

Acupuncture use in pelvic health – a pilot study

Acupuncture use in complex pelvic pain patients showed benefits in 76% of the pilot group

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Patient cohort:

17 women with ongoing, significant pelvic pain impacting their ability to function and quality of life. The sample included women with pelvic pain in pregnancy, which is a group that has a high referral rate to the physiotherapy service.

Patients were accepted for a course of acupuncture if they had minimal or no change with exercises, lifestyle interventions and physiotherapeutic techniques.

Acupuncture protocol:

Weekly sessions with a physiotherapist trained in acupuncture for pelvic health, for a set number of sessions as long as improvements continued.

Results:

13 of the 17 women treated reported an improvement in their pain score.

The largest change reported was a pre-treatment score of 8/10 and a post-treatment score of 0/10.

Mean pre-treatment pain score (0-10)	Mean post-treatment pain score (0-10)
6.3	4.2

Follow-up questionnaire:

Ten respondents (58.8%)

How effective was the treatment?	
Not effective at all	0
Slightly effective	0
Moderately effective	3
Very effective	6
Extremely effective	1

30% satisfied

70% very satisfied

100% would recommend

“I feel grateful that there was this service available that provided some relief during an extremely difficult and painful pregnancy”

“The overall care was wonderful”

Further studies:

It may be valuable to separate data in a larger trial into women with pregnancy-related pelvic pain and women without. Further research on the optimal length of a treatment session, and optimal number of sessions would also be helpful.