Acupuncture Used To Treat Chemotherapy-Induced Nerve Damage.

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Patients taking particular chemotherapy drugs, including paclitaxel (Taxol®), are at risk for developing pain, numbness, burning, and/or tingling in their hands and feet. Also called chemotherapy-induced peripheral neuropathy (CIPN), the problem due to nerve damage caused by the drugs.

A small pilot study in Germany has shown that acupuncture can be an effective treatment for this side effect. In the study, 6 patients with CIPN were treated with acupuncture and their nerve function was tested over time. Five of the six treated patients showed improved nerve function. In a comparison group of untreated CIPN patients, only one showed improvement over the same time period. The results indicate that larger studies should be done with acupuncture for CIPN.

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