

A Study of Homeopathic Medicines, Acupuncture Points, and the Possible Integration of Homeopathy and Acupuncture in the Treatment of Low Back Pain

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ABSTRACT

Background: Low back pain (LBP) is a painful condition affecting the lumbar region. It can be caused by various pathologies and present with variable duration and intensity—acute, subacute, or chronic. It can significantly impact patients' quality of life. According to numerous scientific studies, LBP can be effectively treated with homeopathy, which treats patients by administering *infinitesimal doses* based on the *law of similarity*, and acupuncture, which treats patients by inserting sterile needles into specific points on the body. Both therapies can be considered free from side effects. **Objectives:** This study aimed to systematically review the scientific literature to identify and evaluate articles reporting the efficacy of homeopathic remedies and acupuncture points in the treatment of LBP. The goal is to analyze the validity of homeopathy and acupuncture and explore their role within evidence-based pain management strategies. **Methods:** This study was conducted through a literature search and consultation of biomedical databases, PubMed/Medline, and Google Scholar. Article selection took into account the authors' scientific authority and credibility and the relevance of their institutional affiliations to ensure the high quality of the data reviewed and discussed. **Results:** Although further research is needed, the data acquired during our literature search demonstrate that homeopathy and acupuncture are effective in the treatment of low back pain, **Conclusion:** The analysis of the data acquired during our bibliographic research suggests that homeopathy and acupuncture treatments, if integrated, represent useful and effective therapeutic options.

Keywords: back pain, homeopathy, acupuncture, infinitesimal doses, law of similarity.

INTRODUCTION

Low back pain (LBP) is a painful condition affecting the lumbar region. The pain can be caused by various pathologies and can vary in duration and intensity. It can be acute, subacute, and chronic. Based on the results reported in authoritative scientific articles we have selected and reviewed, we intend to evaluate the effectiveness of homeopathy and acupuncture in managing acute, subacute, and chronic pain. We also wish to provide insights into the possibility of integrating homeopathy and acupuncture into treatment.

METHODS

Our study was conducted through a bibliographic search and consultation of biomedical databases, PubMed/Medline, and Google Scholar. The selection of scientific articles took into account the authors' scientific authority and credibility and the relevance of their institutional affiliations to ensure the high quality of the data processed.

RESULTS

We cite a series of important scientific articles and, in compliance with maximum transparency, we report in quotation marks some significant passages taken from the scientific articles published by the authoritative authors. **Muduli et al**, Homeopathic Treatment of Chronic Low-Back Pain: A Double-Blind, Randomized, Placebo-Controlled Trial: "Thus, homeopathic medicines worked significantly better than placebos in reducing chronic LBP. Independent replications are warranted to substantiate the findings" [1]. **Witt et al**, Homeopathic Treatment of Patients With Chronic Low Back Pain: A Prospective Observational Study With 2 Years' Follow-up: "Classic homeopathic treatment represents an effective treatment for low back pain and other diagnoses. It improves health-related QoL and reduces the use of other healthcare services" [2]. **Reddy and Adi**, Efficacy of homeopathic medicines in chronic low back pain: a clinical study: "Homeopathic medicines can possibly improve low back pain by decreasing pain, disability and can securely be utilized as complete social care therapeutics" [3]. **Shah**, Assessment of the effectiveness of homeopathic remedies in improving quality of life of chronic low back pain: a prospective study: "Homeopathic treatment has made significant improvement in the patients suffering from chronic low back pain pertaining to the symptom's severity. Further Randomized control trial can be conducted for validation of the results" [4]. **Beer et al**, Effectiveness and safety of a homeopathic drug combination in the treatment of chronic low back pain: a double-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled clinical trial: "This first randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial shows, that the homeopathic drug combination can improve the treatment of chronic low back pain" [5]. **DeBar et al**, Acupuncture for Chronic Low Back Pain in Older Adults: A Randomized Clinical Trial: "The findings of this randomized clinical trial of older adults with CLBP suggest that acupuncture needling provided greater improvements in back pain-related disability at 6 months and at 12 months compared with UMC alone. These findings support acupuncture needling as an effective and safe treatment option for older adults with CLBP." Chronic low back pain (CLBP). Usual medical care (UMC) [6]. **lv et al**, Effects of time-dependent acupuncture on back muscle endurance in women with chronic nonspecific low back pain: A randomized crossover trial: "RA improves lumbar extensor endurance in patients with CNLBP and lasts approximately 9 minutes. RA can improve blood circulation to reduce blood lactic acid and blood ammonia produced during exercise". Real acupuncture (RA), Chronic nonspecific low back pain (CNLBP) [7]. **Zhao et al**, EXPRESS: Single cell transcriptomic analysis reveals dynamic cellular composition changes at acupuncture point BL23 (Shenshu) in low back pain: "This study presents the first characterization of cellular and transcriptional dynamics at the acupuncture point BL23, offering new insights into the mechanism underlying acupuncture-induced pain relief" [8]. **Li et al**, Acupuncture for the treatment of pregnancy-related low back pain: A systematic review and network meta-analysis: "Acupuncture performs similarly to SAcu in pain relief and is more efficient than SC. Regarding the effectiveness of treatment and QOL, acupuncture therapy was superior to SAcu and SC." Sham acupuncture (SAcu). Standard care (SC) [9]. **Manheimer et al**, Meta-analysis: acupuncture for low back pain: "Acupuncture effectively relieves chronic low back pain. No evidence suggests that acupuncture is more effective than other active therapies"

