects, no significant changes were also revealed, with the preservation of the initial psychological profile as a whole.

However, more distinct, in comparison with the 1st group, were favorable changes ( $p > 0.05$ ) of blood flow in the hypogastric arteries. In the 2nd group, as a result of the combined use of homeopathic and reflex methods, potentiation of the achieved effects was established. Improvement in the condition was noted already by 63% of men, with a significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) improvement in individual indicators of sexual activity - on average up to 3.4 points (table 2). It is noteworthy that positive changes in the group were observed in persons with not only a strong, but also an average sexual constitution. Accordingly, in a greater number of observations (53%) than in other groups, a recovery ( $p < 0.05$ ) of hormonal parameters was noted. In parallel, there was an improvement ( $p > 0.05$ ) of blood flow in the hypogastric arteries. On the other hand, despite the achieved effect, significant ( $p < 0$ ,

After six months, an analysis of the sexual activity of persons who noted an improvement after the treatment was performed. At this stage, 14 men were examined from the 2nd group, 10 men, the comparison group - 7. At the same time, 71% of men in the 2nd group retained the achieved level of sexual activity, in the 1st - 50%, while in the comparison group - 3 out of 7 persons.

#### Discussion and conclusions

The study is devoted to the important problem of correction (restoration) of sexual activity in a certain category of conditionally healthy men, an issue that, as a rule, remains outside the field of vision of specialists.

In the course of the work, it was confirmed that the proposed therapeutic approach, combining homeopathic and reflex effects, ensures the achievement of a pronounced and stable sexological effect that surpasses the characteristics of the compared treatment technologies. In this regard, it should be emphasized that the recommended techniques are physiological, not burdensome, and acupressure is quite feasible in a domestic environment. Based on this, the developed program of restorative correction can be recommended for practical use.

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