

# Creating Calm in the Storm:

## An Innovative Approach to Integrating Complementary Therapies into Patient Care

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*Seeking to improve symptom management and increase patient satisfaction through the integration of acupressure and Reiki into traditional nursing interventions.*

### BACKGROUND

- During hospitalization patients experience a myriad of physical, psychological and environmental stressors which can impede the healing process.
- Many complementary therapies, including **acupressure** and **Reiki**, have demonstrated success in managing pain, stress, and anxiety, thus helping to create calm in the chaos, promote healing, and improve patient comfort and satisfaction.

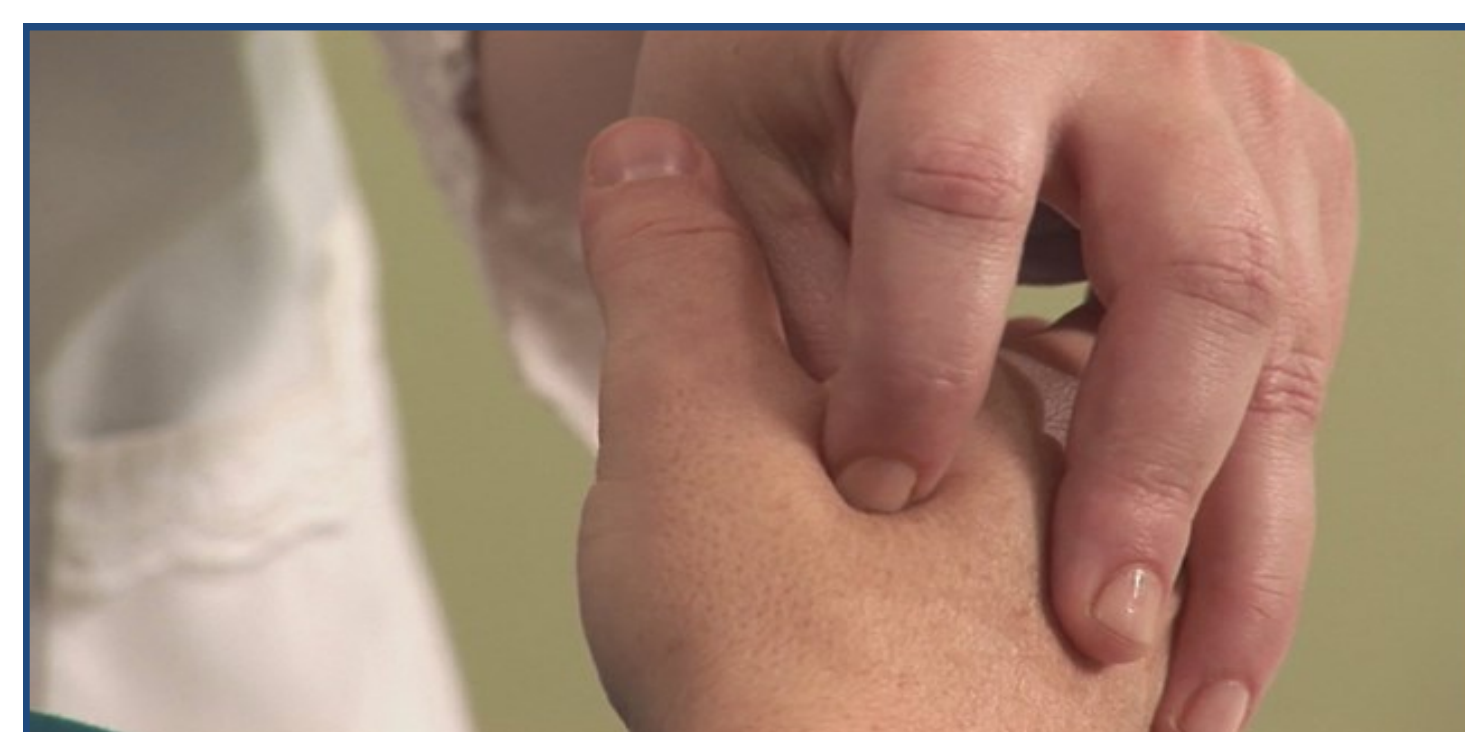
### REIKI

- A type of bio-energetic therapy using the hands on or near the body.
- Promotes stress reduction and relaxation response.

### ACUPRESSURE

- Applying pressure to specific points or series of points on the body using finger pressure.
- Pressure may be applied by health care providers or patients themselves.

