

Does Piercing Acupuncture Really Effectively Reduce Pain?

Acupuncture, originally an ancient Chinese medical procedure, aims at reducing a huge range of bodily ailments (disease, infections, pain and psychological problems) by the stimulation of key anatomical points. A whole family of techniques are used from simply applying pressure to inserting needles or using tiny quantities of electricity.

Traditional beliefs on how acupuncture operates function along the notion that this ancient art re-creates a balance in the yin and yang of the patient. Chi is believed to be unblocked and able to flow harmoniously through the meridians of the body, other various mystical abound.

Modern science acknowledges that acupuncture can sometimes be useful with reducing pain, acupuncture typically being used for patient migraines and headaches.

In the recent past results from three big studies found results that displayed significant positive effects from the use of acupuncture on patients suffering from headaches.

In recent German medical trials incidences of headaches were found to be halved when pins were made to pierce a patient's skin, regardless of where these pins were positioned. Traditional specific positioning of pins were found to be no different in their effect on the patients.

302 largely female patients suffering from migraines were studied in 2004 with the use of traditional and 'random' acupuncture as a form of pain reducer. Both forms of acupuncture were found to be as effective as the other in minimizing the occurrence of migraines.

The Royal London Homeopathic hospital in 2004 discovered that, in a study involving 400 patients suffering from headaches and given 12 sessions of needle acupuncture, the incidence of headaches was statistically significantly and sharply reduced by the end of the 12 sessions.

There has also been a wave of controlled trials that have concluded acupuncture involving the piercing of skin with needles has no effect on headaches at all. A minimum of 26 controlled experiments that conferred this fact have been performed and published, according to the newspaper The Independent, in 2005.

Scientific research has found that our nervous systems can be stimulated at various myofascial so called 'trigger points', already known in modern science, enabling pain to be inhibited in a similar fashion to medical practices like transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS).

'Fake' acupuncture, where pins are made to feel like they have pierced the skin even though they have not, have been just as affective in other experiments at producing positive results on patients. Such pins appear to pierce the skin but actually retract inside themselves.

Simply touching skin can create hormonal and emotional reactions, known as a 'limbic touch responses', involving the affected tactile nerves under the skin. Controls in experiments in this way have produced the same pain reducing effects as actually piercing the skin.

Placebos have been seen to have less effect, as opposed to actually piercing the skin, on more pronounced and deep sensory pains such as osteoarthritis in the knee.

What should be taken from this brief article is that acupuncture is medically known to reduce pain, but that the majority of associated traditional theories and advice are either untested or simply untrue and therefore best ignored. The small chance of punctured lungs, internal bleeding, increased pain and other side-effects, that can sometimes occur in up to 1 in 5 acupuncture sessions are details often omitted.

If you do seek acupuncture treatment ensure that the practitioner has the relevant qualifications, typically up to MSc level, in acupuncture, from an accredited institution.

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About the Author

Are you wanting to know more about the effectiveness of acupuncture, have a look at <http://www.acupuncturetreatmentcenter.com/acupuncturealerts/> for a whole range of acupuncture information.