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# Is Acupuncture Effective in Reducing the Pain Intensity Due to Primary Dysmenorrhea?

Allison Eichenlaub

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, allisonei@pcom.edu

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**Is acupuncture effective in reducing the pain intensity due to  
primary dysmenorrhea?**

Allison Eichenlaub, PA-S

A SELECTIVE EVIDENCE BASED MEDICINE REVIEW

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements For

The Degree Of Master of Science

In

Health Sciences – Physician Assistant

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## Abstract

**OBJECTIVE:** the objective of this selective EBM review is to determine whether or not acupuncture is effective in reducing the pain intensity due to primary dysmenorrhea in women ages 15 to 35.

**STUDY DESIGN:** Review of three randomized control trials (RCTs) written in English, one of which was published in 2011 and two in 2013.

**DATA SOURCES:** Three non-blind randomized control trials published in peer reviewed journals found via PubMed.

**OUTCOME MEASURED:** Pain intensity due to primary dysmenorrhea was measured using visual analog scale (VAS), Cox Menstrual Symptom Scale (CMSS), and Cox Retrospective Symptom Scale (RSS COX2 – average severity ratings).

**RESULTS:** Liu et al. and Ma et al. reported a decrease in pain scores after acupuncture was given. The Kiran et al. study showed a significant improvement in pain intensity with acupuncture, but the results were slightly less significant than that of the group that received NSAIDs, as shown in the p-values.

**CONCLUSION:** All three studies showed that there was a decrease in the severity and intensity of pain caused by primary dysmenorrhea with the use of acupuncture therapy. However, further studies with larger sample sizes that examined a more specific method and location of acupuncture will be needed to strengthen the conclusion that acupuncture is effective in treating dysmenorrhea in women of young, reproductive ages.

**KEY WORDS:** Primary dysmenorrhea, acupuncture