



GENERAL ACUPUNCTURE

Study: Acupuncture Helps With Cancer Fatigue

Editorial Staff

Acupuncture can zap the fatigue from breast cancer patients, according to a new study published in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*.

The study published in October has been highlighted by many media outlets for showing promising results for women suffering with the chronic fatigue that comes with breast cancer and treatments. As many as 40 percent of breast cancer patients experience significant fatigue from moderate to severe during and after their cancer treatments.

In the published study, the authors focused on more than 300 women with breast cancer who were being cared for as outpatients at one of nine health care facilities across the United Kingdom.

At the time of the study, participants had been diagnosed with either stage 1, 2 or 3 breast cancer, and all had been experiencing at least moderate levels of fatigue for an average of 18 months. Most were white, and their average age was 53.

For a six-week period, all patients continued to receive the same care they had been receiving before the study, and all were additionally given an information booklet that tackled the issue of fatigue management.



However, more than 200 of the patients also were randomly chosen to undergo weekly 20-minute acupuncture sessions that involved needle placement at three different entry points. By the end of the six-week period, those who had received acupuncture appeared to fare better on every measure of fatigue that the team assessed.

Specifically, those in the acupuncture group reported feeling notably better than the "usual-care" group in terms of overall fatigue, physical and mental fatigue, anxiety and depression levels, functional well-being, emotional well-being, social functioning, and overall quality of life.

Although the study found an association between acupuncture and reduced fatigue in breast cancer patients, it did not prove a cause-and-effect relationship.

For more information about this study visit jco.ascopubs.org.

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