

## Study: Acupuncture Helps PCOS Patients

Editorial Staff

Acupuncture combined with frequent physical activity is key to reducing hormonal imbalances in women suffering from polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS), according to a recent report from the University of Gothenberg, Sweden.

The common disorder - marked by irregular or no ovulation/menstruation and ovaries full of immature eggs - is known to affect up to 10 percent of all women of child-bearing age in the United States.

Women with PCOS usually have low energy, extra body/facial hair, fairly overweight and high insulin and blood sugar. They also have high elevated levels of testosterone.

The study published in the American Journal of Physiology - Endocrinology and Metabolism found that four months of acupuncture treatment combined with electrical stimulation reduced the levels of testosterone in women with PCOS by 25 percent.

The study included a group of women with PCOS were given acupuncture where the needles were stimulated both manually and with a weak electric current at a low frequency that was, to some extent, similar to muscular work. A second group was instructed to exercise at least three times a week, while a third group acted as controls. All were given information on the importance of regular exercise and a healthy diet.

Groups separately treated with exercise or acupuncture both experienced improvements in weight, testosterone levels, acne and menstrual regularity, according to the study.

"The study shows that both acupuncture and exercise reduce high levels of testosterone and lead to more regular menstruation," said docent associate professor Elisabet Stener-Victorin in a published statement. "Of the two treatments, the acupuncture proved more effective."

Stener-Victorin also stated that the study may have also indicated clues about the underlying causes of PCOS, which have yet to be determined.

"We've recently demonstrated that women with PCOS have a highly active sympathetic nervous system, the part that isn't controlled by our will, and that both acupuncture and regular exercise reduced levels of activity in this system compared with the control group, which could be an explanation for the results," said Stener-Victorin.

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To read more about PCOS, read articles from our *Women's Health* columnist Kaleb Montgomery at [www.acupuncturetoday.com/mpacms/at/article.php?id=32370](http://www.acupuncturetoday.com/mpacms/at/article.php?id=32370)

APRIL 2011