The Evidence

High-quality evidence supports the use of acupuncture to reduce osteoarthritic knee pain, this is also backed by NHS evidence summaries and SIGN guidelines (2013).

One study found that acupuncture with optimal doses in an intensive 2–4 week treatment regime resulted in short-term pain relief for osteoarthritis (OA) of the knee (Bjordal et al. 2007).

Sham controlled randomised controlled trials (RCTs) suggest that acupuncture may reduce pain in patients with peripheral OA, and that it could be considered for patients with OA of the knee (Kwon et al. 2006).

A high-quality systematic review found evidence to suggest that acupuncture could be considered to be one of the more effective physical treatments for alleviating osteoarthritic knee pain in the short term (Corbett et al. 2013 (NHS Economic Database)).

Evidence supports that acupuncture in conjunction with advice and exercise, administered by a physiotherapist, is cost-effective. This will especially be the case when it is delivered as part of an already proven, cost-effective physiotherapy treatment plan.
References


For further information about the effectiveness of acupuncture, and to find your local AACP Physiotherapists, visit:

www.aacp.org.uk