Acupuncture for headache and migraine: an overview of systematic reviews

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In recent years, several systematic reviews of acupuncture for headache and migraine were published. This article is aimed at providing an overview and critical analysis of these data. We conducted searches in 11 electronic databases without language restrictions. Articles published in 2005 or later were considered if they referred to a systematic review of acupuncture. Data were extracted by two independent reviewers according to pre-defined criteria. Twelve systematic reviews met our inclusion criteria. There were 6 systematic reviews for headache and 6 systematic reviews for migraine. Their conclusions were often contradictory and important caveats emerged. Most of systematic reviews were not positive and we conclude that systematic reviews of acupuncture for these indications fail to show positive evidence. Further rigorous studies are needed to overcome my limitation of previous studies.