

THE EFFICACY OF SIMULTANEOUS USE OF MASSAGE THERAPY
AND ACUPUNCTURE (SUMTA) FOR HAND/WRIST-INJURED
PATIENTS UNDERGOING PAIN MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Background: This study was designed to shed light on an existing problem for patients suffering from acute or chronic pain on their hand or wrist; namely, the unrecognized shortcoming of treatment methods offering only one modality of complimentary care instead of two or more simultaneously, e.g., acupuncture, chiropractic adjustments, massage and physical therapy, in a limited amount of time. Due to the insurance policies, patients are allowed short treatments from one modality at each session, and thus, the effectiveness of a treatment cannot be maximized. Besides such short treatment, traveling to and from multiple locations for various treatments might worsen a patient's pain or consume a patient's time for other needs.

Purpose: This study investigated the efficacy of Simultaneous Use of Massage Therapy and Acupuncture (SUMTA) treatment in the hope of providing beneficial health evidence and information of SUMTA to patients, as well as to doctors, medical centers, and medical insurance companies in order to persuade them to cover the costs of concurrent treatments.

Methods: In this study, a repeated, counterbalanced design, including a pretest, posttest and a follow-up phone survey was adopted. Six patients with an initial pain level of at least 7, on a 0 to 10 pain scale were recruited. Each patient was given a different treatment in each week in a total of three weeks. The pain levels were recorded in the end of each treatment session.

Results: This study demonstrated that SUMTA was more effective than massage therapy and acupuncture alone in treating hand/wrist pain. No side effects were found in this study using SUMTA. Moreover, it presented evidence that SUMTA promoted healing process and reduced the initial pain levels of hand or wrist in patients. The patient's chances for recovery and rehabilitation increased which, as a result, promotes an improved quality of life.