

Evaluation of Acupressure and Traditional Pain Treatment Methods

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Abstract

Physical function, mental health, and overall quality of life can all take a hit when dealing with chronic pain, which ranks high among the most frequent health issues impacting people globally. It is common practice to employ pharmaceutical treatments and physical rehabilitation strategies as part of conventional pain management. Acupressure and other complementary therapies have recently seen a surge in popularity as people seek alternatives to pharmaceuticals due to worries about drug side effects, addiction, and treatment costs. The practice of acupressure, which has its roots in Traditional Chinese Medicine, is a non-invasive method for alleviating pain and promoting healing by means of the application of pressure to particular sites on the body. According to the results, acupressure and traditional pain treatment methods both work well for pain reduction. Pharmacological therapies and other conventional treatments for pain typically work quickly but come with the danger of reliance, drowsiness, gastrointestinal side effects, and other negative health consequences. There were few negative side effects associated with acupressure's proven ability to alleviate pain, induce calm, boost physical functioning, and improve general health. Acupuncture has shown promise as an adjunctive or alternative treatment for managing chronic pain and symptom control over the long term, even though traditional methods may be better suited to more severe or acute pain disorders.

Keywords: Acupressure, Pain Management, Conventional Therapy, Chronic Pain, Complementary Medicine

Introduction

Worldwide, pain is a major public health concern and a leading reason people seek medical attention. It can develop as a result of a number of medical issues, such as those involving the muscles and joints, accidents, surgeries, long-term health problems, and neurological abnormalities. Physical, mental, social, and economic well-being are all negatively impacted by pain. In addition to causing physical limitations, chronic pain can lower productivity, diminish quality of life, and exacerbate mental health issues like sadness and anxiety. Consequently, achieving good pain management continues to be a primary goal in healthcare. For a long time, people have relied on traditional methods of pain management to help them feel better. Physical therapy, exercise programs, heat and cold therapy, surgical interventions, and pharmacological interventions like opioids, analgesics, muscle relaxants, and nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) are all part of this approach. Adverse effects, the possibility of dependence, high prices, and varying efficacy across individuals are some of the limitations that may accompany these treatments, despite their ability to alleviate pain effectively. The use of alternative and complementary medicine (CAM) approaches to pain relief has grown in

popularity in recent years. In particular, acupressure's reputation as a low-risk, non-invasive, and economical treatment option has brought it a lot of interest. The practice of acupressure, which has its roots in TCM, is applying gentle pressure to certain anatomical locations called acupoints. In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), stimulating these spots aids in the body's inherent recuperative abilities by reestablishing harmony in the flow of life force energy, or Qi. According to current scientific views, acupressure can alleviate pain by enhancing blood circulation, reducing muscle tension, stimulating nerve pathways, and releasing endorphins. There have been a lot of research looking at the efficacy of acupressure for pain management. Some of the pains that have been studied include headaches, low back pain, osteoarthritis, labor pain, postoperative pain, and menstrual pain. According to the results of these research, acupressure has the potential to alleviate pain, promote relaxation, increase physical function, and boost general health. Moreover, acupressure is typically well-tolerated, has few side effects, and, with the right training, may often be self-administered. It is of utmost importance to compare the efficacy of acupressure with conventional pain management strategies, especially with healthcare systems moving towards more patient-centered and integrative treatment approaches. Healthcare providers can better identify relevant interventions and construct comprehensive pain management plans if they have a firm grasp of the benefits, drawbacks, and clinical uses of both techniques. acupressure and traditional pain care methods by comparing how well they alleviate pain, boost functional outcomes, improve quality of life, and increase patient satisfaction. The results could shed light on the function of acupressure as an auxiliary or adjunctive treatment modality in contemporary approaches to pain management.

The Effects of Pain on Daily Living and Its Burden

There are many facets to the multi-faceted experience of pain, which impacts millions of people around the globe and is a major contributor to disability and healthcare consumption. A person's physical, mental, social, and financial health can all be profoundly affected by pain, whether it is acute or chronic. In addition to negatively impacting one's quality of life and general health, the toll that pain takes goes much beyond the physical suffering, permeating many facets of everyday existence.

