

# EMORY PAIN CENTER

## News You Can Use

Spring 2018

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### Acupuncture Therapy in a Group Setting for Chronic Pain

#### KEY POINTS:

- The American College of Physicians recommends acupuncture as 1<sup>st</sup> line treatment for low back pain
- Acupuncture has been effective for migraines, TMJ disorders, neck and shoulder pain, knee arthritis
  - This has been done effectively in group settings
- Acupuncture has also been used to help treat depression
- Formalized auricular acupuncture was given in a group setting for treatment of substance use disorder

**WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU:** *Acupuncture therapy is a great way to treat multiple types of pain conditions. It is a safe pain treatment that can be used in combination with other treatment plans and has minimal side effects.*

Pain Medicine 2018;19:393-403

### Comparative pain reduction of oral non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and opioids for knee osteoarthritis: systematic analytic review

#### KEY POINTS:

- Randomized controlled trials(RCT) 8-52 weeks duration involving knee osteoarthritis were reviewed
- Studies involving NSAID's (celecoxib, diclofenac, naproxen, piroxicam) and opioids (tramadol, hydromorphone, oxycodone) were evaluated for efficacy
- Western Ontario and McMaster Universities Osteoarthritis Pain subscale (WOMAC) 0-100 used
- Pain reduction was as follows:
  - NSAIDs – 18 points
  - Tramadol – 18 points
  - Potent opioids – 19 points

**WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU:** *Strong opioids such as oxycodone and hydromorphone are no better than NSAIDs such as naproxen for relief of arthritis knee pain.*

Osteoarthritis and Cartilage 2016;24:962-972

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### Effect of $\alpha$ -lipoic acid on symptoms and quality of life in patients with painful diabetic neuropathy

#### KEY POINTS

- $\alpha$ -lipoic acid (ALA) is a naturally occurring antioxidant that has been used to treat neuropathic pain
- Diabetic peripheral neuropathy is a very painful condition and is associated with older age, long standing diabetes, poor glucose control and high blood pressure
- 72 patients with painful diabetic neuropathy were treated with ALA 600mg daily for 40 days
- Significant reduction in symptoms (neuropathy symptom and neuropathy questionnaire scores).
- Significant reduction in brief pain inventory (BPI) and pain interference scores
- 50% of patients rated their health as 'very much better' or 'much better'
- Fasting triglycerides were lower
- There were no adverse events

J International Medical Research  
2018;0:1-12

**WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU:**  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid (ALA) can be an effective treatment for painful diabetic neuropathy and has very few side effects.