

Chinese medicine in chronic pain



Prof. Dr. med. Konrad Streitberger
Universitätsklinik für Anästhesiologie
und Schmerztherapie

Chinese medicine in chronic pain in 30 minutes

- A) My conflict of interest - Acupuncture
- B) Pain in traditional Chinese medicine
- C) Therapies and prevention measures for chronic pain



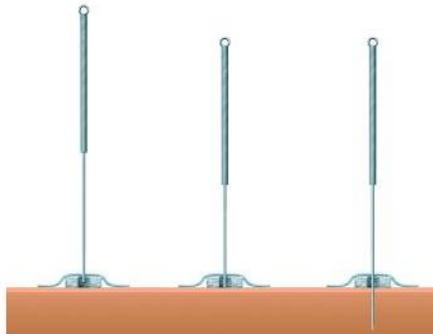
A) My conflict of interest – Acupuncture

asiamed
the art of gentle healing

**ACUPUNCTURE
WORLD**

Akupunkturnadeln Akupunkturbedarf Laser Moxibustion Akupressur Schröpfen Physio & Tap

Startseite > Akupunkturnadeln



Beschreibung

Bewerten

Streitberger Placebo Akupunkturnadeln Set - für randomisierte, placebokontrollierte Einfachblindstudien geeignet

Die Placebonadel ist eine Entwicklung von Herrn Dr. med. Konrad Streitberger speziell für die wissenschaftliche Erforschung der Akupunktur und ihrer Wirkungsweisen. Hergestellt wird die Placebonadel von der Firma asiamed.

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PrePaC
Prevention of
Pain Chronification

Prävention chronischer Schmerzen

Schmerzen verstehen
Neue Wege gehen

Information für Fachpersonen,
die Menschen mit Schmerzen behandeln

www.prepac.ch



Gesundheitsförderung Schweiz
Promotion Santé Suisse
Promozione Salute Svizzera



My personal history with Chinese medicine

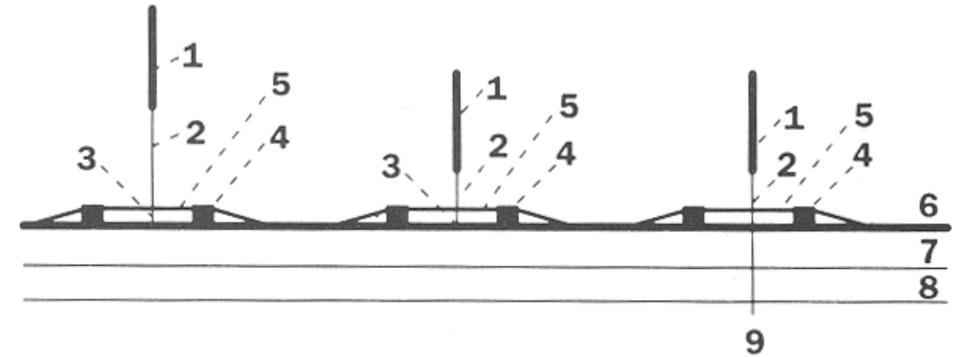


EARLY REPORTS

THE LANCET • Vol 352 • August 1, 1998

Introducing a placebo needle into acupuncture research

K Streitberger, J Kleinhenz



Available online at www.sciencedirect.com



European Journal of Integrative Medicine xxx (2010) xxx-xxx

Case report

Acupuncture assisted anesthesia for nasal surgery as an example for integrative medicine in China

Konrad Streitberger^{a,*}, Jinhua Shi^b, Florian Pfab^{c,d}, Wenjing Huang^{e,f}, Claudia N. Witt^e, Ying Duan^b, Stefan M. Willich^e

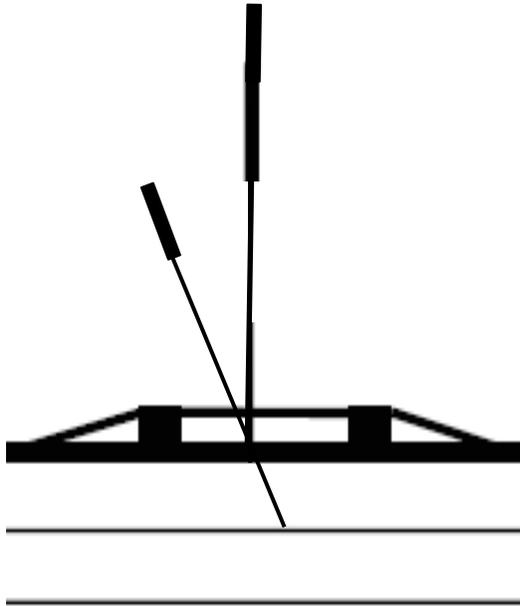
European Journal of
**INTEGRATIVE
MEDICINE**

www.elsevier.com/eujim

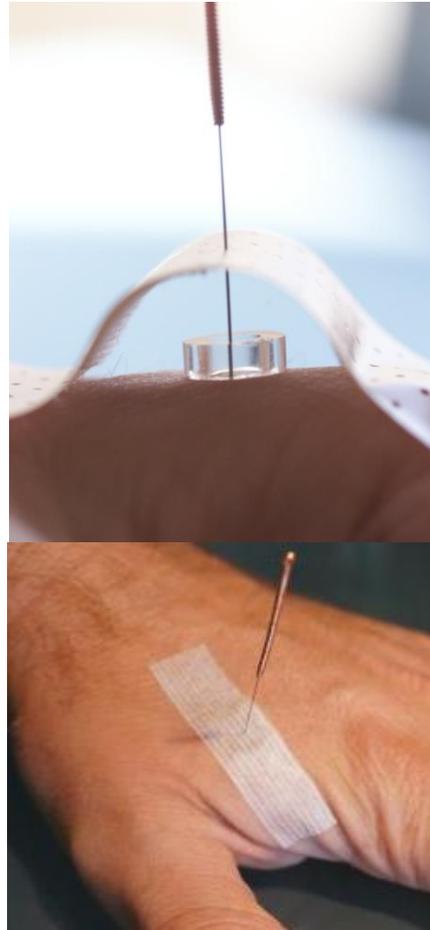


Placebo / Sham acupuncture?

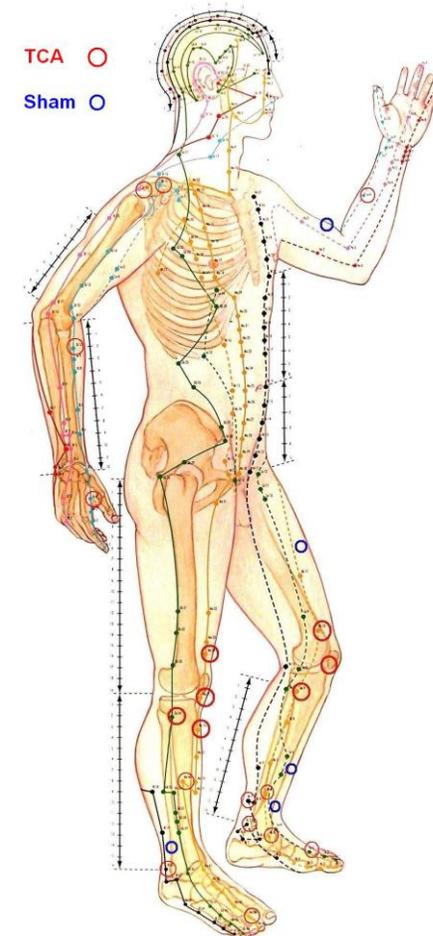
Placebo needle / Sham needle / Streitberger needle
→ non invasive