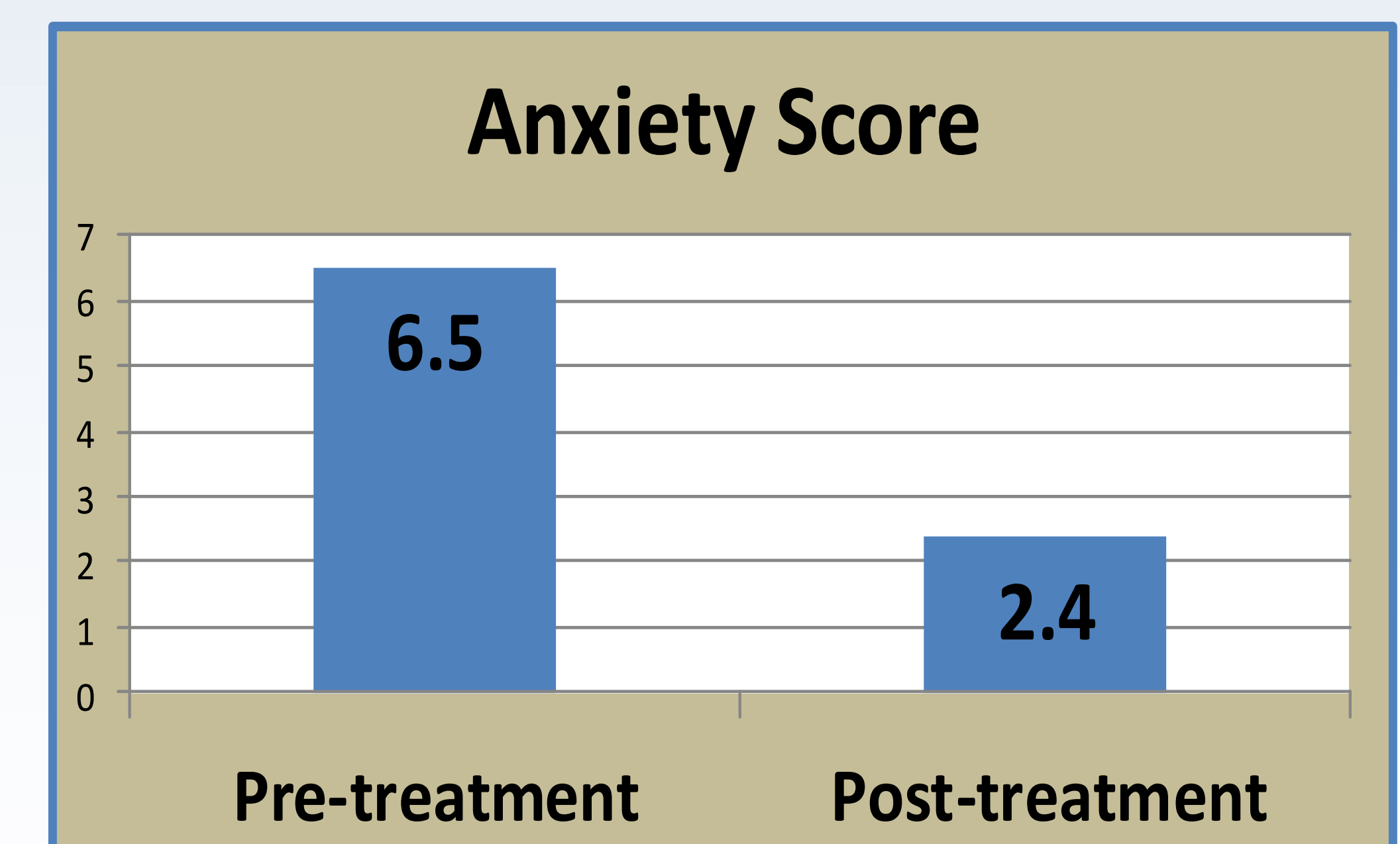
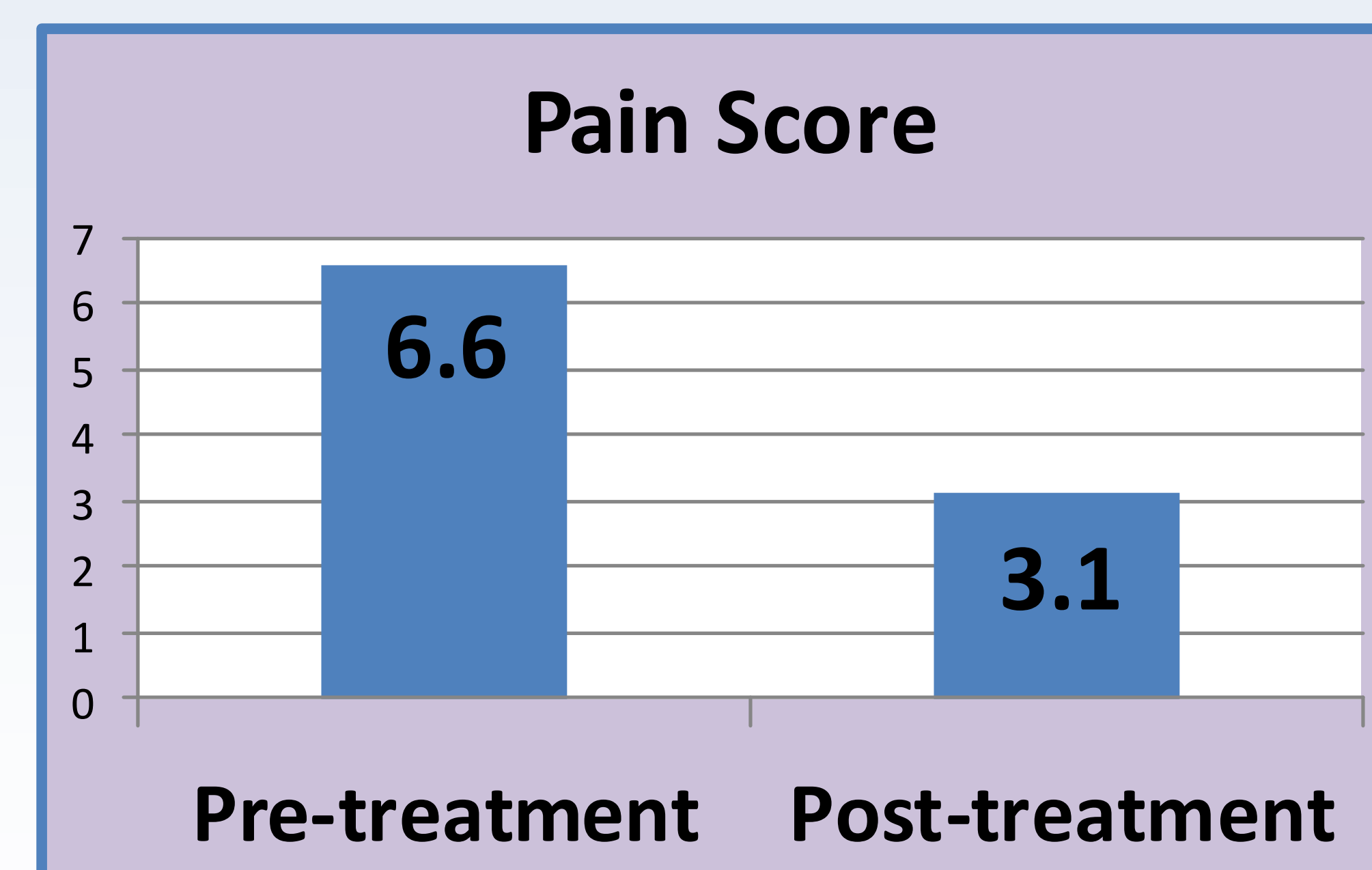
**Hoku (LI 4):**  
*Useful for treating  
pain and anxiety*



