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## Acupoint herbal plaster therapy in patients with severe constipation as palliative care

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Constipation is a common and often debilitating symptom in terminal patients, which may be caused by underlying diseases, structural abnormalities, prolonged bed rest and a variety of medications such as anticholinergics and opiates. For hospitalized patients whose death is imminent, palliative care can alleviate distressing symptoms that are common during the last few days or weeks of life. However, when drug use was rejected by patients, the methods modern western medicine could provide to ameliorate constipation seemed only rectal enema, despite the fact that it caused great pain and psychological burden on the patients. Therefore, to substitute for enema, we conducted non-invasive and thus pain-free plaster therapy based on traditional Chinese medicine with an eye to improving the patient's bowel movement. To process herbal plaster pills, we properly mixed equal amount of powder of dried and grinded *Yán Hú Suo* (*Corydalis yanhusuo*), *Bái Jiè Zǐ* (*Sinapis albae semen*), *Xì Xīn* (*Asarum sieboldii*) and *Gān Sui* (*Euphorbia kansui*) with purified water till the herbal mixture was thick and sticky to make marble-sized balls and applied it onto selected acupoints on patients which was tailored to patient's individual physical constitution. Treatment efficacy was assessed by patient's fecal frequency, dietary record and pain score observed during period of treatment. The patients experienced better self-defecation after receiving acupoint herbal plaster therapy with less abdominal or anal pain and increased appetite. As a result, being non-invasive and free of pain, acupoint herbal plaster can be an appropriate and effective alternative in treating patients with constipation in consideration of palliative care.

### Biography

Hang-Chen Hsu, MD obtained her two Bachelor's degrees of Medicine and Chinese Medicine from China Medical University in Taiwan. She is currently a practicing physician at Chung Shan Medical University Hospital in department of Integrated Chinese and Western Medicine. Dr. Hsu focuses on patient treatment integrated with Chinese and Western medicine and conducts research on pediatric and psychiatric patient's treatment tailored to patient's individual physical constitution based on traditional Chinese medical theory.

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