

# Effect of acupuncture at tender points for the management of fibromyalgia syndrome: a case series.

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### Abstract

#### BACKGROUND:

Affecting more women than men, fibromyalgia syndrome (FMS) is a rheumatic disorder characterized by chronic, diffuse and widespread musculoskeletal pain, and its pathogenesis is still unknown. Among the recommended treatments, acupuncture (for its analgesic effects) is an effective option for reducing the pain sensitivity and improving quality of life. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate whether acupuncture at tender points could effectively manage FMS.

#### METHODS:

Eight female patients, with a previous diagnosis of fibromyalgia, underwent an initial assessment involving pressure algometer measurements for pain tolerance and questionnaires [Fibromyalgia Impact Questionnaire (FIQ), Health Assessment Questionnaire (HAQ), Beck Depression Inventory (BDI), and Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI)], followed by treatment. Over a 2-month period, acupuncture was performed once per week at five tender points, located bilaterally at the occipital bone, trapezius, rhomboid, upper chest and lateral epicondyle. At the end of treatment, the participants underwent a reassessment for a final review of the applied methods.

#### RESULTS:

We observed a reduction in the pain threshold and sensitivity and improvement in the areas of anxiety and depression and quality of life, which were demonstrated using the FIQ, BDI and BAI but not the HAQ.

#### CONCLUSION:

The results demonstrated the effectiveness of tender-point acupuncture treatment on the patients' overall well-being, not only by improving quality of life, but also by reducing the pain sensitivity of FMS.

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