



Acupuncture Poll

Editorial Staff

The Acupuncture Poll's question for August 2001 was:

"Do you consider *tui na* to be part of the practice of acupuncture?"

Results are as follows:



These results are based upon 853 responses. Here is a sample of the comments made by those who took the survey and how they voted:

Yes: Oriental medicine, being a holistic system since its beginnings, never separated out the various methods of working with the *qi*. This means that whether it be acupuncture, *tui na*, shiatsu, *tai chi* (or) *qi gong*, it is within the scope of the trained practitioner.

There might be a need for more specialization (which also means continued training) within the scope of Oriental medicine. No one practitioner can be a master of all techniques, so we must find what works best for our patients and ourselves, and be willing to refer out when the problem falls outside of our expertise. Some practitioners might be better with herbs, some with exercise (*tai chi*, etc.), some with *tui na*. Some may work better with emotional problems; some with geriatrics; some with pediatrics; some with immune dysfunction. We need to work together as a community.

If patients are being injured (as happened in Texas), we must look at when and how the

therapy has been used to see if this is an issue. We must look at if it is happening with only certain "types" of patients, and if it is our technique that needs correction.

We also have to be prepared for political motivations to limit our scope of practice from other healing groups (chiropractors, doctors, nutritionists) and from those who are misinformed, who might feel that we are moving into their "territory" so that we can create understanding and cooperation with them and also better protect our scope of practice.

Yes: I think that the tendency present in the Western world of eliminating more and more essential parts of traditional Chinese medicine and make it more Westernized is an insult to the people of that land, who have used it effectively for all the life span of their culture. I not only support that *tui na* is part of the practice of acupuncture, but that we should educate practitioners versatile in all aspects of Chinese medicine (including *tai ji*, *qi gong* and pharmacology) in order to create a whole and consistent strategy of healing.

No: Absolutely not. How many of us actually have any training other than push here or here · leave this one alone, or we will rock the boat and sink ourselves like other natural medicine providers have.

Yes: The tradition of *tui na* in traditional Oriental medicine goes back thousands of years. It is quite clear that any attempts to restrict this from the Oriental medical practitioners' scope of practice is restraint of trade, pure and simple, and that is in violation of the law and everything that the U.S. stands for. If patients were actually injured by poorly trained licensed acupuncturists, it is a case for increased educational standards, not an excuse for one profession to monopolize a technique.

No: *Tui na* is part of Oriental medicine, as is acupuncture. But *tui na* is not part of acupuncture any more than physical therapy is part of thoracic surgery. Both are part of a Western medical model, but being a PT does not allow you to practice thoracic surgery. Texas needs to change the way the law is written.

No: *Tui na* falls under the category of TCM, just as acupuncture is one of the facets of TCM. Depending on state law, you are enabled to practice acupuncture per se and not other traditional treatments within the scope of TCM. As an example, moxibustion may not be allowed; however, people will argue that moxibustion is a distinct part of TCM.

The case in Texas is not an attack on licensed acupuncturists. I believe it is a mechanism to protect the chiropractic profession and the public from inexperienced practitioners injuring patients without the proper diagnosis and workup required. Just my opinion.

Yes: Basically, it is within the scope of practice to do *tui na* as a part of our treatment. Although we are termed "acupuncturists", in truth, we are Oriental Medicine specialists, and as such, we can practice *tui na* and herbology, as well as moxibustion, cupping, dietary advice and *qigong*.

The article with which this questions stems from is arguing semantics and is started from some chiropractor that feels threatened for her profession. I wonder if the chiropractor who wrote the letter feels proud for the trouble she has caused our profession. How would

she feel if osteopaths (DOs) attacked chiropractic as a legitimate profession? This is just another example of how greed, ignorance and anger can cause disruption in the world.

Yes: I consider *tui na* to be a part of the practice of acupuncture. The definition of *tui na* needs to be more defined, and should include various techniques such as massage, stretching and mobilization techniques. However, it should not include any form of manipulation or adjustments to the spine or the extremities beyond the normal physiological barrier which is accomplished with chiropractic manipulation.

I graduated from both LACC with my doctor of chiropractic degree, and also graduated from Samra with my master's degree in Oriental medicine. The bottom line is: if you have not been trained adequately in acupuncture, herbology or manipulation, it should be restricted from others to practice it. Just as chiropractors and MDs think they have a right to practice acupuncture, it is my opinion that if they want to perform and practice acupuncture, they should be required to go through the proper education and training to learn acupuncture. Also, for MDs, PTs and acupuncturists that want to perform manipulation, let them also go through the proper education and training in chiropractic.

Again, it's all about who owns the turf. Once again, it is my opinion that anyone should be able to practice whatever form of treatment they desire if they have undergone the proper education and training.

One last note to all you acupuncturists: if we don't unite as a profession, become more politically strong, and educate the media and public regarding our education and training, we will eventually lose prospective patients to the other professions and may eventually fall by the wayside. All one needs to do is look at the mistakes that the chiropractors have made being fragmented as a profession.

We should all unite under one profession and association for stronger political power for teaching and educating the media and public. We can all agree to disagree and respect each other's right to practice acupuncture and Oriental medicine the way we each would like, regardless of which techniques and theories that one has been taught. Let's not make the same mistakes the chiropractors have made over the years.

For more information on the Acupuncture Poll, contact *Acupuncture Today* at editorial@acupuncturetoday.com.

NOVEMBER 2001