

Acupuncture reduces aromatase inhibitor-related joint pain

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Among women with early breast cancer who have aromatase inhibitor-

related joint pain, pain at 52 weeks is reduced with true acupuncture (TA) compared with sham acupuncture (SA) or waiting-list control (WC), according to a study published online Nov. 11 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Dawn L. Hershman, M.D., from the Columbia University Irving Medical Center in New York City, and colleagues examined the effect of acupuncture in reducing aromatase inhibitor-related joint pain through 52 weeks in a [randomized clinical trial](#) conducted at 11 sites. A total of 226 women with [early-stage breast cancer](#) who were taking an [aromatase inhibitor](#) and with a score of 3 or higher on the Brief Pain Inventory Worst Pain (BPI-WP) item were randomly assigned to receive TA, SA, or WC. The TA and SA protocols were composed of six weeks of intervention at two sessions per week, followed by six weeks with one session per week.

The researchers found that the 52-week mean BPI-WP scores were 1.08 and 0.99 points lower in the TA versus the SA and WC groups, respectively. The 52-week BPI pain interference scores were lower in the TA group versus the SA group (difference, 0.58; 95 percent confidence interval, 0.00 to 1.16; $P = 0.05$).

"This study highlights the durability of the acupuncture response through one year, as well as the importance of having both SA and WC groups to fully evaluate the effect of the acupuncture intervention," the authors write.

Two authors disclosed financial ties to industry.

More information: Dawn L. Hershman et al, Comparison of Acupuncture vs Sham Acupuncture or Waiting List Control in the Treatment of Aromatase Inhibitor–Related Joint Pain, *JAMA Network Open* (2022). [DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.41720](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.41720)

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