

Acupuncture For Cynics

don't be scared
to be healed



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"Acupuncture has become white bread in American society. It's no longer something that's very unusual. It's something patients expect their physicians to be able to provide or refer to." Dr. Joseph Helms, UCLA Medical Center

Introduction to Acupuncture

Most of us have heard of acupuncture, but the truth of the matter is that for many of us, that's as far as our knowledge of acupuncture goes. But it goes way beyond just relieving pain...it can remedy your digestive problems, PMS, hot flashes, fibromyalgia, insomnia, depression and much more.

But the very idea of needles perhaps sounds painful. However, this is not really the case. When most people think of needles they conjure up the image of hypodermic needles. These are hollow core needles that inject fluids into the body. The truth is, you could fit 10 acupuncture needles inside on one of these. Think about the thickness of a human hair. That's how thin acupuncture needles are.

Traditional Chinese medicine is a whole health care system that includes acupuncture, Chinese herbs, food therapy, exercise and meditation. If you look at an Acupuncture chart or an acupuncture model you'll notice it has all these lines running head to toe, front and back. Thousands of years ago, practitioners of Chinese medicine mapped out a series of pathways within the body called meridians.

The meridian pathways travel throughout your entire body from front to back, connecting to every organ. If you look at an acupuncture chart, all of the little dots on the meridian lines are acupuncture points. They have certain effects upon your body and mind when stimulated. Together, these pathways, points and your organs, form what we call your Meridian/Organ network.

Within the Meridian/Organ network flows the essential energy called Qi. (pronounced "chee"). Qi is the spark of life that animates and moves your body. It's a substance that provides energy, nourishment, and support for every cell, tissue, muscle, organ, and gland. It supports digestion and allows us to think.

Qi (also spelled Chi) travels through the body in precise and predictable ways, from one organ system to the other, providing nourishment for your body and mind to function and work optimally. Now imagine a river. Rivers travel throughout our entire planet carrying water that provides nourishment to all plants, animals, and people. What do you think would happen without that water?

Meridians are like great rivers flowing inside each of us. As said earlier, Qi flows within these pathways, activating, enlivening and vitalizing your entire being while providing the power to accomplish everyday activities. What do you think would happen if a dam were placed over one of these areas?

Well, the flow of Qi would be restricted and blocked. That means that everything downstream will not receive proper support and nourishment required to keep your body and mind healthy. Can you see that? If Qi becomes restricted or blocked, an imbalance will occur. Eventually, your health and well-being will be compromised.

Now here's the important part. When a particular meridian is blocked and out-of-balance, a variety of symptoms and signs will appear. For instance, when the Lung meridian is out-of-balance and not receiving adequate Qi to nourish it, some of the symptoms that may be allergies, colds, flu, skin problems or immune deficiency. Or when the Spleen Meridian is out-of-balance and not receiving adequate Qi to nourish it, some of the symptoms that may appear might be digestive problems, bloating, fatigue, or diarrhea.

So, the goal in our [clinic](#) is to discover where the restriction or blockage is.

Compare these meridians to a garden hose that nourishes plants. When the water is flowing evenly inside the hose the plants are lush, healthy and beautiful. But what would a kink in a hose do? It keeps the water or nutrition from flowing to the plant and the plant will eventually die. A "kink" in the energy flow of a meridian will prevent optimal nutrition and information from flowing to that area of your body. Eventually that will create problems

As a Licensed Acupuncturist, I can detect and correct the kinks or blockages in the flow of your Qi, so vital life energy can flow. Once located, we can use specific points to un-kink and restore the proper flow of Qi, so that your cells, muscles, tissues and organs can receive vital energy with which to function correctly.

So, my goal in this clinic is to discover where Qi has become restricted, blocked, and out-of-balance. Once we uncover this problem, we will then use certain methods to remove the blockage, uncover the root cause of your problem(s) and facilitate the free flow of Qi.

Once this is accomplished, your body now has the capacity to return to a state of balance, and ultimately health and well-being. I am here to help you move from a place of pain and discomfort to a place of health and well-being. How does that sound?

Chi is the life force of the universe. In your body, it is the 'chi' that creates and animates life. We are all born with a certain amount of chi and continually acquire it throughout our lives through food, air, water and sunlight. Chi moves through your body in these channels called meridians. The quantity and quality of chi in your body depends on the state of your mental and physical balance.

There are twelve main meridians or channels through which chi – our vital life energy – can travel in our body, eight extra meridians and over 2000 acupuncture points or acupoints which connect these meridians. The practice of acupuncture unblocks these chi pathways, thus moving people from a place of pain and suffering to health and well being – physically, mentally and emotionally.

Acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine treatments are custom tailored and modified to suit each person. So, we might have 3 different patients with stomach pain and each might receive a different diagnosis as well as a different treatment to give them the best treatment results.

Traditional Chinese medicine is a complete healthcare system that is capable of providing both specialized and primary healthcare. It also gives us guidelines on how to prevent illnesses.

Traditional Chinese medicine was deeply influenced by Taoism. The main focus of Taoism is the natural laws of the universe and our relationship to the universe.

Some of the basic principles of Taoism are listed below. They can be understood in terms of their applications to health and healing:

- Basic laws of nature govern our universe. We are a part of this universe and we must exist within that framework and abide by these laws to be healthy.
- In its natural order, the universe is perfectly harmonious and perfectly organized. If humans live according to the laws of the universe, they will also be in harmony.
- Change is the only constant. Our universe is dynamic. If we do not change ourselves in line with the universe, disharmony will prevail. It is this disharmony that will cause sickness or illness of the mind and body.

- All life is interconnected and interdependent. To ensure overall well being we need to consider the whole before the parts. When curing an illness or sickness we must adopt a systems approach, that is, look at the body as a whole rather than as parts.
- We are a part of the universe. We are not independent of our universe. In fact, we have an intimate connection with our environment and universe. Therefore, our physical, mental and emotional health is affected by our environment and external factors.

Acupuncture originated in China more than 2000 years ago – making it one of the oldest and most commonly practiced medical procedures in the world. Research into acupuncture is still ongoing and practices and theories are being constantly updated.

Acupuncture is aimed at promoting well being and alleviating pain. The method may seem alien to many of us but it has been practiced in China and beyond for thousands of years and continues to be validated by scientists today.

Acupuncture is now practiced the world over to benefit of people of all races, ages and ailments.

What Are The Benefits Of Acupuncture?

Acupuncture Stimulates:

- * Endorphins and other neurotransmitters to control pain
- * Leukocytes to fight infection and boost immune response
- * Prostaglandins to reduce inflammation and swelling to prevent tissue damage
- * Nerve conduction to regenerate healthy tissue and restore muscle tone
- * Quicker recovery from soft tissue injury, surgery, or fracture
- * Homeostatic normalization and regulation of all body functions

Other Benefits:

- * Regulates hypo or hyper conditions
- * Reduces allergic reactions and helps decongest sinuses
- * Relieves most types of headache
- * Reduces TMJ pain and toothache

- * Normalizes bowel function
- * Benefits eyes, ears and brain function
- * Reduces stress and promotes a sense of comfort and well being
- * Helps relieve depression
- * Promotes restful sleep
- * Balances female hormones to normalize cycle and reduce PMS, perimenopause or menopausal symptoms.

Origins and History

Conceptual Development

Acupuncture is more than just a remedy. It is both a science and an art, one that has been thousands of years in the making. Acupuncture is an ancient form of healing that pre-dates written history. It is rooted in a Taoist philosophy more than 6000 years old.

Legendary Chinese sage, Fu Xie, observed nature – particularly the flow of energy within one's self and beyond. He also saw the connection between the human body and the universe at large. He created the first two symbols – that of a broken line, and an unbroken line. They represent the two major forces in nature – creation and reception.

This was, in fact, the basis of the principle of duality or Yin and Yang.

The Practice of Acupuncture

The development of acupuncture as we know it started between the years 3045-204BC in the Chinese medical manual called Nei-Jing - The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine.

The first part of this manual describes anatomy, physiology, various syndromes, the yin and the yang, the five elements, treatments and man's relationship with nature.

The second part of the manual is all about acupuncture, including descriptions of the meridians (the pathways of vital energy in the body), the functions of the organs, the functions of acupuncture points, types of needles, types of chi and much more.

Between AD 260 and 265, the physician Huang Fu Mi organized much of the ancient Chinese medical texts into one comprehensive manual, which he called The Systematic Classics of Acupuncture and

Moxibustion. Over the years, acupuncture texts continued to be revised and updated.

In the 20th century – in 1950 to be precise – Chairman Mao moved to a combination of traditional Chinese medicine and Western medicine. Acupuncture was now being offered in hospitals across China.

Acupuncture research continued apace during the 1950s and 1960s with further research into ancient texts, acupuncture anesthesia and acupuncture's effect on internal organs.

To the present day, acupuncture plays a crucial role in the medical system of China. China is at the forefront of researching all important aspects and applications of acupuncture and its effects. Acupuncture has become modernized, yet it is still deeply tied to the ancient philosophy of nature, balance and well-being.

The Basics of Chinese Medicine

The wisdom of traditional Chinese medicine observes the relationship between our mind, body and spirit.

Keeping this in mind, it is a 'holistic' approach that promotes healing on multiple levels. So it is accurate to say that traditional Chinese medicine focuses on holistic healing.