Streitberger, Lancet 1998



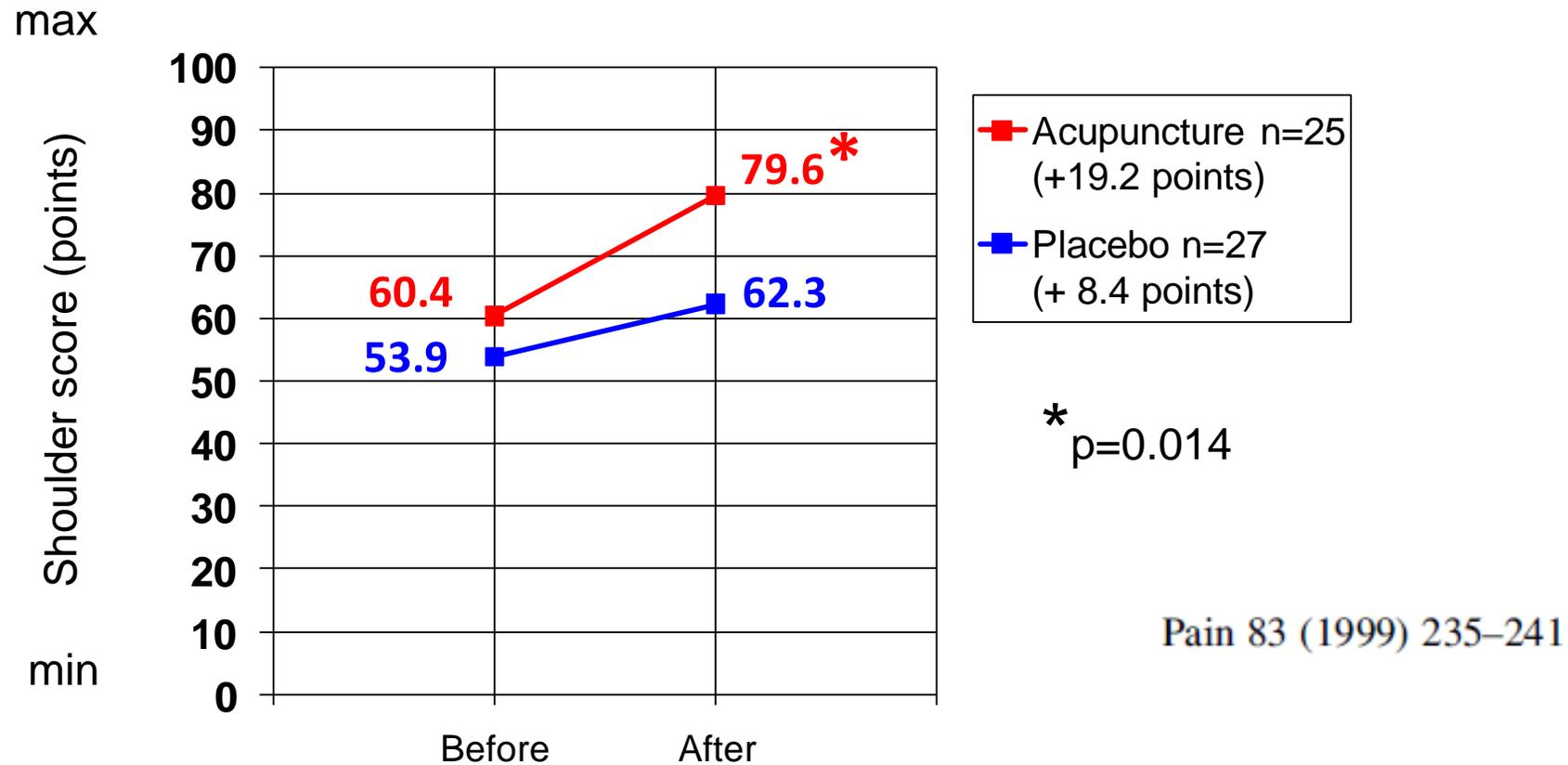
Placebo points / sham points
→ invasive or non invasive



Acupuncture for shoulder pain

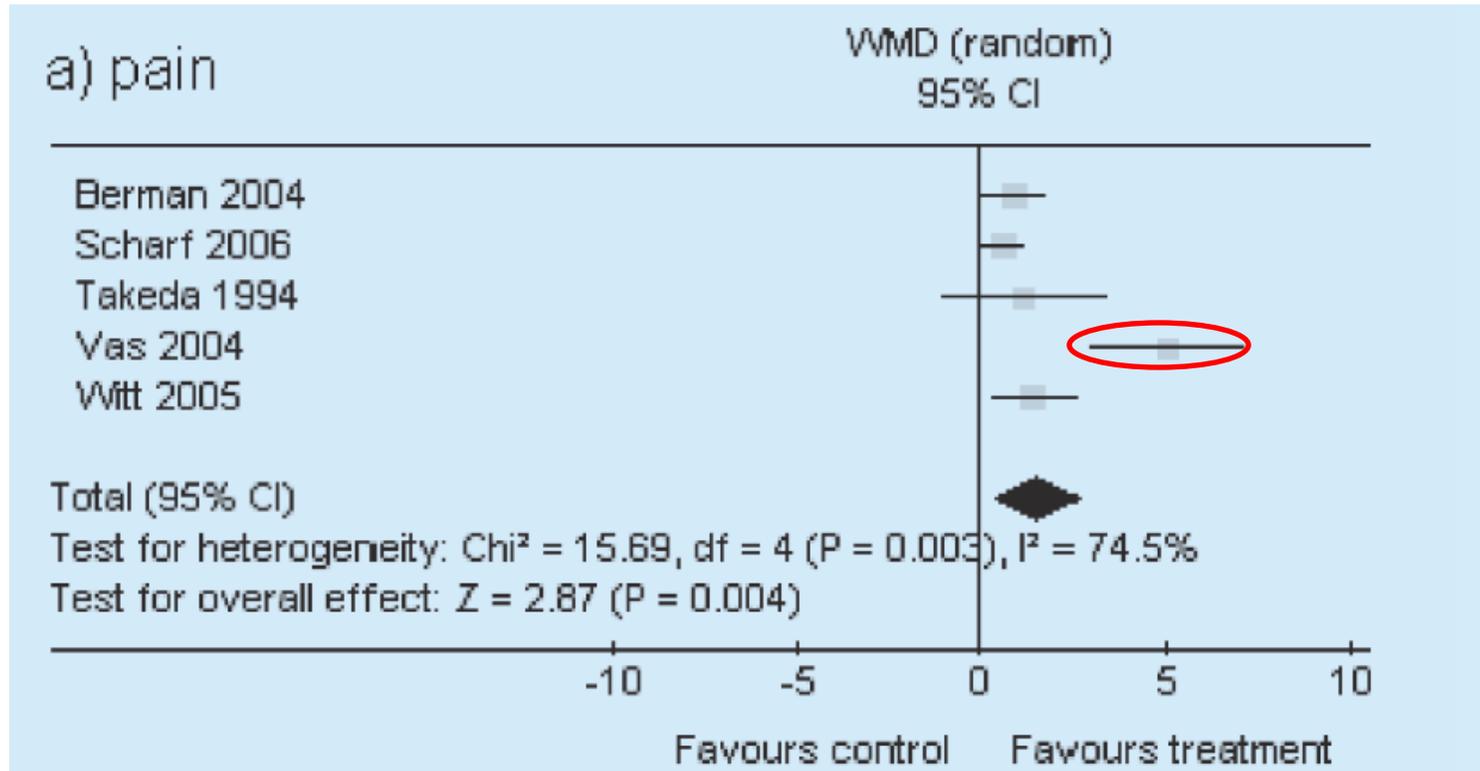
Randomised clinical trial comparing the effects of acupuncture and a newly designed placebo needle in rotator cuff tendinitis

