

Editorial

## Chess and Acupuncture?

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### Abstract

This editorial briefly describes possible relationships and similarities between chess and acupuncture. Although the methods of chess and acupuncture could not be more different, possible joint effects on the brain can be hypothesized. However, the effectiveness of these joint effects has yet to be proven in scientific studies. Both chess and acupuncture can be used to improve physical and mental well-being. According to the author, the Yintang point could play a key role here.

### Keywords

Chess; acupuncture; Yintang

## 1. Introduction

Chess and acupuncture have very different concepts but can be linked in specific situations to improve physical and mental well-being.



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Chess is a strategic board game that has been played for centuries. Success requires a great deal of focus, planning and patience. Players must keep track of their own and opponent's moves and react quickly to changes. Chess players must also be able to flex their thinking in order to create new strategies and tactics to defeat their opponents [1].

Acupuncture is an ancient Chinese healing technique that uses thin needles to be inserted into specific points on the body to regulate the flow of blood and energy and restore balance to the body. The needles dissolve blockages, stimulate the immune system and promote relaxation [2].

Both chess and acupuncture can look back on centuries-old traditions. Chess has a long history dating back to the 6<sup>th</sup> century, while acupuncture plays a central role in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) and has been practiced for centuries [1-3].

## 2. Methods

Although chess and acupuncture do not seem to have much in common at first glance, they can help improve cognitive skills and well-being. Studies have shown that chess players exhibit greater mental flexibility and creativity than non-players [4]. They also have a better memory and can make decisions faster.

Acupuncture has proven to effectively treat pain, depression, anxiety, and other disorders. The needles relieve tension and relieve stress, leading to an overall improvement in well-being (Figure 1) [2].



**Figure 1** Chess and ancient acupuncture needles (© G. Litscher).

## 3. Possible Results and Discussion

The acupoint Yintang (EX-HN 3) is between the eyebrows [5-7]. It is known to have a mentally stabilizing effect in TCM [8, 9]. In a systematic review of the effects of acupressure on anxiety, acupuncture and acupressure showed promising results for anxiety relief. EX-HN 3 was one of the most commonly used acupoints [8, 9]. Yintang is used to improve mental clarity, concentration and cognitive function, soothe emotions and relieve stress, anxiety and agitation [5-9].

When combined, chess and acupuncture may have a synergistic effect that yields even better results (Figure 1). Players who regularly play chess and receive acupuncture treatments can improve their focus and cognitive flexibility while lowering their stress levels. This maybe can result in better overall chess performance and an improvement in overall well-being. However, scientific studies on this topic are still missing.

#### **4. Conclusions**

Chess and acupuncture can be used as tools to improve physical and mental well-being. By combining their strengths, they can help achieve higher levels of focus, creativity, and relaxation, resulting in a healthier lifestyle.

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#### **Author Contributions**

The author did all the research work of this study.

#### **Competing Interests**

The author hereby declares that no conflict of interests exists in connection with the publication of this article.

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