

HEALTH REPORT

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ACUPUNCTURE IS FINALLY ACCEPTED AS AN EFFECTIVE TREATMENT FOR ARTHRITIS BY MEDICAL COMMUNITY

The Annals of Internal Medicine recently published a landmark study that has validated Acupuncture as an effective therapy.

According to the National Institutes of Health, this study was the “largest, longest and most rigorous study of Acupuncture ever conducted.” Investigators further stated that Acupuncture is now considered a ‘new’ addition to therapies for degenerative osteoarthritis.”

Results showed that Acupuncture relieved the pain and improved function in patients who suffer with arthritis of the knee.

570 patients, ages 50 and older, participated in the study. All patients had arthritis in one or both knees.

Patients were randomly assigned to three groups: 190 patients received 23 Acupuncture sessions, 191 patients received 23 sessions of sham Acupuncture, and 189 patients took six two-hour education courses. All patients continued receiving care from primary physicians.

Researchers found that patients who received 23 sessions of Acupuncture over a six-month period reported a 40% improvement in knee function and a 40% reduction in pain by the end of the fourteenth week.

According to Dr. Brian M. Berman, director of the Center for integrative medicine at the University of Maryland’s School of Medicine, Conventional medicine doesn’t have all the answers.”

He noted that the drugs don’t always provide adequate pain relief and that many drugs have undesirable side effects.

“We need to have more ‘poly-therapies,’ not just one magic bullet.” said Berman, who also served as lead investigator for the study.

Acupuncture involves the insertion of needles at various points on the body. These points, according to Chinese practitioners, connect to pathways called Meridians, which conduct energy, or Qi. Chinese practitioners believe that Acupuncture works by improving the flow of Qi throughout the body.

SOURCE: *Annals of Internal Medicine*, December 21, 2004; *Web MD Health*, www.my.webmd.com, December 20, 2004; *Indianapolis Star*, www.indystar.com, December 26, 2004; *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, December 21, 2004.

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ACUPUNCTURE FOR ARTHRITIS: NEW STUDY SHOWS IT'S AN EFFECTIVE COMPLEMENT TO STANDARD CARE

A landmark study funded by the National Institutes of Health has shown that Acupuncture provides pain relief and improved function for people with osteoarthritis of the knee.

The results published in the December 21, 2004 issue of the *Annals of Internal Medicine* reported that 570 patients aged 50 or older who had osteoarthritis of the knee were enrolled on the study. None of the subjects had ever received Acupuncture before. All patients continued to receive their usual care from their primary physicians.

By the eighth week of Acupuncture care, those who received Acupuncture care reported a significant increase in function; by week 14 they also reported a significant decrease in pain compared to the other groups that either received no treatment or sham Acupuncture treatments (treatment at points other than those intended for the specified condition).

Overall, those who received Acupuncture had a 40% decrease in pain and a nearly 40% improvement in function compared to baseline assessments.

SOURCE: <http://www.femalefirst.co.uk/health/1242004.htm>, <http://www.nih.gov/news/pr/dec2004/nccam-20.htm>,
<http://www.nih.gov/news/pr/dec2004/nccam-20.htm>