Julia Kleinhenz^a, Konrad Streitberger^{a,*}, Jürgen Windeler^b, Albert Güßbacher^c,
Georg Mavridis^c, Eike Martin^a



Invasive and non-invasive sham acupuncture

Osteoarthritis of the knee - Metaanalysis



White et al. Rheumatology 2007

Acupuncture for Chronic Pain

Individual Patient Data Meta-analysis

Arch Intern Med. 2012;172

Andrew J. Vickers, DPhil; Angel M. Cronin, MS; Alexandra C. Maschino, BS; George Lewith, MD; Hugh MacPherson, PhD; Nadine E. Foster, DPhil; Karen J. Sherman, PhD; Claudia M. Witt, MD; Klaus Linde, MD; for the Acupuncture Trialists' Collaboration



Raw data from 29 studies (17 922 patients):

- 18 trials non-acupuncture control (14 597 patients)
- 20 trials sham control (5 230 patients)



Critical Reviews

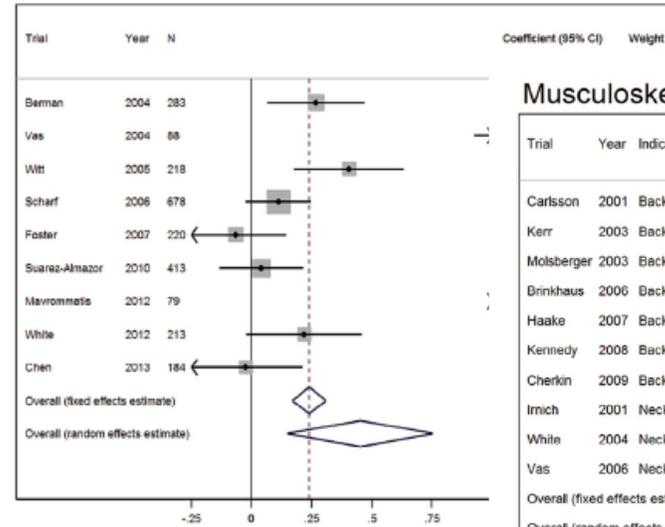
Acupuncture for Chronic Pain: Update of an Individual Patient Data Meta-Analysis

Andrew J. Vickers,^{*} Emily A. Vertosick,^{*} George Lewith,[†] Hugh MacPherson,[‡] Nadine E. Foster,[§] Karen J. Sherman,[¶] Dominik Irnich,^{||} Claudia M. Witt,^{*,†,||,##} and Klaus Linde^{§§} on behalf of the Acupuncture Trialists' Collaboration

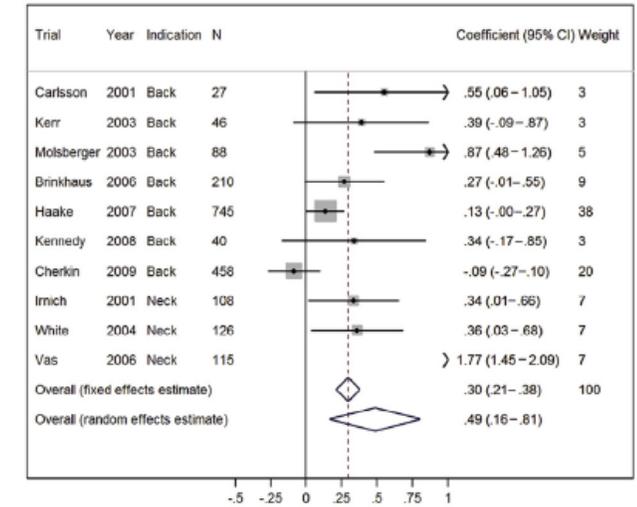
- Update with 39 studies
- Involving 20,827 patients
- Effect size independent of acupuncture, but dependent on control
- Acupuncture > sham with needle insertion > sham without needle insertion > control without acupuncture
- Lasting effect up to 1 year

Vickers et al

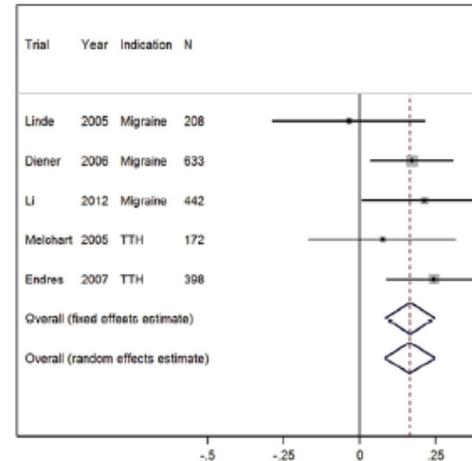
Osteoarthritis



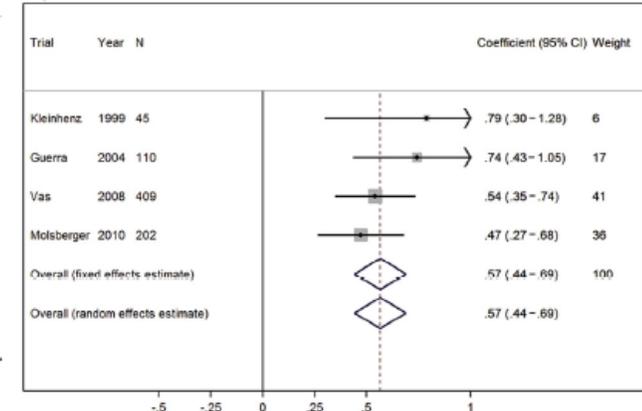
Musculoskeletal Pain



Headache



Specific Shoulder Pain



B) Pain in traditional Chinese medicine

Chronic Pain:

- Disruption in the flow of *qi* (vital energy) and blood
- Caused by factors like cold, damp or emotional stress

Therapy

Moving Qi: Meridians → Acupuncture, Tai Chi
Internal → Curcuma

Warming: Meridians → Moxibustion
Internal → Curcuma, Ginger

Strengthen: Internal → Ginger (Spleen and Lung)

氣

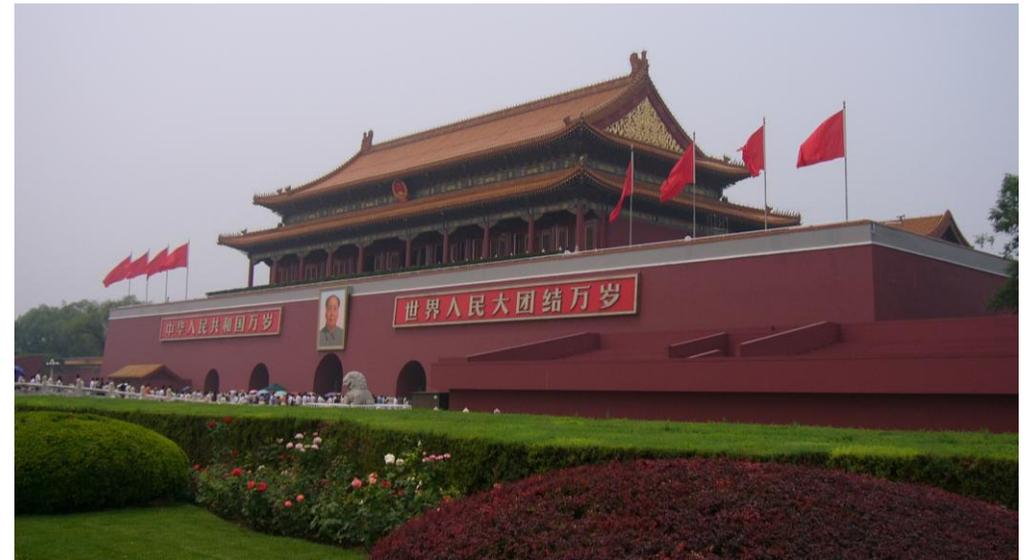


A brief history of traditional Chinese medicine

- ▶ 11th – 3th century BC: Zhou-Dynasty
 - ▶ Daimons – Daoism – Konfucianism
- ▶ 221 BC: Dynasties
 - ▶ Politics and medicine
- ▶ 1911: Republic of China
 - ▶ Western contra Traditional Medicine
- ▶ 1949: Peoples Republic of China
 - ▶ Acupuncture in anaesthesia
 - ▶ Scientific evaluation

