

# Webinar on NATURAL PRODUCTS, CAM THERAPIES, AND TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE

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## Acupuncture as an integrative therapeutic modality in rehabilitation medicine: Utilization and mechanisms

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**Statement of the Problem:** Integrative Medicine (IM) is an individualized, healing-oriented, inter-professional approach to health and preventative care that applies a whole person philosophy, in the promotion of appropriate therapeutic modalities used to support an individual's long-term health. The use of these modalities, particularly acupuncture, is growing in outpatient and inpatient settings. The field of rehabilitation medicine is well served by these modalities since the pathologies addressed are diverse and treatments need to be individualized. There is a gap in understanding the precise acupuncture mechanism of action. However, many mechanisms have been elucidated and its positive effects support its usage and the need to do more clinical research for acupuncture in PM&R. (Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation).

**Methodology & Theoretical Orientation:** A literature review of the state of the art in Acupuncture utilization in outpatient and inpatient settings was conducted at NYU Langone Medical Center between the years 2018-2021. Studies such as "Analyzing the Effect of Acupuncture on Mobility and Quality of Life in Multiple Sclerosis" and "Understanding the Cognitive Benefits of Acupuncture for Stroke Recovery Through fMRI" were performed in the context of a PM&R setting. Mechanistic theories to explain acupuncture effectiveness were also reviewed.

**Findings, Conclusion & Significance:** It is of high importance to understand how a modality like Acupuncture works to be able to take advantage of its full potential. A combination of a mechanistic and a clinical research approach can give us a better context to be able to promote and implement integrative programs in clinical and hospital settings. A thorough understanding of the subject will allow us to extrapolate this highly portable and cost-effective technique to other settings. It is compelling to expand the research efforts in clinical settings beyond the model of PM&RA utilized here.

### Recent Publications:

1. Tramontana, Alfonso & Sorge, Roberto & Labate, Angelo & Paz, Esther & Page, Juan & Siminovich-Blok, Barbara. (2017). Evaluating Integrative Approaches for Fibromyalgia in Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine (PM&R). Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. 98. e65-e66. 10.1016/j.apmr.2017.08.204.
2. H. I. Karpatkin, D. Napolione, B. Siminovich-Blok, Acupuncture and Multiple Sclerosis: A Review of the Evidence. Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine, vol. 2014, Article ID 972935, 9 pages, 2014. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2014/972935>

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