

# Acupressure treatment in Refugee camps

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## Abstract

**Background:** Asylum seekers often experience high levels of psychosocial stress and trauma, predisposing them to psychosomatic symptoms such as sleep disturbances and psychogenic pain. Conventional psychopharmacotherapy, while beneficial, may not fully address these complex, stress-related conditions.

**Objective:** This study aimed to evaluate the effect of auricular acupressure using gold beads on the *Shen Men* point and the five acupoints of the NADA protocol as an adjunctive therapy to standard psychiatric care among asylum seekers in six camps in the Canton of Solothurn, Switzerland.

**Methods:** Participants received weekly auricular acupressure sessions, applied voluntarily under supervision, in addition to their ongoing psychopharmacological treatment. The intervention involved the placement of gold-plated acupressure pellets on the designated points. Outcomes were assessed using standardized measures of sleep quality, self-reported pain, and overall psychosocial well-being over a structured follow-up period.

**Results:** Participants demonstrated improved sleep quality, reduced psychogenic pain, and enhanced subjective well-being compared with baseline measurements. Many asylum seekers reported feeling calmer, more resilient, and better able to cope with stress. The addition of auricular acupressure appeared both feasible and well-accepted within this population.

**Conclusion:** Auricular acupressure at *Shen Men* and NADA protocol points may serve as a valuable complementary approach to conventional psychiatric treatment for trauma-affected asylum seekers. Integrating such low-cost, patient-centered interventions in refugee care settings may enhance overall treatment outcomes and improve quality of life.