Cultural – Political
Context

- **Qi**
- **Yin/Yang**
- **Meridians**
- **5 Element**



Chinese medicine – Transformation in Western medicine

Neurophysiologic research of acupuncture

Neurotransmitters

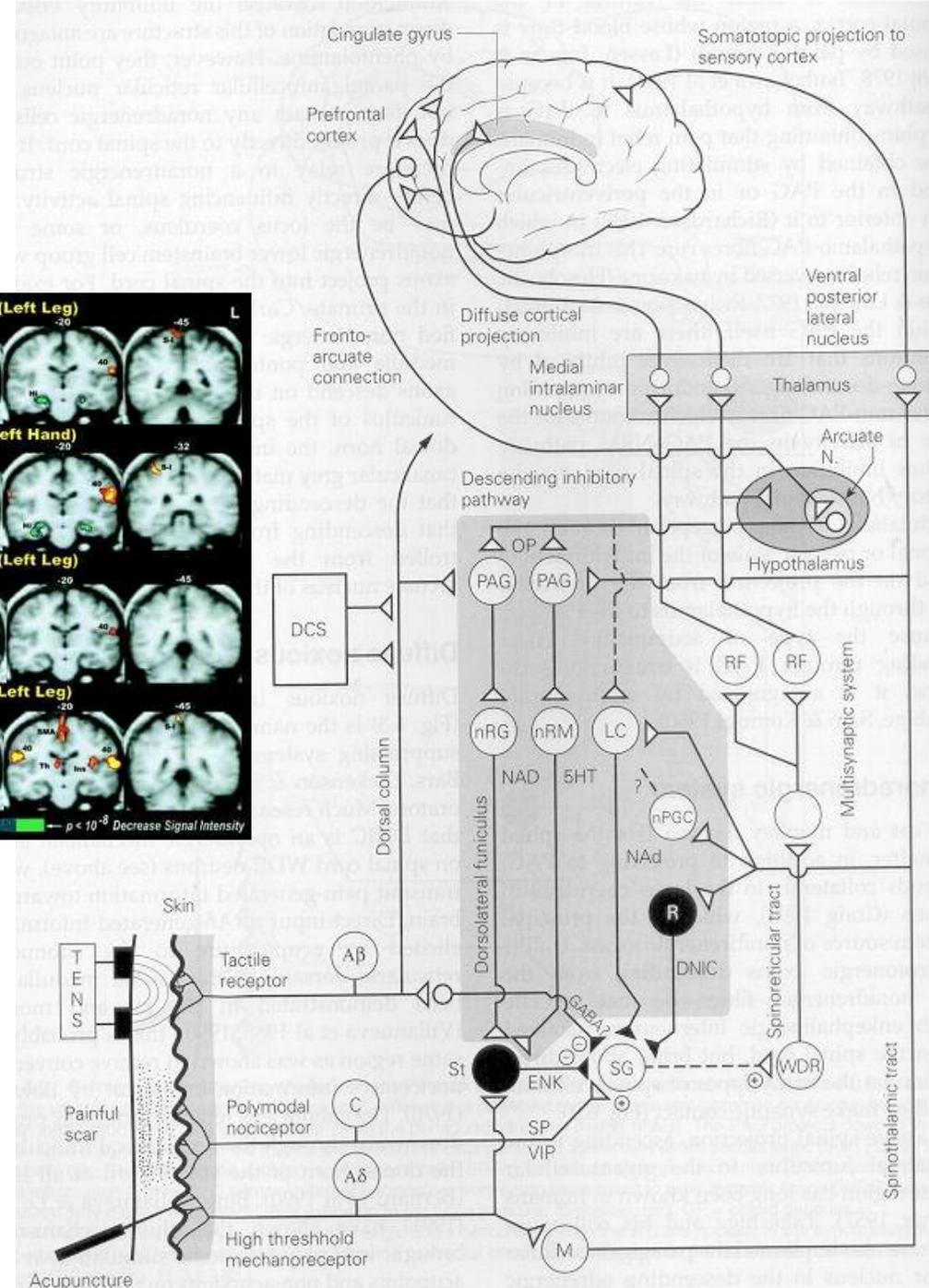
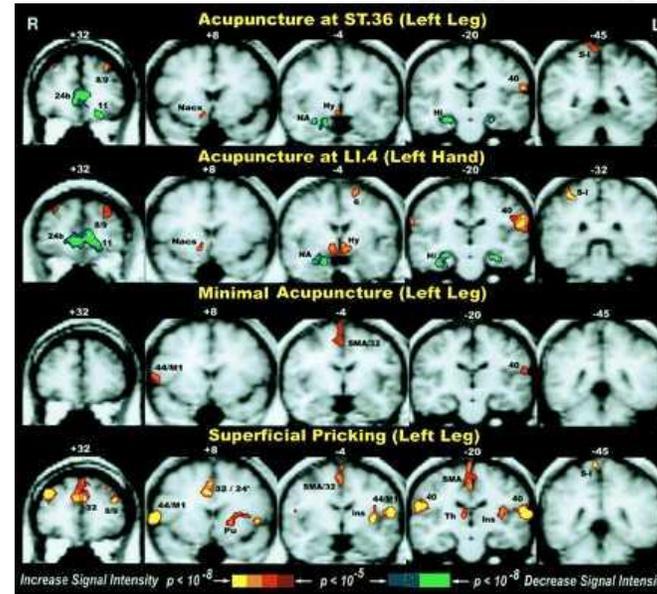
- Endorphin, enkephalin, etc (Pomeranz, Life Sci 1976)

Segmental afferent inhibition

- Dorsal horn (Chung, Pain 1984; Liu, Eur J Neurosci 1998)
- Gate-Control → Neuromatrix (Melzack, Pain 1999)

Cerebral mechanisms

- Supraspinal descending
Diffuse noxious inhibitory control (Bing, Neuroscience 1990)
- Modulation of cerebral activation
Limbic System; Hypothalamus; PAG (Pariente, Neuroimage 2005, Wu et al, Radiology 1999)



