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Clinical trial

### Self-efficacy and self-care-related outcomes following Alexander Technique lessons for people with chronic neck pain in the ATLAS randomised, controlled trial [★](#)

Author links open overlay panel [JuliaWoodman<sup>ab</sup>](#) [KathleenBallard<sup>a</sup>](#) [CatherineHewitt<sup>b</sup>](#) [HughMacPherson<sup>b</sup>](#)  
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#### Abstract

##### Introduction

ATLAS was a pragmatic randomised (1:1:1 ratio), controlled trial recruiting patients with chronic [neck pain](#) (N = 517) and evaluating one-to-one [Alexander Technique](#) lessons, or [acupuncture](#), each plus usual care, compared with usual care alone. The primary outcome (12-month Northwick Park Neck Pain Questionnaire [NPQ]) demonstrated significant and clinically meaningful reductions in neck pain and associated disability for both interventions compared with usual care alone. Here we describe

pre-specified, self-efficacy and other self-care-related outcomes for the Alexander group compared with usual care.

## Methods

Participants reported on 11 self-efficacy/self-care-related outcome measures at 6 and 12 months. Linear or logistic regression models evaluated changes in parameters and impact on NPQ. Alexander teachers reported on lesson content.

## Results

Lesson content reflected standard UK practice. The Alexander group (n = 172) reported significantly greater improvements, compared with usual care alone (n = 172), in most of the self-efficacy/self-care measures (9/11 measures at 6 months, and 8/11 at 12 months), including the ability to reduce pain in daily life. At 6 months, 81% (106/131) of Alexander participants reported significant improvement in the way they lived and cared for themselves (versus 23% for usual care), increasing to 87% (117/135) at 12 months (usual care: 25%). NPQ scores at both 6 and 12 months were related to improvement in self-efficacy and ability to reduce pain during daily life.

## Conclusions

Alexander Technique lessons led to long-term improvements in the way participants lived their daily lives and managed their neck pain. Alexander lessons promote self-efficacy and self-care, with consequent reductions in chronic neck pain.

## Abbreviations

NPQ

Northwick Park Neck Pain Questionnaire

SF-12

short-form quality of life survey