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**DECEMBER 2010 ISSUE**

## IN THIS ISSUE

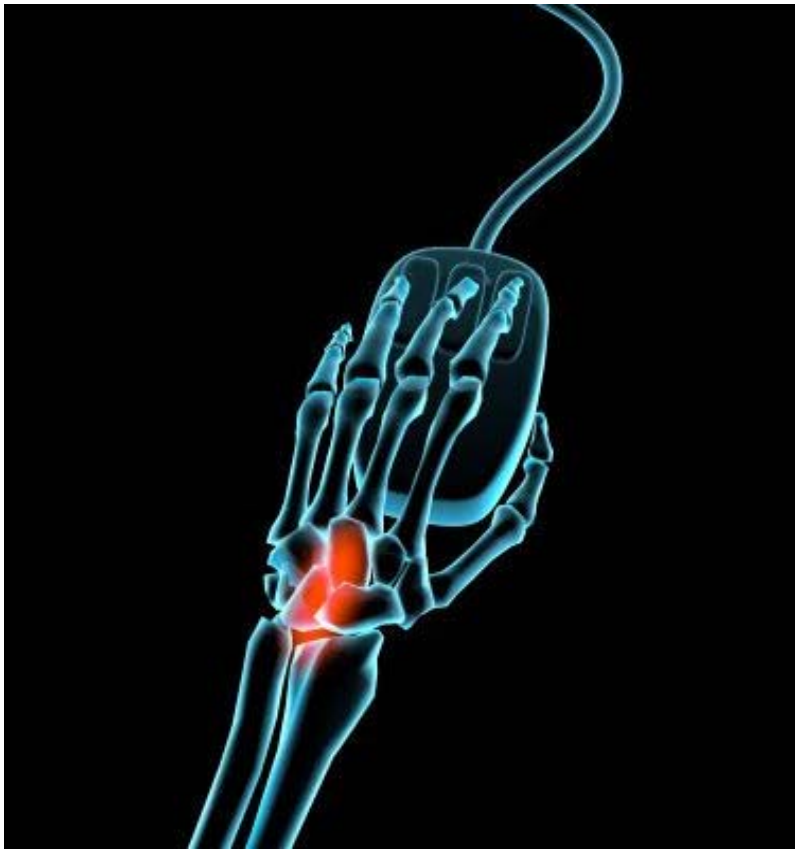


## This month in the news..

Welcome to the December Issue of the Acupuncture.com.au monthly newsletter.

If you wish to contribute a story or article about Acupuncture or Traditional Chinese Medicine please contact the Acupuncture.com.au team through the web.

## 25/11/2010—Acupuncture for Carpal Tunnel Syndrome: A Systematic Review of Randomized controlled trials.



Acupuncture is a widely used symptomatic treatment for carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS). The objective of this systematic review was to evaluate the evidence of the effectiveness of acupuncture and acupuncture-like treatments for CTS. Systematic searches were conducted on 11 electronic databases without language restrictions.

All randomized controlled trials (RCTs) of acupuncture as a treatment of CTS were included. Methodological quality was assessed using the Cochrane risk of bias tool. Six RCTs met our inclusion criteria.

Their methodological quality was generally low. Two RCTs compared the effectiveness of acupuncture with a sham control. The others used active controls. A meta-analysis of acupuncture versus steroid block therapy favored acupuncture (2 studies, n = 144; risk ratio, 1.28; 95% CI, 1.08 to 1.52; P = .005; heterogeneity, I(2) = 10%) in terms of responder rate. Our systematic review and meta-analysis demonstrate that the evidence for acupuncture as a symptomatic therapy of CTS is encouraging but not convincing.

## 25/11/2010—Acupuncture for Carpal Tunnel Syndrome: A Systematic Review of Randomized controlled trials.

The total number of included RCTs and their methodological quality were low.

Further rigorous studies are required to establish whether acupuncture has therapeutic value for this indication.

PERSPECTIVE: This systematic review of RCTs focused on clinical trials testing the effectiveness of acupuncture for CTS. The existing evidence is not convincing enough to suggest that acupuncture is an effective therapy for CTS. Further RCTs should overcome the limitation of previous studies.

**Pubmed ID:** 21093382 / **Country:** South Korea / **Institute:** School of Korean Medicine, Pusan National University, Yangsan, South Korea. / **Author(s):** Sim H, Shin BC, Lee MS, Jung A, Lee H, Ernst E. / **Journal:** J Pain. 2010 Nov 17.

# Events Calendar for December 2010

**04** **Aspley QLD - Dr Igor Simonov Acupuncture Pulse diagnostic seminar**

When: 12.00pm - 05.00pm, Where: Aspley Wellness Centre Shop C 589 Robinson Rd west Cnr Mapellen St

Contact: Igor Simonov on 07 3862 8818 or igorsimonov@yahoo.com

# 28/11/2010—How large are the non-specific effects of Acupuncture? A meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials.

BACKGROUND: While several recent large randomized trials found clinically relevant effects of acupuncture over no treatment or routine care, blinded trials comparing acupuncture to sham interventions often reported only minor or no differences.

This raises the question whether (sham) acupuncture is associated with particularly potent nonspecific effects. We aimed to investigate the size of nonspecific effects associated with acupuncture interventions.

METHODS: MEDLINE, Embase, Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Clinical Trials and reference lists were searched up to April 2010 to identify randomized trials of acupuncture for any condition, including both sham and no acupuncture control groups. Data were extracted by one reviewer and verified by a second. Pooled standardized mean differences were calculated using a random effects model with the inverse variance method.

RESULTS: Thirty-seven trials with a total of 5754 patients met the inclusion criteria. The included studies varied strongly regarding patients, interventions, outcome measures, methodological quality and effect sizes reported. Among the 32 trials reporting a continuous outcome measure, the random effects standardized mean difference between sham acupuncture and no acupuncture groups was -0.45 (95% confidence interval, -0.57, -0.34; I^2 = 54%; Egger's test for funnel plot asymmetry, P = 0.25). Trials with larger effects of sham over no acupuncture reported smaller effects of acupuncture over sham intervention than trials with smaller nonspecific effects (beta = -0.39, P = 0.029).

CONCLUSIONS: Sham acupuncture interventions are often associated with moderately large nonspecific effects which could make it difficult to detect small additional specific effects. Compared to inert placebo interventions, effects associated with sham acupuncture might be larger, which would have considerable implications for the design and interpretation of clinical trials.

**Pubmed ID:** 21092261 **Author(s):** Linde K, Niemann K, Schneider A, Meissner K. / **Journal:** BMC Med. 2010 Nov 23;8(1):75.