Curcuma

- Warming
- Moves Qi
- Relieves pain

Check for updates

OPEN ACCESS

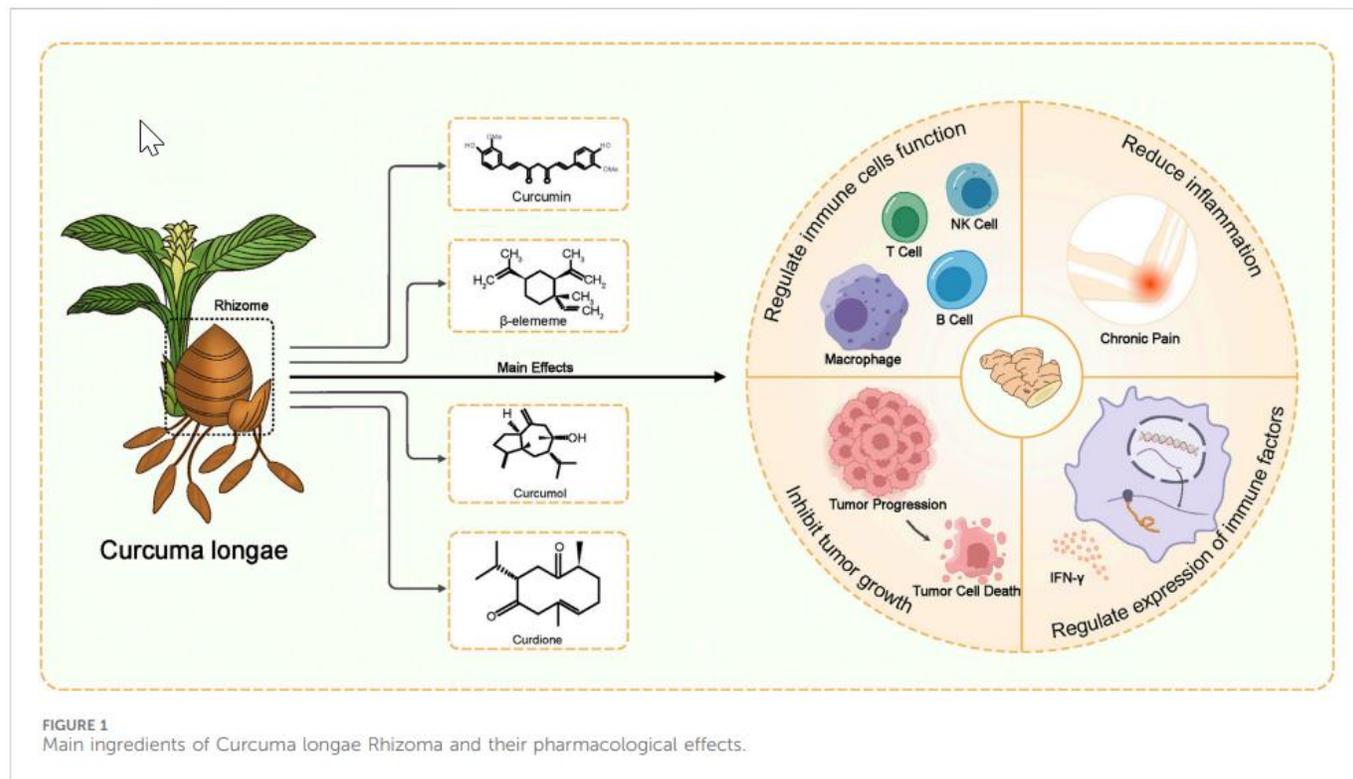
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Role of Curcuma longae Rhizoma in medical applications: research challenges and opportunities

Peng Zhang, Hong Liu, Yuan Yu, Shiyang Peng and Shaomi Zhu*

School of Medical and Life Sciences, Chengdu University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Chengdu, Sichuan, China



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Journal of Ethnopharmacology

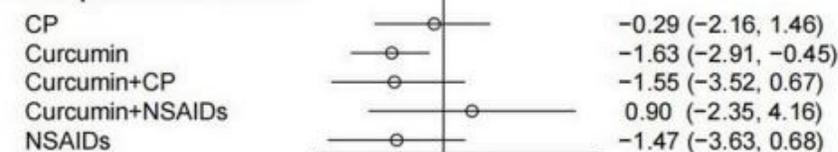
journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/jethpharm



Efficacy and safety of curcumin therapy for knee osteoarthritis: A Bayesian network meta-analysis

Jinlong Zhao^{a,b,c}, Guihong Liang^{a,b,c}, Guanghui Zhou^a, Kunhao Hong^d, Weiyi Yang^b, Jun Liu^{c,d,e,*}, Lingfeng Zeng^{a,b,c,*}

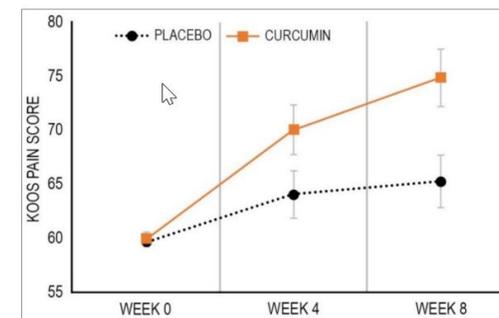
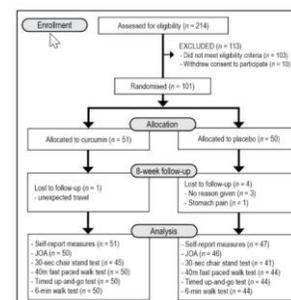
Compared with Placebo



Article

An Investigation into the Effects of a Curcumin Extract (Curcugen®) on Osteoarthritis Pain of the Knee: A Randomised, Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled Study

Adrian L. Lopresti^{1,2,*}, Stephen J. Smith^{1,2}, Shavon Jackson-Michel³ and Timothy Fairchild²



C) Therapies and prevention measures for chronic pain

Traditional Chinese Medicine

1. Acupuncture
2. Tai Chi and Qi Gong
3. Tui Na
4. Herbal medicine
5. Chinese diet

Western Integrative Medicine

- Dry needling
- Relaxation / Movement
- Manual therapy / Massage
- Phytotherapy
- Mediterranean diet

1. Acupuncture

Lat.: acus = needle, pungere = puncture

Chin.: 針灸 = zhen jiu = needle and Moxibustion

Stimulation with

- Needle:
 - Body / Auricle / Scalp / Hand acupuncture
 - Trigger points: Dry needling
- Heat:
 - Moxibustion
- Suction:
 - Cupping



Auricle acupuncture

Stimulation of vagus, trigeminus and cervical plexus nerves

- Acute pain
- Vegetative dysfunction
- Opioid withdrawal:
NADA-Protocol (National Acupuncture Detoxification Association)

Auricle points:

- ▶ Vegetativum 51
- ▶ Shen Men 55
- ▶ Liver 97
- ▶ Lung 101

European Journal of Pain



Two-Phase Inpatient Withdrawal Programme for Long-Term Opioid Use in Non-Cancer Pain

