
[Article in Hebrew]
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Abstract:
Rheumatologic and autoimmune diseases are among foremost diseases for which patients seek complementary and integrative medicine options. Therefore, physicians should be informed on the advances in research of these therapies, in order to be able to discuss possible indications and contraindications for these treatment modalities with their patients.

This review summarizes several therapeutic modalities of complementary medicine that may be involved in the cholinergic anti-inflammatory pathway. The analysis of systematic reviews of acupuncture for rheumatic conditions has concluded that the evidence is sufficiently sound to warrant positive recommendations of this therapy for osteoarthritis, low back pain and lateral elbow pain.

There is relatively strong evidence to support the use of hypnosis in pain treatment, such as in cases of fibromyalgia. A recent controlled study that evaluated tai-chi in fibromyalgia has reported reductions in pain, improvements in mood, quality of Life, self efficacy and exercise capacity..

There is also cumulative evidence that acupuncture, hypnosis and tai-chi may decrease the high frequency of heart rate variability, suggesting enhancement of vagus nerve activity. Hence, it has been hypothesized that these modalities might impact the cholinergic anti-inflammatory pathway to modulate inflammation.

Further clinical and basic research to confirm this hypothesis should be performed in order to validate integration of these therapies in comprehensive treatment for some inflammatory and autoimmune diseases.

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