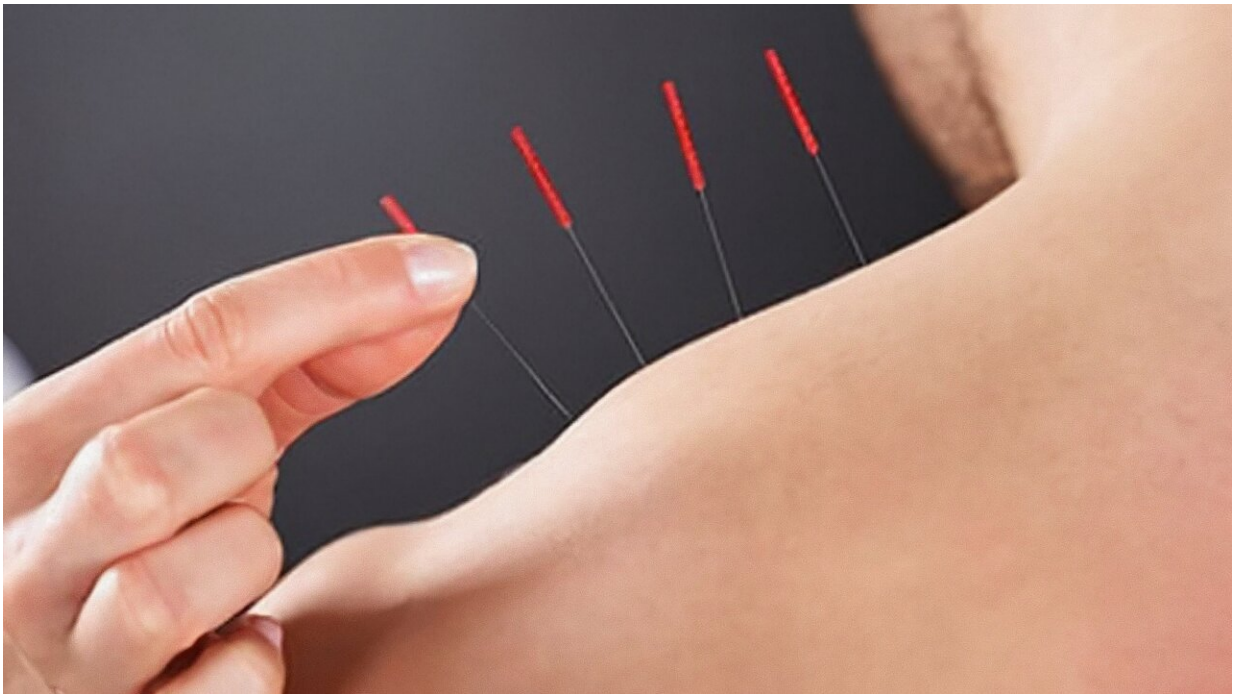


Acupuncture aids outcomes after heart valve surgery

October 27 2023, by Lori Solomon



Acupuncture after heart valve surgery is feasible and safe and has clinical benefit, according to a study recently published in *JTCVS Open*.

Kim L. Feingold, Ph.D., from Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago, and colleagues randomly assigned (1:1) [patients](#) undergoing primary valve surgery via sternotomy to [acupuncture](#) (51

individuals) or standard care (49 individuals). Daily inpatient acupuncture sessions started on postoperative day 1.

The researchers found that an average of 3.8 acupuncture sessions were delivered per patient during a mean hospital stay of 4.6 days.

Acupuncture was associated with lower pain, nausea, stress, and anxiety after each session and across admission versus standard care.

Additionally, acupuncture was associated with a lower incidence of postoperative atrial fibrillation (acupuncture, 13.7 percent; standard care, 32.7 percent), fewer discharges on amiodarone (acupuncture, 9.8 percent; standard care, 26.5 percent), and fewer hours in the [intensive care unit](#) (acupuncture, 30.3; [standard care](#), 37.0).

"We learned that acupuncture after [open heart surgery](#) is feasible in this fast-paced environment—even in the intensive care unit the day after surgery—and was well tolerated by patients with no adverse effects," Feingold said in a statement. "The majority of patients had no prior history with acupuncture, demonstrating their openness to receive integrative therapies after surgery. Overall, patients reported that it was a pleasant and positive aspect of their cardiovascular surgery recovery."

Several authors disclosed ties to the medical technology industry.

More information: Kim L. Feingold et al, Acupuncture after valve surgery is feasible and shows promise in reducing postoperative atrial fibrillation: The ACU-Heart pilot trial, *JTCVS Open* (2023). [DOI: 10.1016/j.xjon.2023.05.010](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.xjon.2023.05.010)

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