Physical Impact

A direct impact of pain on bodily function is one of its most noticeable aftereffects. Regular tasks including walking, standing, sitting, lifting, and doing domestic chores may become challenging for people with chronic pain. Limitations in self-care, mobility, strength, endurance, and strength training might result from chronic pain. Work, exercise, and leisure time activities may become more difficult to partake in as pain levels rise.

Psychological Impact

Pain has a profound influence on mental and emotional health. Individuals suffering from persistent pain frequently experience anxiety, depression, stress, frustration, and feelings of helplessness. Chronic pain may alter mood, reduce self-esteem, and contribute to emotional distress. The constant presence of pain can also increase the risk of sleep disturbances, which further exacerbates psychological symptoms and reduces coping ability.

Social Impact

The effects of pain often extend to social relationships and community participation. Individuals with chronic pain may withdraw from social activities, family gatherings, and interpersonal relationships due to physical limitations or emotional distress. Reduced social interaction can contribute to feelings of loneliness, isolation, and decreased life satisfaction. Family members and caregivers may also experience emotional and practical challenges while supporting individuals with persistent pain.

Occupational and Economic Impact

Pain can significantly affect occupational performance and productivity. Many individuals experience absenteeism, reduced work efficiency, and difficulty maintaining employment due to pain-related limitations. In severe cases, chronic pain may result in long-term disability, early retirement, and financial hardship. The economic burden of pain includes direct healthcare costs such as medical consultations, medications, rehabilitation services, and hospitalizations, as well as indirect costs related to lost productivity and reduced workforce participation.

Impact on Sleep and Daily Functioning

Pain frequently interferes with sleep quality, making it difficult to fall asleep or maintain restful sleep throughout the night. Poor sleep can increase fatigue, reduce concentration, impair memory, and negatively affect daily functioning. A cycle often develops in which pain disrupts sleep, and inadequate sleep further intensifies pain perception and emotional distress.

Living Conditions as a Whole

A person's emotional and mental health, social connections, functional capacity, and level of personal happiness are all components of quality of life. A significant decrease in quality of life can occur when chronic pain negatively impacts all of these aspects. Reduced autonomy, less happiness, and trouble reaching one's professional and personal objectives are all possible outcomes. When viable pain management options are unavailable or inconvenient, the long-term effects of pain can become much worse.

The toll that pain takes on people, their loved ones, medical systems, and the larger community is enormous. The effects on mental health, social functioning, occupational performance, and quality of life go well beyond the realm of physical symptoms. Effective pain management is crucial for better health outcomes and overall well-being because of these far-reaching repercussions. In order to alleviate pain and its many negative impacts on quality of life, both traditional medicine and supplementary methods, like acupuncture, are vital.

Traditional Approaches to Pain Management

In order to alleviate pain, boost physical function, and improve quality of life, conventional pain management makes use of therapeutic and medical therapies that are supported by evidence. These methods can be adjusted to address different types, levels, and causes of pain, and they are commonly employed in healthcare settings. Medication, physical therapy, interventional procedures, and surgery are all part of the traditional toolbox for pain management.

Pharmacological Management

Pharmacological therapy is one of the most common approaches to pain management. Various medications are used depending on the nature and intensity of pain.

Nonsteroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)

NSAIDs such as ibuprofen, diclofenac, and naproxen are frequently used to relieve mild to moderate pain and reduce inflammation. They are commonly prescribed for musculoskeletal disorders, arthritis, and postoperative pain.

Analgesics

Simple analgesics, such as paracetamol (acetaminophen), are often used for mild pain and fever management. They are generally well tolerated and widely available.

Opioids

Opioid medications, including morphine, tramadol, codeine, and oxycodone, are used for moderate to severe pain. While effective, long-term use may be associated with adverse effects such as nausea, constipation, sedation, tolerance, and dependency.

