



For Immediate Release:

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Acupuncture Walk Educates Community on Alternative to Pain Medications

Association hopes event motivates insurers to cover alternative medicine

Raleigh, NC – It is estimated that 2.1 million Americans are addicted to painkillers. Keith Davis was taking up to 30 pills a day to treat chronic back pain that resulted from a Humvee accident in the army. Worried he would become another statistic, he asked his doctor for an alternative.

"I started going to acupuncture once a week nearly two years ago and it has made a tremendous difference," said Davis, who is 52 and lives in Durham. "Prior to starting acupuncture treatment, I was going to the pain clinic and the emergency room every three months because the medication wasn't working. Being in constant pain was also affecting my mental health. I would go to the grocery store late at night to avoid standing in a long line, as I feared my back would go out. I would always bring my cane. I had trouble sleeping and sometimes had to ask for help to take a shower. Now that I go to acupuncture, I have dramatically reduced my medication intake. I don't walk with a cane. My whole outlook has improved because I feel more independent."

In an effort to increase awareness about the benefits of acupuncture, the [North Carolina Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine](#) (NCAAOM) is hosting its first [5K walk on Saturday, Oct 29, at 8:30 a.m. at the NC Legislative Office Building in Raleigh](#). NCAAOM Executive Director Denise Graham said the goal of the walk is twofold – educating the public about acupuncture as an alternative to prescription medications and advocating for coverage of acupuncture by private insurers.

"Acupuncture is an alternate option for managing pain and this treatment will not fuel the opioid crisis," said Graham. "We also really want insurers to recognize the power of this profession. The tagline for our walk is 'Acupuncture: The Best Answer for Pain!' We stand by this statement and we will have patient ambassadors on hand to share how acupuncture has improved their health."

One of those patient ambassadors is Teresa Gault. She moved to North Carolina from Nebraska and hesitated buying a property that required any lawn maintenance due to her debilitating battle with fibromyalgia. Gault took a minimum of five painkillers a day for more than 15 years before she pleaded with her doctor for an alternative.

“I’ve been going to acupuncture for a year now and it has changed my whole world,” said Gault, who is 51 and lives in Mebane. “I was always in pain when my two kids were growing up and that caused me to miss a lot of activities with them. But since starting acupuncture, I’ve been able to keep up with my five grandchildren and even help my husband with the yard work. Acupuncture has given me my life back.”

Click [here to watch a video](#) comparing acupuncture and prescription painkillers for treatment of chronic back pain. Register for the walk, learn more about the NCAAOM and locate an acupuncturist at ncaaom.org.

About the North Carolina Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine

Our mission is to promote the highest standards of professional practice for Acupuncture and East Asian Medicine in North Carolina. The Association provides its members, the public, and policymakers, resources for ensuring the preservation and advancement of the art, science, and practice of East Asian Medicine.

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