[10]. **Lee et al** , Acupuncture for acute low back pain: "The current evidence is encouraging in that acupuncture may be more effective than medication for symptom improvement or relieve pain better than sham acupuncture in acute LBP. The present findings should be confirmed by future studies that overcome the methodological limitations of the studies evaluated in our review"[11].

DISCUSSION

This study of ours adds to and, in a certain sense, integrates our previous works on homeopathy [12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17]. Homeopathy and acupuncture are two useful and effective disciplines in the treatment of chronic low back pain. There are several scientific studies that confirm their therapeutic efficacy. We have mentioned them in this article after selecting the articles based on our study and communication needs. An important concept to reflect on is the following: "An alternative medicine holds the promise of being able to treat certain patients with chronic disease or otherwise difficult-to-treat conditions and to achieve immediate palliative effects with virtually no side effects" [18]. Another equally important concept to reflect on is that of therapeutic integration. It is important to evaluate when, how and why it is appropriate to integrate homeopathy with acupuncture based on the principles of homeosiniatry: Homeosiniatry is defined as a medical methodology that combines acupuncture and homeopathy. "Homeo" stands for Homeopathy and "Siniatry" for Sinology, the study of Chinese culture (Dr. Roger de La Fuye, 1947)" [19]. Homeosiniatry, therefore, integrates homeopathy and acupuncture, taking into account the existing relationships between homeopathic medicines and acupuncture points. We believe that integration should be carried out by the attending physician, evaluating each case and personalising the integrated therapy as much as possible. Regarding the administration of homeopathic remedies, the article just cited states: "Each time you perform acupuncture, put a few drops of the proper homeopathic remedy on the skin and insert the needles through it. The dilutions of the homeopathic remedies are 6C. A more basic, or an older technique, is giving the remedy orally, four to six drops. [13]. We believe that the most practical technique is to administer homeopathic remedies orally during the acupuncture session, taking into account the relationship between remedies and points. Injection administration, in our opinion, is not very "homeopathic", given that in homeopathy the preferred route of administration is oral and sublingual. Based on our bibliographic research and the articles we have cited, we believe that homeopathy and acupuncture are therapies that have been sufficiently studied, still to be studied, but are effective and can be used in the treatment of low back pain, even in an integrated way, according to the principles of homeosiniatry or according to the assessments of the attending physician who decides to implement a highly personalized therapy.

CONCLUSIONS

Analysis of the data acquired during our literature search suggests that homeopathy and acupuncture treatments, if combined, represent useful and effective therapeutic options.

Thanks

The authors thank for their support: Foundation T. & L. de Beaumont Bonelli for Cancer Reserch, Naples Italy

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