



**SEX DIFFERENCES IN DISPOSITIONAL MINDFULNESS AND ITS EFFECT ON  
ACUPUNCTURE TREATMENT OUTCOMES**

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**Background:** In the United States, rates of opioid prescriptions for chronic pain have risen. Rising rates of opioid misuse, dependence, and abuse have prompted research to be conducted on non-pharmacological treatments as opioid alternatives. Women are often prescribed higher doses of opioids at lower pain ratings and progress more quickly to opioid misuse than men.

**Objectives:** This study aimed to improve acupuncture program outcomes for patients who rated their chronic pain as three or greater on a scale of 0-10 for three or more months.

The purpose of this thesis was to investigate whether males and females differ in dispositional mindfulness after receiving an acupuncture treatment with or without a mindfulness intervention.

**Methods:** After the acupuncture treatment, the question “In the last 15 minutes, I was receptive to observing unpleasant thoughts and feelings without interfering with them” was given to assess dispositional mindfulness. Participants were asked to indicate on a scale from 0-10 how applicable the statement was, with a higher score indicating greater dispositional mindfulness.

**Results:** Data were collected from 25 participants (4 males, 14 females, 4 who did not report sex) with a mean age of 57 years. The mean scores for dispositional mindfulness

were 4.75 ( $SD = 2.50$ ) for males and 5.18 ( $SD = 2.79$ ) for females. There was no significant effect for sex ( $p = .78$ ).

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