

# Can acupuncture help alleviate menopausal symptoms?

March 20 2018

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An umbrella review from Duke Clinical Research Institute that was a comprehensive assessment of previous systematic reviews and randomized controlled trials has found that women who received acupuncture had less frequent and less severe vasomotor symptoms associated with menopause than women who did not have acupuncture. The women who had acupuncture also reported improved health-related quality of life, as shown in the evidence reported in *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine (JACM)*.

In the article entitled "Management of Menopause Symptoms with Acupuncture: An Umbrella Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis," coauthors Deanna Befus, PhD, RN, Wake Forest School of Medicine (Winston-Salem, NC) and colleagues from Duke Clinical Research Institute, Duke University, Durham Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Duke University Medical Center, and Duke University School of Medicine (Durham, NC) conducted a thorough review of studies that assessed the effectiveness of acupuncture for vasomotor symptoms and any adverse effects of treatment in perimenopause and postmenopausal [women](#). The researchers note that the statistically significant differences found between acupuncture and no acupuncture could be due at least in part to nonspecific effects of the treatment.

Lead author Befus notes that she was "impressed with the notable improvements in vasomotor [symptom](#) frequency, severity, and several quality of life measurements with acupuncture compared with no acupuncture. The evidence of benefit of [acupuncture](#) for bothersome vasomotor symptoms is compelling."

"Notably while follow-up time of included studies varied, some found reductions in hot flash frequency that continued for a year," says *JACM* Editor-in-Chief John Weeks, johnweeks-integrator.com, Seattle, WA, "This presents real promise for patients wrestling with bothersome [vasomotor symptoms](#)."

**More information:** Deanna Befus et al, Management of Menopause Symptoms with Acupuncture: An Umbrella Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis, *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* (2018). [DOI: 10.1089/acm.2016.0408](https://doi.org/10.1089/acm.2016.0408)

Provided by Mary Ann Liebert, Inc

Citation: Can acupuncture help alleviate menopausal symptoms? (2018, March 20) retrieved 28 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-03-acupuncture-alleviate-menopausal-symptoms.html>

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