

AHCI Grand Rounds

Title: AHCI Grand Rounds Recorded 06-17-2026: Acupuncture

Recorded Date: June 17, 2026

Faculty:

Matthew Peterson, L.Ac.

Acupuncturist

Allina Health

OVERVIEW/PURPOSE STATEMENT:

AHCI Grand Rounds presentation 6/17/2026. Expires 6/16/2027. Duration = 58 minutes.

Matthew Peterson, M.OM., Dipl. OM, L.Ac., describes acupuncture as an evidence-informed, low-risk integrative modality that can be incorporated across the oncology care continuum to improve symptom control and quality of life for patients with cancer. He outlines its dual mechanistic framework, including local effects such as activation of peripheral nociceptors, modulation of connective tissue, and reduction of inflammatory mediators, as well as central nervous system effects involving endogenous opioid release and neurochemical signaling along spinal and hypothalamic-pituitary pathways. He explains how acupuncture restores physiologic balance (homeostasis) by regulating functional patterns described as qi and blood, enabling individualized, symptom-based treatment strategies from a traditional East Asian medicine perspective. He covers that safety is well established with standardized clean needle techniques, with most adverse events being minor and rare serious complications when performed by trained clinicians; oncology-specific precautions include assessment of hematologic status, treatment timing relative to chemotherapy, and avoidance of compromised tissues. He details how evidence from randomized trials, meta-analyses, and ASCO Society for Integrative Oncology guidelines supports acupuncture for cancer-related symptoms such as pain, aromatase inhibitor induced arthralgias, neuropathy, nausea, fatigue, vasomotor symptoms, xerostomia, and psychological distress, while implementation models and clinical practice emphasize individualized treatment plans, multidisciplinary coordination, and awareness of referral pathways and insurance considerations to expand access to integrative oncology care.

OVERALL OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this activity, the participants should better be able to:

- 1 Describe the dual framework understanding of acupuncture, including both traditional East Asian medicine concepts (e.g., qi, yin yang, functional pattern diagnosis) and modern biomedical mechanisms (e.g., nociceptor stimulation, endogenous opioid release, neuroimmune modulation).
- 2 Explain the proposed mechanisms of action of acupuncture, distinguishing local tissue effects (connective tissue signaling, neurotransmitter modulation) from central nervous system responses (hypothalamic pituitary axis activation, endorphin and endocannabinoid release).
- 3 Evaluate the clinical evidence supporting acupuncture in oncology care, including its role in managing cancer and treatment related symptoms such as pain, aromatase inhibitor induced arthralgias, chemotherapy induced peripheral neuropathy, nausea, fatigue, and vasomotor symptoms.
- 4 Identify appropriate patient selection, safety considerations, and contraindications for acupuncture in oncology populations, including assessment of hematologic parameters, treatment timing, infection risk, lymphedema precautions, and coordination with multidisciplinary care teams.

Office of Accreditation

Continuing Medical Education (CME)



5 Integrate acupuncture into an evidenceinformed, multidisciplinary oncology care model, including understanding referral pathways, treatment planning, and practical considerations such as insurance coverage, documentation, and its role within integrative oncology frameworks.

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Name of individual	Individual's role in activity	Nature of Relationship(s) / Name of Ineligible Company(s)
Elizabeth Loach, MSN, APRN, CNS, AGCNS-BC, OCN	Nurse Planner	Nothing to disclose - 06/09/2026
Matthew Peterson, L.Ac.	Faculty	Nothing to disclose - 05/07/2026
Kerry K Sherry, BSN, Cancer Conference and Clinical Program Mgr.	Activity Coordinator	Nothing to disclose - 11/06/2025

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