

# Acupuncture

for

Mental Health



# Acupuncture



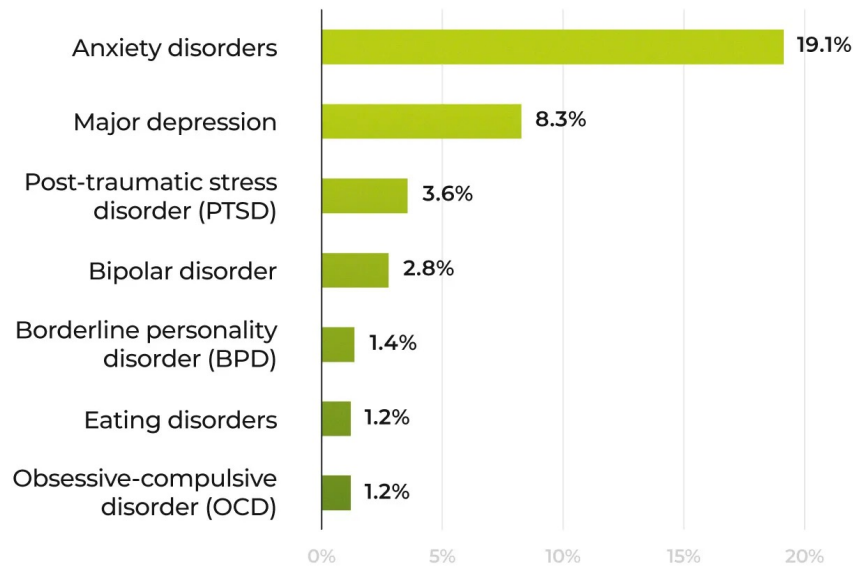
- Minimally invasive<sup>1</sup>.
- Non-pharmacological
- Low-risk, safe<sup>2</sup>.

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- Millenia of continuous use
  - Integrates mind and body
  - Patient centered, holistic

1. <https://www.rochesterregional.org/hub/all-about-acupuncture>  
2. <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0300769>

# Trends in Mental Illness

## The Most Common Forms of Mental Illness



Source: NIH

Data is the prevalence from the past year.

- The COVID effect on mental health lingers: increased incidence of depression and anxiety
- CDC National Center for Health Statistics
  - 12.5% of 18 years and older Americans suffer from anxiety
  - 5% of 18 years and older Americans suffer from depression
- Correlation between mental health issues and drug usage, 2022 National Survey on Drug Use and Health
  - 2022 6% of 18 years and older Americans suffer from serious mental health illness
  - 2022 19.5% adolescents aged 12 -17 had a past year of major depressive episode

# Trends in Mental Illness

- NAMI National Alliance on Mental Illness
  - 1 in 5 U.S. adults experience mental illness each year
  - 1 in 20 U.S. adults experience a **serious** mental illness each year
  - 1 in 6 U.S. youth aged 16-17 experience a mental health disorder each year
  - 50% of all mental illness begins by age 14, and 75% by age 24
  - Suicide in the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death among people ages 10-14
- Mental Health Treatment and Capacity
  - Limited traditional mental health resources
  - Limited insurance coverage for mental health
  - Changing political landscape
  - *Exploration of complementary and alternative avenues*

# Multidimensional Teams and Integration

- Integrative care today, *East into West* in Public Health
  - Communication – electronic messaging and chart sharing
  - Access to health records (EHR)
  - Referrals / Recommendations – electronic, response to urgency
- Mental Health Trends – *Extending the Support Team*
  - Access to care: coverage, capacity, grants
  - Adding in complementary modalities such as Acupuncture, Mindful Breathing
  - Improving outcomes
    - Lessening ER visits
    - Improving the mental outlook
    - Improving social engagement
  - Training the Health Care teams



# Care Settings and Programs Today

In Santa Cruz county, and other counties across the state, millions of patients are receiving acupuncture as part of the care they receive in treatment of mental and emotional health disorders

## Homeless Person's Health Project (HPHP):



- A Federally Qualified Health Center that provides comprehensive primary care services in English and Spanish.
- Part of the Health Centers of the Health Services Agency of Santa Cruz County
- Includes acupuncture treatment as part of a holistic, patient-centered approach to address complex symptoms and conditions of their target patient population
- Provides on-site training for acupuncture students through externship opportunities

<https://www.santacruzhealth.org/HealthCenters/LocationsServices/HPHP.aspx>

# Care Settings and Programs Today

## Santa Cruz Community Health

- Health centers with multiple locations throughout Santa Cruz, providing high quality, affordable, health services that include acupuncture
- Supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration

<https://www.schealthcenters.org/>



## Janus of Santa Cruz

- Treatment center for patients with substance use and abuse disorders that includes acupuncture as part of the services offered
- Operational for over 45 years, currently providing on-site training for acupuncture students through externship opportunities

