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Theresa D Hernandez & Birgitta Johansson

University of Colorado, USA

Gothenburg University, Sweden

Complementary and alternative medicine-based interventions for traumatic brain injury: Translating research (basic and clinical) into evidence-based practice

Objective: Presentation of current challenges and opportunities associated with CAM (complementary and alternative medicine) research and clinical applications in Civilian, Veteran and Military Service populations in the U.S. and Europe. Following a brief overview of CAM, there will be a discussion of translational capacity from basic to clinical research to clinical practice, as well as how to develop an adoptable evidence base, with proof of effectiveness. Methodological and ethical challenges associated with CAM research in those with traumatic brain injury and co-morbidities will also be described in terms of how these challenges relate to practice and policy issues, as well as implementation and dissemination. CAM modalities to be covered will include acupuncture and mindfulness-based stress reduction with an emphasis on lessons learned from the laboratory and the clinic.

Biography

Theresa D Hernandez, Ph.D. has been studying traumatic brain injury (TBI) using basic and clinical neuroscience models since 1985. Her ongoing, extramurally funded research program assesses the degree to which recovery and functional outcome after TBI can be optimized in a variety of populations (Veterans, civilians, athletes). This includes conducting randomized, placebo-controlled, blinded trials of novel interventions, such as acupuncture. This work is accomplished through her appointment as Professor and Chair of the Department of Psychology & Neuroscience at CU Boulder, her appointment as a Senior Investigator and Research Psychologist in the Eastern Colorado Healthcare System, Rocky Mountain MIRECC (Mental Illness, Research, Education & Clinical Center) and through her role as one of the co-Directors of the PAPRR (Promoting Athlete Performance, Recovery and Resilience) Board at CU Boulder. She is also the Director of the CAIRR (Clinical Assessment of Injury, Recovery and Resilience) Neuroscience Laboratory.

theresa.hernandez@colorado.edu, birgitta.johansson2@vgregion.se