

Synergistic Effects of Hijama (Wet Cupping Therapy) and Water-filtered Infrared-A (wIRA) Hyperthermia in Integrative Management of Stress-Related Disorders and Metabolic Dysregulation: A Prospective Observational Study

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Abstract

Background: The global rise in stress-related disorders and metabolic syndrome highlights the need for effective, non-pharmacological adjuncts within integrative medicine. Traditional interventions such as Hijama (wet cupping therapy) have been associated with improved microcirculation, detoxification processes, and autonomic modulation. Concurrently, water-filtered infrared-A (wIRA) hyperthermia has demonstrated benefits in enhancing tissue oxygenation, vasodilation, and mitochondrial activity. Despite their individual therapeutic potential, there is a lack of structured clinical evaluation of their combined application.

Objective: To assess the synergistic effects of combined Hijama and wIRA-based local hyperthermia on psychological well-being, fatigue, and metabolic parameters in patients with stress-related symptoms and metabolic imbalance.

Methods: A prospective observational study was conducted in an integrative medicine center in Europe.

Participants: 42 adult patients (age 25–62) presenting with chronic fatigue, elevated stress, mild anxiety, and/or metabolic imbalance (including hyperlipidemia).

Intervention: Patients underwent a standardized protocol consisting of:

Hijama therapy (1 session every 3–4 weeks)

Targeted local hyperthermia using wIRA technology (1–2 sessions weekly)

Lifestyle and nutritional guidance

Duration: 8–12 weeks

Outcome Measures:

Psychological: Perceived Stress Scale (PSS), sleep quality scores

Physical: fatigue severity scale, patient-reported outcome measures (PROMs)

Biochemical (subset of patients): lipid profile, inflammatory markers (CRP)

Results:

Following the intervention period:

Psychological outcomes:

Significant reduction in perceived stress scores (mean reduction ~28%)

Improvement in sleep quality reported in 76% of participants

Physical outcomes:

Reduction in fatigue severity (mean reduction ~32%)

Improved subjective vitality and functional capacity

Metabolic indicators (subset):

Favorable trends in lipid profile (LDL reduction, HDL improvement)

Mild reduction in inflammatory markers (CRP)

Patient satisfaction:

85% of participants reported greater benefit from combined therapy versus prior single-modality treatments

Discussion: The findings suggest a potential synergistic interaction between Hijama and wIRA hyperthermia. Hijama may facilitate microcirculatory detoxification and neurohumoral regulation, while hyperthermia enhances tissue perfusion and metabolic activity. Together, these mechanisms may contribute to improved autonomic balance and systemic recovery.

Importantly, the combined protocol demonstrated a favorable safety profile, with no serious adverse effects reported.

Conclusion: The integration of Hijama and wIRA-based hyperthermia may represent an effective complementary strategy in the management of stress-related conditions and metabolic dysregulation. These preliminary findings support further investigation through randomized controlled trials to validate efficacy and mechanisms.

Keywords

Integrative Medicine, Hijama, Wet Cupping Therapy, Hyperthermia, wIRA, Stress Disorders, Metabolic Syndrome, Complementary Therapy.

