

# Acupuncture improves sleep in postmenopause in a randomized double blind placebo controlled study.

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## Abstract

### BACKGROUND:

Insomnia increases in frequency as women approach and pass through menopause. Studies have not shown acupuncture efficacy for insomnia in postmenopausal women.

### OBJECTIVES:

The aim of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of acupuncture therapy on sleep parameters, depression symptoms and quality of life in postmenopausal women with insomnia.

### METHODS:

This study included 18 postmenopausal women aged 50-67 years old. Participants had a body mass index  $\leq 30$  kg/m<sup>2</sup>, presented a diagnosis of insomnia according to the DSM-IV criteria, had experienced at least 1 year of amenorrhea and had a follicle stimulating hormone level  $\geq 30$  mIU/ml. Participants were not using antidepressants, hypnotics or hormonal therapy. This study was randomized, double-blind and placebo-controlled. The sample was divided into two groups: acupuncture and 'sham' acupuncture. We performed ten sessions of acupuncture and 'sham' acupuncture during a period of 5 weeks. A polysomnography exam (PSG) and questionnaires (WHOQOL-BREF, Beck Depression Inventory and Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index) were completed by all patients before and after the treatment period.

### RESULTS:

Anthropometric, polysomnographic, and questionnaire data were similar among the groups at baseline. Comparison of baseline and post-treatment data of the acupuncture group showed that treatment resulted in significantly lower scores on the Pittsburgh Questionnaire and an improvement in psychological WHOQOL. The acupuncture group had a higher percentage of the N3 + 4 stage than the sham group in PSG findings.

### CONCLUSION:

Acupuncture was effective in improving reported sleep quality and quality of life in postmenopausal women with insomnia.

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