

Cost savings from integrative medicine via pain reduction in hospitalized patients

May 10 2018



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Researchers at Allina Health (Minneapolis, MN) conducted a large NIH-funded observational study to examine pain treatment outcomes of integrative medicine in hospitalized patients. What they found was that when integrative interventions lowered pain there was an associated cost saving according to a recent article in *JACM (The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine)*.

In "Cost Savings from Reducing Pain Through the Delivery of Integrative Medicine Program to Hospitalized Patients," lead investigator Jeffery Dusek, Ph.D. (then with Integrative Health Research Center, Penny George Institute for Health and Healing, Allina Health and now with the Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health) and a team that included Michael Finch, Ph.D. and David Watson, Ph.D. (Children's Minnesota Research Institute) examined EPIC-based electronic [health](#) record for 2730 hospitalized patients during the study period. Through a methodology that associated reduction in pain with reduction in hospital costs, the researchers determined that pain reductions from integrative medicine interventions were associated with a cost savings approaching \$1,000 per hospital admission for those receiving integrative medicine.

"The results indicate that when integrative medicine interventions reduce patients' perception of pain in the acute care setting, there is a corresponding decrease in the total cost of the patients' care," states Jeffery Dusek, Ph.D., adding: "While the amount of savings are substantial, future studies are needed to optimize the delivery of the integrative [medicine](#) interventions in order to maximize the [cost savings](#)."

"Credit NIH National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health for the investment in this critically important—yet still rare—exploration of cost outcomes from integrative practices," comments *JACM* Editor-in-Chief John Weeks, johnweeks-integrator.com, Seattle, WA. "The value proposition for these integrative practices—both in cost and patient

care—may be even stronger if one considers the potential—not measured here—that the [integrative medicine](#) also reduced use of opioids, those limiting attendant societal [costs](#) of those agents."

More information: Jeffery A. Dusek et al, Cost Savings from Reducing Pain Through the Delivery of Integrative Medicine Program to Hospitalized Patients, *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* (2018). [DOI: 10.1089/acm.2017.0203](https://doi.org/10.1089/acm.2017.0203)

Provided by Mary Ann Liebert, Inc

Citation: Cost savings from integrative medicine via pain reduction in hospitalized patients (2018, May 10) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-05-medicine-pain-reduction-hospitalized-patients.html>

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