

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of tuina in patients with chronic neck pain - a randomized controlled trial

Summary:

Nonspecific neck pain is a common complaint in the general population. The Chinese massage therapy, tuina, (from tui=push and na=hold), is part of Chinese medicine and increasingly applied in Germany. Tuina is applied to points on the body which are also used for acupuncture. The aim of the trial is to evaluate whether additional tuina therapy is more effective and cost-effective than no additional intervention to usual care in reducing neck pain in patients with chronic neck pain. We plan to include 88 patients with chronic neck pain in this randomized, controlled trial. Participants will be randomized into two groups: 1.) tuina as additional intervention to usual care and 2.) no additional intervention to usual care. Treatment duration for the six treatments in the tuina group will be three weeks (two treatments per week). The primary outcome is the visual analogue scale for pain (VAS, 0-100 mm, 0 = no pain, 100 = worst imaginable pain) measured after 4 weeks. A follow-up measurement will be performed after 12 weeks. Secondary outcomes include medication use, costs, and other parameters which evaluate disability caused by the neck pain. All outcomes will be assessed by questionnaires.

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