

Acupuncture is a traditional Chinese medicine practice that consists of very thin needles being put through one's skin to specific spots, it "has been practiced in China for more than 3000 years and was spread to Europe and America from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century" (E.g. Zhuang, 2019). Acupuncture is intended to help those with physical pain, but can also help those with an assortment of issues such as anxiety, infertility, and depression. While "Traditionally, acupuncture is thought to restore the normal flow of energy (qi) in the body"(E.g. Kelly, 2019)), some modern ideas have explained it that the points of acupuncture are specific points that can trigger the nerves and muscles to release the body's natural pain killers.

Can acupuncture treat neck pain? The purpose of this study is to find out whether or not acupuncture is a practice that can help relieve pain, specifically neck pain. The idea of treating physical pain with acupuncture is the main focus of the research; however, the mental aspect of the traditional medicine is also a guiding factor as well. While physical pain is the prime matter, other forms of pain are mentioned as well. The research question is aimed at the physical side of acupuncture, but the point of convergence between physical and mental will play a key role in the research.

*History of Acupuncture Research* : This literature is about the history of acupuncture from the beginning practice of acupuncture, all the way up to present day acupuncture. Zhuang gives an in depth look into how acupuncture started and grew with its research (E.g. Zhuang, 2013).

*Acupuncture for Pain*: The main issue the author is focusing on in this article is whether or not acupuncture is effective for pain. The author hypothesized that acupuncture is effective for managing pain and to support this they used data from studies, including compilations of data and some specific studies as well (E.g. Usichenko, 2005).

*Auricular acupuncture for pain relief after total hip arthroplasty*: The authors in this article are focusing on auricular acupuncture and how effective it is in relieving pain in people who have had a total hip arthroplasty. The hypothesis was to prove auricular acupuncture was better at controlling postoperative pain than sham acupuncture and it was supported by the concepts of articular acupuncture, which are more specific points of acupuncture than the traditional sham acupuncture, and data showing that patients using patient controlled analgesia still felt pain and needed a complementary analgesia as well.

*More Than Needles: The Importance of Explanations and Self-Care Advice in Treating Primary Dysmenorrhea with Acupuncture*: This study was done on women with dysmenorrhea, pain in the uterus due to the menstrual cycle. The author intended to focus on how acupuncture could physically help with the pain from the dysmenorrhea, but instead found that the ways of thinking and mental lessons that came with acupuncture were much more powerful than the physical aspect of the treatment (E.g. Armour, 2016).

Materials: The materials for this research project will consist of mainly primary and secondary sources on acupuncture. Informational books will help to understanding the background of acupuncture. Primary sources such as studies done on acupuncture will be the most helpful for evidence supporting acupuncture relieving pain. Secondary sources will be seen as more evidence that has been analyzed by other authors in order to provide more clarity for interpreting the results of the primary source studies.

Design: The design of this research will be a qualitative, non-experimental, which will help answer the question, "Can acupuncture treat neck pain?" by synthesizing multiple studies and sources on acupuncture into one answer.

Procedure: The research will begin with learning of a background of acupuncture in order to truly understand the traditional medical practice. Then the research will come to viewing the studies done on acupuncture, which will provide hard evidence with numbers in order to get results. Finally the research done will be connected to one another to find the big picture and answer the research questions "Can acupuncture treat neck pain?"

The expected results of this research project are going to be collectively positive hopefully because if acupuncture research is continuing, then there must be a positive connection to acupuncture relieving pain, but I believe the biggest results will come from learning about the mental aspect of acupuncture. The qualitative, non-experimental design of the research should bring rise to many different opinions and results.

I believe it is important to study acupuncture because it is important to always learn more about our bodies and healing. It is especially important to incorporate other cultures into our modern medicine practices as well. Without the diversity we cannot learn everything there is to learn about the human body. We may find a cure or a new way to better health through learning of alternative medicines or forms of healing. Acupuncture can be the key to helping someone cure or manage their disease, such as primary dysmenorrhea (Armour, 2016, 12).

This picture depicts the several acupuncture pressure points that are used in acupuncture. All of them are thought to relieve some specific type of pain or illness.

This picture is depicting the chakras in the body that the qi energy must flow through. Acupuncture is said to help the qi energy flow through the body again. This is the traditional views of acupuncture.