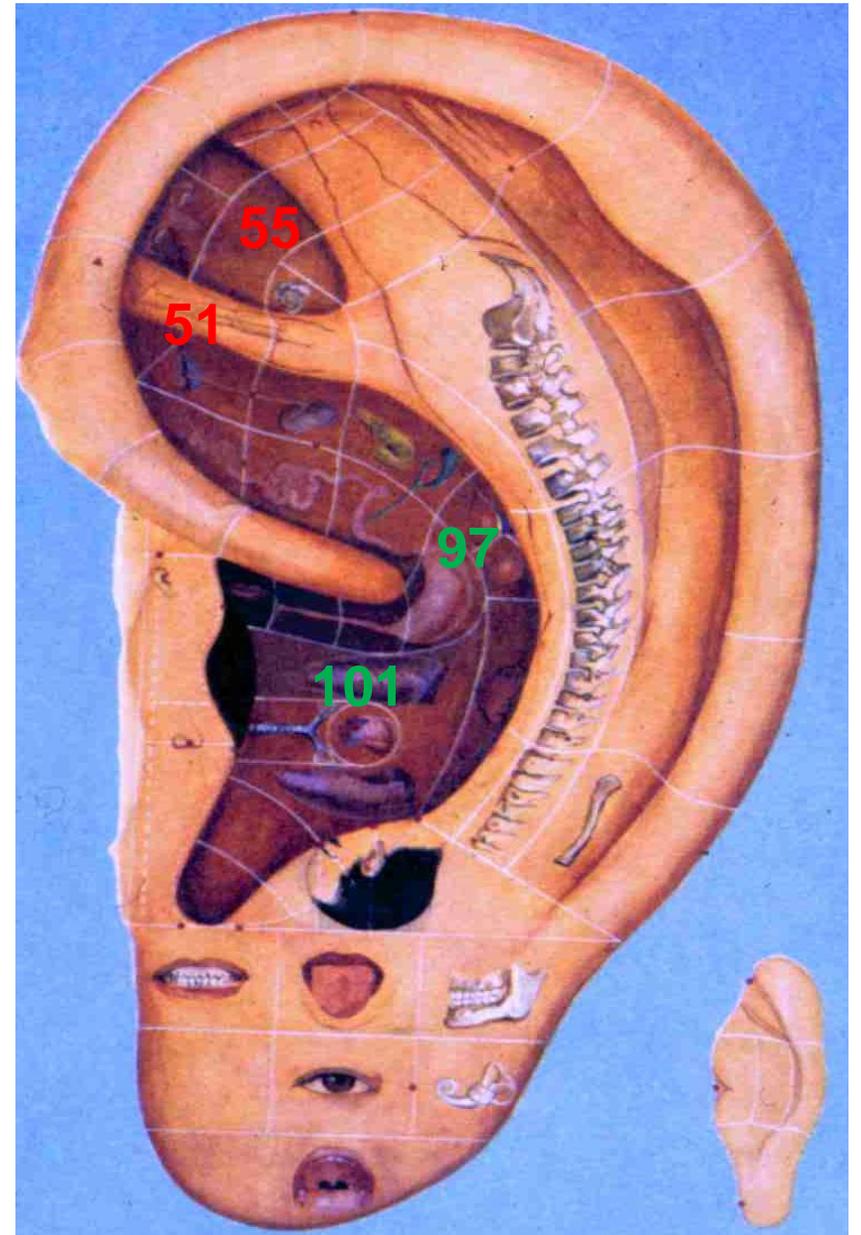
Konrad Streitberger¹ | Michael A. Harnik¹ | Anna Saliba² | Nina Bischoff² | Larissa T. Blättler¹ | Kyrill Schwegler³ | Christine Baumgartner⁴ | Nora Sutter⁴ | Maria M. Wertli^{3,4}

Patients included for opioid withdrawal n=38

→32 successful withdrawal

→23 successful after 3months

Received: 10 October 2024 | Revised: 5 February 2025 | Accepted: 7 March 2025



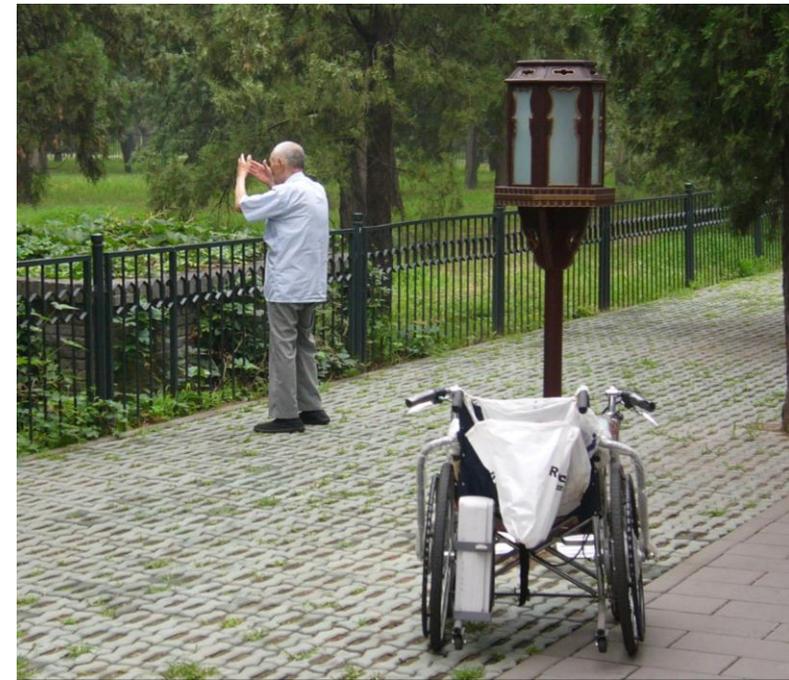
2. Tai Chi and Qi Gong

Tai Chi = Taijiquan
= highest ultimate

Qi Gong
= work with qi

→ Therapy and prevention of chronic pain

Western techniques: Pilates, Feldenkreis,



Tai Chi for chronic pain

www.nature.com/scientificreports

SCIENTIFIC REPORTS

OPEN **Tai Chi for Chronic Pain Conditions: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis of Randomized Controlled Trials**

Received: 13 August 2015
Accepted: 14 April 2016
Published: 29 April 2016

Ling Jun Kong¹, Romy Lauche², Petra Klose³, Jiang Hui Bu¹, Xiao Cun Yang¹, Chao Qing Guo¹, Gustav Dobos^{3,*} & Ying Wu Cheng^{1,*}

- Tai Chi practice more than 5 weeks
- 18 randomized controlled trials
- positive evidence on immediate relief of chronic pain from osteoarthritis, Low back pain and osteoporosis