<https://janussc.org/>



# Care Settings and Programs Today



## Mental Health Client Action Network of Santa Cruz (MHCAN)

- Peer-run organization that provides a variety of services and support specifically focused on patients with mental and emotional health disorders
- Notedly includes acupuncture treatment in a variety settings

<https://www.mhcan.org/mhcan-home.html>

**MHCAN of Santa Cruz**





# Care Settings and Programs Today

## Five Branches University Clinic

- Providing treatment in on and off-site settings that focus on mental and emotional health disorders since 2008.
- On-site clinic currently provides acupuncture treatment and services to low-income and underserved populations, while simultaneously training future generations of acupuncturists
- Medi-Cal benefits allow the vast majority of patients to have access to care



<https://www.fivebranches.edu/>

# Acupuncture Programs Include Training to Address Mental Health



## Postgraduate Professional Training Programs

- Doctor of Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine
- Doctor of Acupuncture
- Doctoral Completion (Master's → Doctorate)
- Doctor of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine

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- California and National licensing

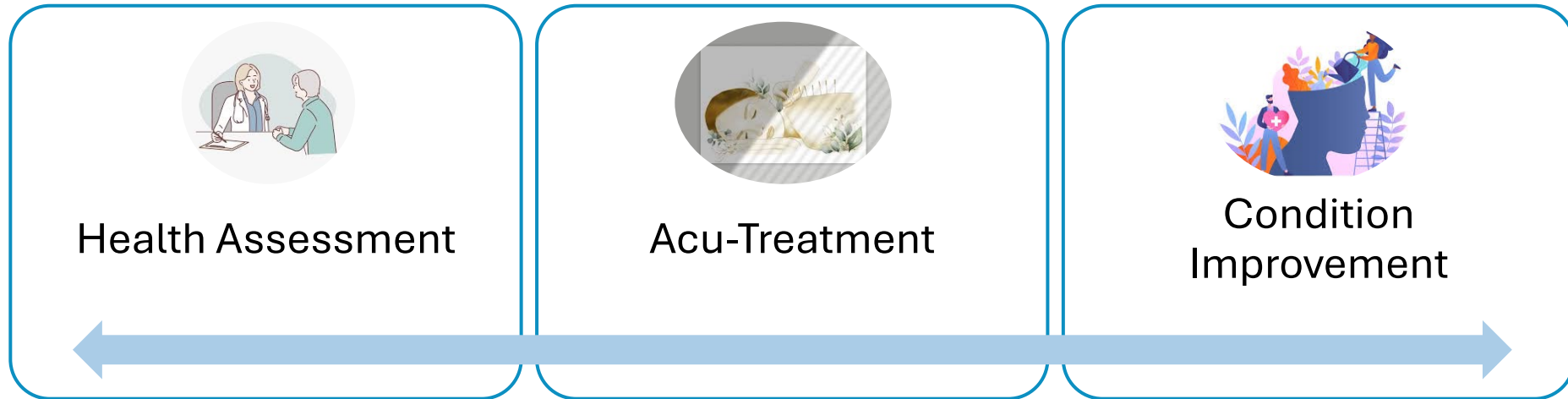
## Mental Health Considerations

- Understanding mental and physical health concerns
- Understanding behavioral health diagnoses
- Understanding the effects of medication
- Understanding herb-drug interaction
- Communication with patient care team

## Multidimensional treatment – care team communication

- Acupuncture
- Herbals/supplements
- Diet / nutrition
- Exercise and movement
- Referrals

# Effects of Acupuncture on Mental Health



- Integration with the health care team
- Herb-drug assessment
- Identifying underlying and causative factors/patterns



- Treatment based on diagnosis & patterns
- Communication to care team/primary
- Herbal therapy (existing medication, diagnoses)



- “I feel so relaxed” (anxiety, stress)
- “The voices are quiet” (schizophrenia)
- Decrease in stress, anxiety, depression
- Ongoing communication with healthcare team
- Improved health outcomes

# Innovation in Mental Health

- Acupuncture can be:
  - Synergistic
  - An integral component of mental health
  - Address underlying conditions
  - In combination with, or as part of, community-based mental health services
- Existing applications of acupuncture for Behavioral Health:
  - Anxiety – very common application
  - Depression and bipolar – very common application
  - Stress – more than very common application
  - Pain is a commonly treated concurrent condition
    - E.g. Santa Cruz homeless clinic – SUD/mental health conditions w/pain, 40% growth in demand over 5 years
- Capacity for mental health support:
  - Wide-spread community of acupuncturists in California
  - Participation in various insurance programs, e.g. Central California Alliance for Health, Blue Shield of California, Aetna, Tricare West

