

## Whalen Abstract

**Background:** The acupressure point Governor 26 has been used anecdotally by athletic trainers and others to release muscle tension. There currently is no evidence based literature for this specific acupressure point, Governor 26, but there is evidence in the literature that supports the use of various acupressure points for the reduction of pain. The goal of this study aims to provide scientific evidence to support the anecdote and to add to the validity of acupressure in today's medical resources. This specific study investigates the question of Governor 26 and its use for releasing muscle tension in the hamstring muscles of healthy participants.

**Methods:** This study will be completed in order to fill a void in the evidence for acupressure. Currently there is no researched theories to support this study. The effects of acupressure have been demonstrated successfully for many years in various physical therapy classes at Ithaca College. One of these demonstrated acupressure points, Governor 26, has been used to effectively release muscle tension and muscle cramping. This study plans to examine the effects of this acupressure point on hamstring flexibility. This study will be supervised by a physical therapy professor that has a vast knowledge of acupressure and other Traditional Chinese Medicine techniques and will be performed in the spring semester of 2017. The researchers will be measuring hamstring flexibility with the sit and reach test. The sit and reach test has been strongly supported in the evidence to be a valid and reliable measure of hamstring flexibility.<sup>1</sup> The best of three measurements will be recorded for the participant. There will be a baseline and a post treatment measurement documented. The control group will be administered a sham acupressure point to the earlobe. The experimental group will be administered Governor 26 acupressure point to the upper lip. Both acupressure points will be administered by the same researcher for twenty seconds and about 2-5 kg of force applied with the thumb and index finger.

**Results:** The hypothesis of this study is that applying pressure to the acupressure point Governor 26 will improve hamstring flexibility as measured by the sit and reach test. The study should show that this acupressure point, Governor 26, could be utilized in a healthy population between the ages of 18-24 to decrease hamstring muscle tension.

**Discussion:** Traditional Chinese Medical techniques are becoming increasingly prevalent in the western medical system. Anecdotally, health professionals have used acupressure in western clinics and athletic arenas. In order for physical therapists to utilize Traditional Chinese Medicine in their clinical practice evidence is required to support its use. This study aims to demonstrate the statistical significance of acupressure. The results of this study will add to the evidence based practice of the physical therapy profession. Acupressure is a non invasive treatment that individuals can administer on their own once properly instructed, without the use of additional equipment or extensive education. This safe and efficient technique can easily be incorporated with no additional consumer cost. Acupressure should be a valid treatment option for the physical therapists metaphorical tool box.

**Works Cited:**

1. Ayala F, Sainz de Baranda P, De Ste Croix M, Santonja F. Reproducibility and criterion-related validity of the sit and reach test and toe touch test for estimating hamstring flexibility in recreationally active young adults. *Phys Ther Sport*. 2012, 13(4): 219-226.