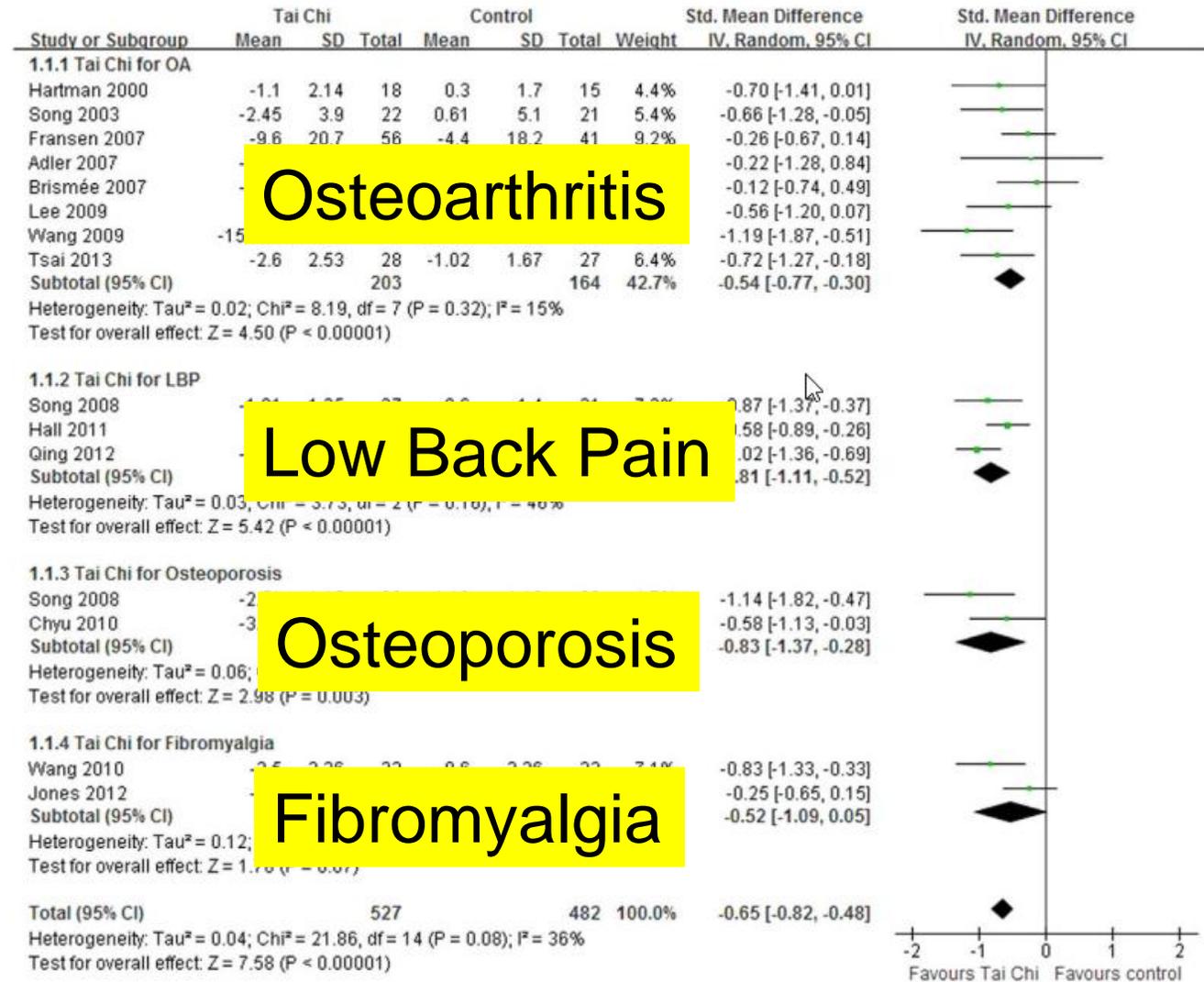


Figure 2. Forest plot of the immediate effects of Tai Chi for chronic pain conditions. OA, osteoarthritis; LBP, low back pain.

Taiji for prevention

- Stress reduction
- General self efficacy increase



Available online at www.sciencedirect.com

SciVerse ScienceDirect

European Journal of Integrative Medicine xxx (2013) xxx.e1–xxx.e7

European Journal of
**INTEGRATIVE
MEDICINE**

www.elsevier.com/eujim

Original article

Influence of general self-efficacy as a mediator in Taiji-induced stress reduction – Results from a randomized controlled trial

Marko Nedeljkovic^{a,*}, Viviane Wepfer^a, Brigitte Ausfeld-Hafter^a, Petra H. Wirtz^b,
Konrad M. Streitberger^c

Psychoneuroendocrinology (2011) xxx, xxx–xxx



Available online at www.sciencedirect.com

SciVerse ScienceDirect

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/psyneuen



Taiji practice attenuates psychobiological stress reactivity – A randomized controlled trial in healthy subjects

Marko Nedeljkovic^{a,*}, Brigitte Ausfeld-Hafter^a, Konrad Streitberger^b,
Roland Seiler^c, Petra H. Wirtz^d

3. Tui Na = Chinese manual therapy

Tuī (推) „push“

Ná (拿) „grasp“, „pull“ oder „hold“

- Manual therapy
- Massage

2023

Medicine

OPEN

Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

Efficacy and safety of Tuina for chronic nonspecific low back pain

A PRISMA-compliant systematic review and meta-analysis

Juan Yang, MD, PhD^a, Xuan Zhou, MD, PhD^b, Qingyu Ma, MD, PhD^b, Jeffrey T. Woods, MTS^c, Arya B. Mohabbat, MD^a, Alexander Do, L.Ac^a, Jeffrey S. Brault, MD^d, Mark A. Jensen, PT^d, Kyung-Min Shin, KMD, PhD^{a,e}, Longbin Shen, MD^f, Canghuan Zhao, MD, PhD^g, Kwok Chee Philip Cheong, PhD^h, Kejie He, MD^g, Yu Guo, MD, PhD^g, Zhuoming Chen, MD, PhDⁱ, Shujie Tang, MD, PhDⁱ, Yong Tang, MD, PhDⁱ, Celia Ia Choo Tan, PhD^j, Jiaxu Chen, MD, PhD^g, Brent A. Bauer, MD^{a,*}

- 15 RCT 1390 patients
- pain and physical function significant
- quality of life not significant



4. Chinese Herbal Medicine

Impressions from Chengdu



Chinese herbs and diet



Nutrition
Volume 66, October 2019, Pages 153-165



Review article

Does diet play a role in reducing nociception related to inflammation and chronic pain?

Geir Bjørklund ^a, Jan Aaseth M.D., Ph.D. ^{b,c}, Monica Daniela Doşa M.D., Ph.D. ^d, Lyudmila Pivina M.D., Ph.D. ^{e,f}, Maryam Dadar D.V.M., Ph.D. ^g, Joeri J. Pen M.D., Ph.D. ^{h,i}, Salvatore Chirumbolo Ph.D. ^{j,k}

Ginger = Sheng Jiang

- Antioxidant and antiinflammatory
- Warms stomach
- Strengthens spleen and lung
- Helps for pain and nausea

Pharmacological Research - Modern Chinese Medicine 14 (2025) 100561

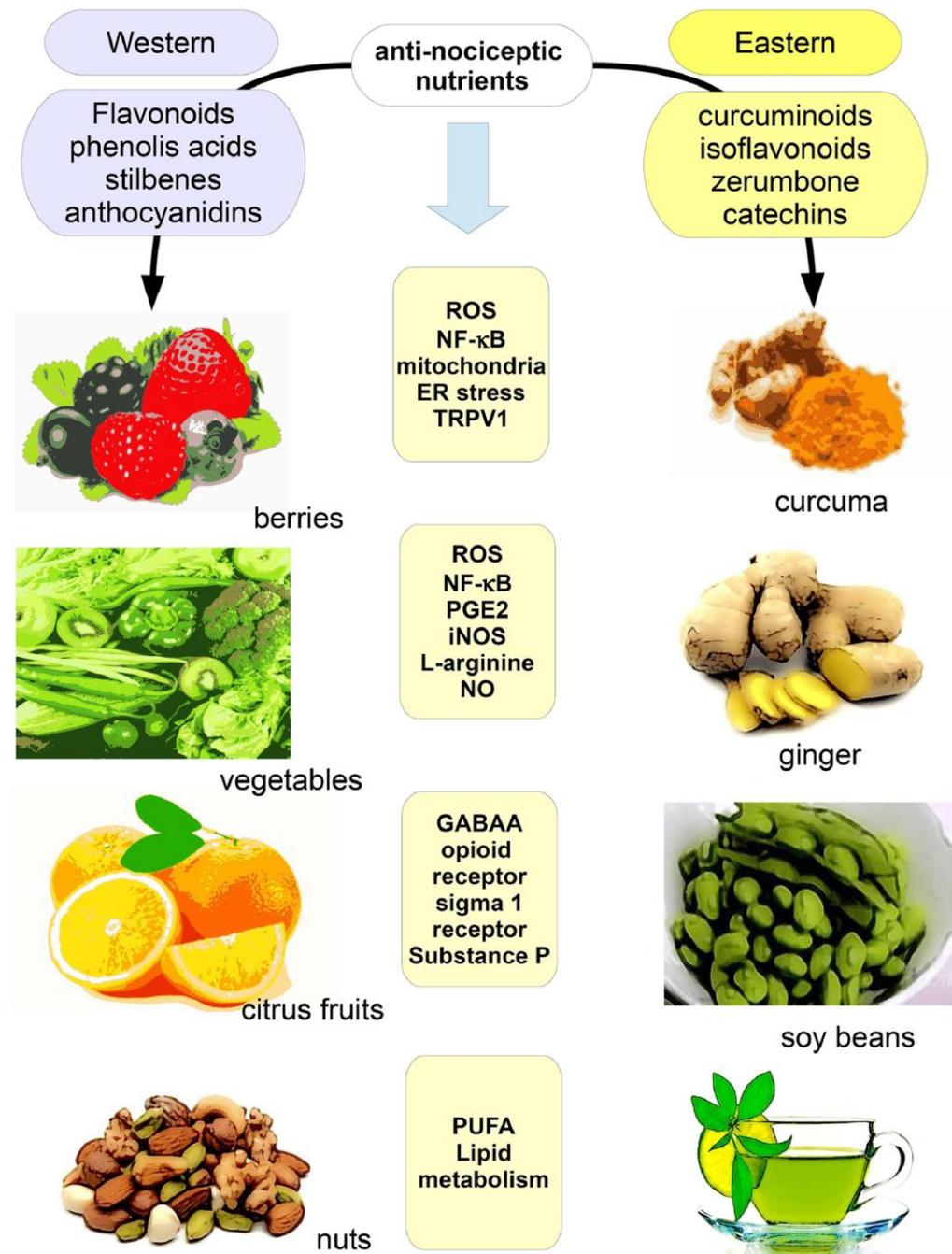


Contents lists available at ScienceDirect
Pharmacological Research - Modern Chinese Medicine
journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/prmcm



Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*) in traditional Chinese medicine: A comprehensive review of its anti-inflammatory properties and clinical applications

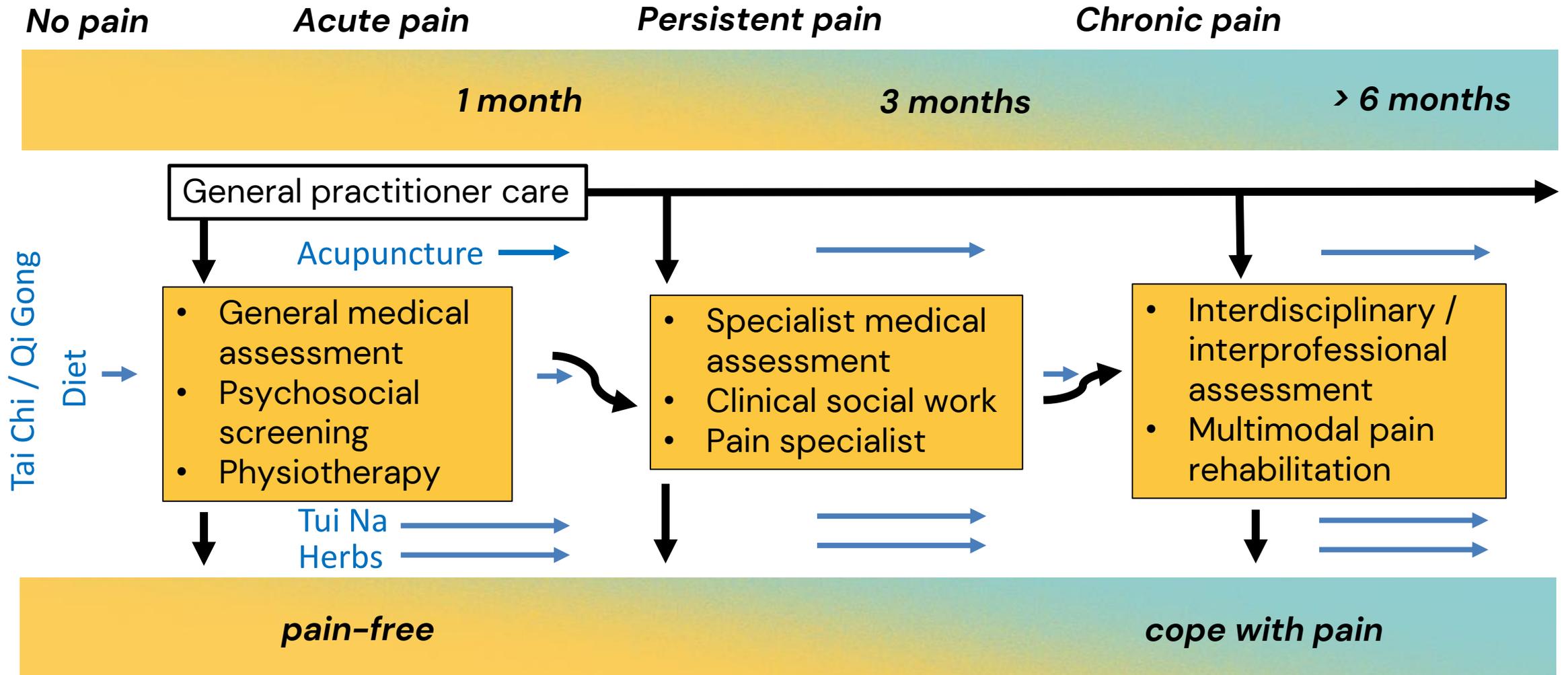
Jitendra Gupta ^{a,*}, Bhawna Sharma ^b, Rahul Sorout ^c, Ram Gopal Singh ^d, Ittishree ^e, Mukesh Chandra Sharma ^f



5. Chinese diet



Chinese medicine for prevention



Chinese Medicine for Chronic Pain...

Therapies and prevention for chronic pain:

- Acupuncture or dry needling should be an integral part of the treatment of pain
- Tai Chi and Qi Gong reduce stress and enhance self efficacy
- Tui Na → Manual medicine
- Herbal medicine → Phytotherapy
- Chinese diet remains difficult to translate in western context

...from out of the box into the box!



PrePaC Team



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Projektleitung PrePaC, Leiter Schmerzzentrum Inselspital



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Prof. Dr. phil. Tom Friedli
Co-Projektleitung, Professor für Klinische Soziale Arbeit FHNW



Prof. Dr. Martin Grosse Holtforth
Fachsupport Psychologie / Psychosoziales Screening, Psychologie Uni Bern / Psychosomatische Medizin Inselspital



Gisela Steinmann
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Sibylle Obrecht Lösch
lic. phil., Projektkoordination, Teilprojektleitung Plattform



Prof. Dr. Heidi Kaspar
Teilprojektleiterin Partizipation, Berner Fachhochschule



Chantal Britt
Teilprojektkoordination Partizipation, Wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin Berner Fachhochschule



Anik Coray
Mitarbeiterin Administration und Kommunikation, Bachelor of Arts in Gesellschafts- und Kommunikationswissenschaften

Thank You!



Gesundheitsförderung Schweiz
Promotion Santé Suisse
Promozione Salute Svizzera

Fortbildungsprogramm Schmerzzentrum 2025

Zeit: Donnerstag, 16:30-17:30 Uhr

Ort: OPO D-127 / [online](#) via Webex

Ort und Link sind bis auf weiteres für jede Schmerz-Fortbildung gültig, ausser wenn anders vermerkt



[Weitere Informationen](#)

November

20.11.2025
16:30-17:30

Angst und Schmerz – fatale Verknüpfungen im Gehirn

Prof. Dr. Thomas Nevian, Ordinarius, Ko-Direktor Institut für Physiologie, Universität Bern

Credits: SSIPM 0.5, SPS 1, SAPP 1, SGAIM 1, SSAPM 1



Kongress 2025

18. Fortbildungstage für Therapeuten und Ärzte
18e Journées de perfectionnement pour les thérapeutes et les médecins
18ª Edizione delle giornate di formazione continua per terapisti e medici
18th Advanced training days for therapists and doctors

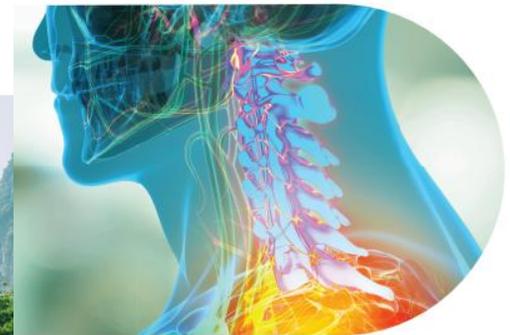
Un-Sterblichkeit Im-mortalité

20. – 21. November 2025

Careum Auditorium, Zürich

KONGRESS / CONGRÈS

Zervikothorakaler Übergang
Transition cervico-thoracique



Congress Kursaal Interlaken

Donnerstag bis Samstag, 27. bis 29. November 2025