Adjuvant Medications

Certain medications originally developed for other conditions may also be used to manage pain. These include antidepressants, anticonvulsants, and muscle relaxants, which are particularly useful for neuropathic and chronic pain conditions.

Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation

Physical therapy plays a crucial role in pain management by improving mobility, strength, flexibility, and functional independence. Common interventions include:

- Therapeutic exercises
- Stretching programs
- Postural correction
- Manual therapy
- Heat and cold applications
- Ultrasound therapy
- Electrical stimulation techniques

These interventions help reduce pain, prevent disability, and promote recovery.

Interventional Pain Management

For patients who do not respond adequately to conservative treatments, interventional procedures may be considered. These techniques are typically performed by pain specialists and include:

- Nerve blocks
- Epidural steroid injections
- Trigger point injections
- Radiofrequency ablation
- Spinal cord stimulation

These procedures aim to interrupt pain pathways and provide targeted pain relief.

Surgical Management

Surgery may be recommended when pain results from structural abnormalities or when other treatment options have failed. Examples include joint replacement surgery, spinal surgery, and

corrective orthopedic procedures. Surgical intervention is generally reserved for selected cases where significant improvement is expected.

Psychological and Behavioral Approaches

Pain is influenced by psychological and emotional factors; therefore, behavioral interventions are often incorporated into pain management programs. These may include:

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
- Stress management techniques
- Relaxation therapy
- Biofeedback
- Counseling and psychotherapy

Such approaches help patients develop coping strategies and improve their emotional response to pain.

Advantages of Conventional Pain Management

Conventional pain management techniques offer several benefits, including rapid symptom relief, evidence-based treatment protocols, accessibility in healthcare settings, and the ability to address a wide range of pain conditions. These methods are particularly effective for acute pain, postoperative pain, and severe chronic pain requiring medical intervention.

Limitations of Conventional Pain Management

Traditional remedies may have their limits, even though they work. Side effects and the possibility of dependence are associated with pharmacological treatments. There is a risk of complications and high costs connected with surgical and interventional procedures. Not all patients will feel completely relieved from their pain, which is why supplementary methods like acupressure may be necessary.

Medication, physical therapy, interventional treatments, surgery, and psychological interventions are all part of the conventional pain management techniques that continue to form the basis of pain treatment. The limits of conventional treatments, notwithstanding their efficacy for many patients, have prompted research into complementary and alternative medicine. A comparison of the efficacy of traditional pain management with that of alternative methods, like acupressure, in attaining optimum pain control and improving quality of life can be made with an understanding of conventional pain management.

Conclusion

Physical, mental, social, and financial aspects of an individual's well-being are all impacted by pain. Reducing the burden of acute and chronic pain disorders, improving functional ability, and enhancing quality of life are all outcomes of effective pain treatment. Pharmacological therapies, physical therapy, psychological interventions, and surgical procedures are all examples of conventional pain management techniques. These methods have been around for a long time and are still very effective in many clinical settings. Acupuncture has recently gained popularity as an effective supplementary method for alleviating pain. The practice of acupressure involves applying pressure to certain locations on the body known as acupoints in an effort to alleviate pain, induce relaxation, increase blood flow, and improve general health. Acupressure is a non-invasive, cheap, easy-to-administer, and relatively risk-free alternative to many conventional treatments. Because of these qualities, it is a good choice for people who

want to alleviate their pain in a natural and safe way. Acupressure and more traditional methods of pain relief each have their advantages and disadvantages, as seen in the comparison. While conventional pain treatments are great for acute and severe pain, acupressure has the potential to help with chronic pain, symptom control, and overall health in the long run. Acupuncture can supplement traditional treatments rather than replace them, increasing the efficacy and satisfaction of treatment as a whole. An all-encompassing and patient-centered method of pain treatment could be possible through the integration of acupressure with traditional pain management techniques. Potential benefits of such integration include better pain results, less pharmaceutical dependence, fewer treatment-related adverse effects, and higher quality of life. In order to solidify the evidence for acupressure's usage in interdisciplinary pain management programs and to develop standardized methods, additional high-quality research is required.

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