



# Acupressure for painful periods!

**The Study's Title:** A randomized controlled clinical trial evaluating quality of life when using a simple acupressure protocol in women with primary dysmenorrhea

## The Study's Abstract (AKA Synopsis)

### ARTICLE INFO

**Keywords:**  
Dysmenorrhea  
Acupressure  
Quality of life

### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** To evaluate a simple acupressure protocol in LIV3 and LI4 acupoints in women with primary dysmenorrhea.

**Methods:** This paper reports a randomized, single blinded clinical trial. 90 young women with dysmenorrhea were recruited to three groups to receive 20 min acupressure every day in either LIV3 or LI4, or placebo points. Acupressure was timed five days before menstruation for three successive menstrual cycles. On menstruation, each participant completed the Wong Baker faces pain scale, and the quality of life short form - 12 (QOL SF-12).

**Results:** Intensity and duration of pain between the three groups in the second and third cycles during the intervention ( $p < 0.05$ ) differed significantly. Significant differences were seen in all domains of QOL except for mental health ( $p = 0.4$ ), general health ( $p = 0.7$ ) and mental subscale component ( $p = 0.12$ ) in the second cycle, and mental health ( $p = 0.9$ ), and mental subscale component ( $p = 0.14$ ) in the third cycle.

**Conclusion:** Performing the simple acupressure protocol is an effective method to decrease the intensity and duration of dysmenorrhea, and improve the QOL.

Registration ID in IRCT: IRCT2016052428038N1

## The Study's Specifics

According to the study:

\*There's an **88% worldwide prevalence** of primary dysmenorrhea and painful menstruation...aka **painful periods, among young women.**

\*And, approximately **20-25% of women have reported that their menstrual pain is not controlled by taking NSAIDS alone.** (NSAIDS are nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, such as Aspirin, Midol Extended Relief, and Advil).

Acupressure-what is it?

\*Acupressure is pressure or massage to acupoints, which are points typically needled during an acupuncture treatment.



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## The Study's Specifics-Cont.

- This randomized, single blinded clinical trial had 3 groups, 1 was a placebo group (acupressure to a location that wasn't an acupoint-a random point on the foot), LV3 acupoint, and LI4 acupoint.
- The participants of this study were 90 women, between the ages of 18 and 21, and part of the inclusion criteria (criteria to be eligible to participate in the study) included the presence of excess syndrome signs. These include, but are not limited to, **blood clots in menstrual blood, breast swelling, and diffuse pain in the back.**
- The acupressure was **pressure applied 20 minutes, for an average of 5 days (3-7 days) before menstruation.**
- The participants were followed for 3 menstrual cycles. The first cycle was used as a baseline, and it's important to note, that there were not significant differences between the participants at the first menstrual cycle (baseline).
- The 2nd menstrual cycle, the intervention was implemented by the researchers, to ensure participants knew how to properly administer the acupressure.
- The participants then went on to apply acupressure by themselves; the 3rd cycle, acupressure was administered solely by the participants themselves.
- And again, the results: **Pain intensity and pain duration in the placebo group were statistically more than LIV3 and LI4 groups by the second and third cycles.**
- And again, **A significant difference between three groups in all domains of quality of life, except for mental health ( $p = 0.9$ ), and mental subscale component ( $p = 0.14$ ) were observed in the third cycle.**

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### References

1. Bazarganipour F, Taghavi S-A, Allan H, Hosseini N, Khosravi A, Asadi R, et al. A randomized controlled clinical trial evaluating quality of life when using a simple acupressure protocol in women with primary dysmenorrhea. *Complementary Therapies in Medicine*. 2017 Jul 14;34(2017) 10-15.