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## Non-contact healing: Combining the evidence

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Reviews of empirical work on the efficacy of noncontact healing have found that adopting various practices that incorporate an intention to heal can have some positive effect upon the recipient's wellbeing. However, such reviews focus on 'whole' human participants who might be susceptible to expectancy effects or benefit from the healing intentions of friends, family or their own religious groups. We proposed to address this by reviewing healing studies that involved biological systems other than 'whole' humans (e.g., studies of plants or cell cultures) that were less susceptible to placebo-like effects. Secondly, doubts have been cast concerning the legitimacy of some of the work included in previous reviews, so we planned to conduct an updated review that excluded that work. 49 non-whole human studies from 34 papers and 57 whole human studies across 56 papers from both bio-medical and psychological databases conformed to the inclusion/exclusion criteria. Independent measures of study quality were conducted and the results correlated with the effect sizes. Results suggested that subjects in the active condition exhibit a significant improvement in wellbeing compared to control subjects under circumstances that do not seem to be susceptible to placebo and expectancy effects. Findings with the whole human database suggested that the effect is not dependent upon the previous inclusion of suspect studies and was robust enough to accommodate some high profile failures to replicate. Both databases showed problems with heterogeneity and with study quality, recommendations are made for necessary standards for future replication attempts.

## How the growing use of acupuncture for pain relief is bridging the intersection of the drug overdose crisis in the USA on one hand, and on the other, the expansion of the integrated medicine model

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On a trip to West Virginia late last Fall, President Obama underscored reports that: 120 Americans were dying daily from drug overdoses, most of them involving legal prescription drugs; statistics from 2012, showed that enough painkiller prescriptions were written to supply a bottle of them to every American. Recently, the Center for Disease Control noted that 7,000 Americans a day are treated in emergency rooms for drug overdose. In January 2015, in the peer reviewed journal *Practical Pain Management*, Dr. Forest Tennant, MD, DPH wrote an Editorial "Acknowledging the Failure of Standard Pain Treatment", citing the recently published "Lange Medical Diagnosis and Treatment 2015". Shannon Brownlee's book *Overtreated- Why Too Much Medicine is Making Us Sicker and Poorer*, is based on significant research by a Dartmouth Physician looking at how geography influences healthcare in the USA. Contemporaneously, The Bravewell Collaborative published a study in 2012 of the top 38 hospitals in the USA, who were offering integrated care utilizing massage, acupuncture, and chiropractic, in that order of utilization. In a teleconference entitled "Whose running the circus? The optimization of Integrated Medicine", a panel from The Center for Optimal Integration discussed patient-centered care that was effective, efficient (not just in outcomes, but also process), and equitable (Accessible). On a personal note, with the addition of acupuncture at the Pain Clinic of Stroger Hospital, Cook County Health and Hospital System in 2011, the second largest public hospital, treating over 700,000 outpatients a year, has been evolving a model of care that moves from a vertical, silo approach housed in separate departments of specialized care, to a longitudinal model of collaboration, with dynamic interplay between caregivers sharing a common mission along a continuum of caring.