### PROJECT DESCRIPTION/METHODS

- Nurses trained in acupressure and Reiki working on a 39-bed progressive care unit participated in this study.
- These nurses offered acupressure and/or Reiki to **110 patients** as patient condition warranted and nurse time allowed.
- Pre- and post-treatment pain and anxiety levels were assessed separately using 0-10 scales where 0 = no anxiety or pain and 10 = worst anxiety or pain.
- Relief of other symptoms such as nausea and sleep deprivation was assessed as appropriate.
- Patient satisfaction was measured using a 0-10 scale, 10 being most satisfied.

### RESULTS



- Patients and families also reported other benefits including:
  - Improved sleep
  - Resolution of or decreased nausea
  - Decreased confusion and agitation
- **Average patient satisfaction rating 9.4 on a 0-10 scale**
- Average length of treatment: 18 minutes



*“I can definitely state that the most relaxed, comfortable, and pain free I was during my stay in the hospital was immediately during and after those acupressure sessions...”*

**- Steve A., Cardiovascular Surgery Patient**

### IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

- Incorporating acupressure and Reiki into patient care of this sampling demonstrated a measurable decrease in pain, anxiety and other symptoms with a high degree of patient satisfaction.
- Integration of complementary therapies into nursing practice expands possibilities for healing interventions and contributes to greater nurse job satisfaction.
- Complementary therapies such as acupressure and Reiki are well-received and give patients more choice in treatment options.
- Future research with bedside application of complementary therapies is needed to identify reduction in total healthcare costs, medication use, and adverse effects.