Holistic health refers to a philosophy of physical care that is of the view that our body, mind and emotions are inter-connected. It is the idea that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

In the same way, traditional Chinese medicine sees the body as a universe, one which must be governed by the laws of balance (the yin and the yang). Our emotional and mental well being is just as likely to affect our vulnerability to disease, and external factors such as work, lifestyle choices, environment and even relationships are crucial to the overall picture of one's health.

Contemporary Western medicine describes health in measurable and quantitative processes of chemical reactions. In contrast, traditional Chinese medicine uses the idea of the yin-yang, the organ system and the five elements to look at the body and health. We have already discussed the concept of the yin and the yang briefly – but it is worth understanding these basic concepts in greater depth to improve our understanding of many other aspects of traditional Chinese medicine

Yin and Yang

In Chinese philosophy, the body and the universe at large are best described by opposing and separate yet complementary principles – that is, yin and yang.

Yin is the cooling, moisturizing part of your body – blood, body fluids. Yang is the heating, motivating part of your body – keeps your body warm and supplies the fire for your digestion.

Imagine that the Yang energy is like gasoline that fuels a car, and the Yin energy is the coolant for the car's engine. Without the coolant, the engine overheats and begins to burn out. Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine work to make sure the Yin and Yang are equal within your body, restoring your essential internal balance.

Yin and Yang must be in balance to achieve good health. The two forces are in constant interaction and opposition yet always influencing each other. For example, if one is suffering from symptoms of a migraine headache, the Chinese medicine diagnosis (determined by Chinese pulse diagnosis) might be that your liver has too much yang rising up and causing the severe pain. We would prescribe methods reducing the yang and alleviating your pain.

Another example would be hot flashes. Here is a case where there is not enough yin to cool you off (remember the coolant in the car?) We would prescribe acupuncture points and Chinese herbs that nourish the yin and cool off your body. Therefore, acupuncture therapies increase or decrease yang or increase or decrease yin in particular body regions.

Chi

“Chi is the spark of energy that animates and brings life to your body. It’s a substance that provides energy, nourishment, and support for every cell, tissue, muscle, organ, bone and gland in your body.” Steven Sonmore, L.Ac.

Chi (also spelled Qi) – as we mentioned before – is a cornerstone of traditional Chinese medical philosophy. Chi is the vital life energy that exists in all living things. It is generated by our internal organs, and we also receive it from food, water, air and sunlight. Our body has natural patterns through which chi flows – the meridians. It flows through the body to help nourish and regenerate. Illnesses are often the by-product of blocked or imbalanced chi in the body's meridians or an imbalance of chi in the body's key organs. Traditional Chinese medicine relieves these imbalances by adjusting chi circulation in the body. Acupuncture

is one of the best ways of achieving an ideal flow of chi through your body.

Diagnosis in traditional Chinese medicine relies on recognizing and establishing global patterns of dysfunction in a patient which can be explained in logical terms.

Why Acupuncture? – The Scientific Perspective

The Chinese system of medicine is quite intricate, especially in the way that it is suggested that our organs and mental symptoms are related.

More and more MD's as well as neurologists are presently recognizing the value of acupuncture. They refer some of their patients to licensed acupuncturists.

Some interesting parallels between Western and traditional Chinese medicine have been observed over recent years. An example is the relationship between the heart and the kidney. Western medicine has now observed that when one suffers from severe heart problems, kidney failure is often quite close behind.

Whilst this is a relatively recent discovery in the West, this connection between the two organs was established many centuries ago in traditional Chinese medicine.

More than 10,000 studies have been conducted into the scientific basis of the effectiveness of acupuncture. It should, therefore, be no surprise that the science of acupuncture is evolving as scientists are taking a renewed interest in this centuries old science.

Because of this, it is now a highly respected, yet intriguing mode of healing. There are several contemporary scientific theories that support the use and effectiveness of acupuncture.

There are in fact changes that happen in our bodies when acupuncture is performed. Consider the scientific theories below as evidence of this truth:

- Studies using radioactive tracers have shown that acupuncture channels or meridians are in fact distinct channels that are separate from blood vessels and lymph vessels.
- Acupuncture points on the body have a higher electrical resistance than surrounding tissue.

- The conduction of electricity through our bodies is faster through the meridians than it is through the rest of the body.
- An electrical charge initiated at one acupoint can be received at a distant point on the same meridian.
- The acupuncture needle can act as an antenna and attract electromagnetic energy to pass it into tissue.
- Acupuncture makes the brain release neuropeptides that are helpful in relieving pain.

Neuro-hormonal Theory

The transmission of pain between the various points of our body and brain can be modulated at different levels in the brain.

Different structures in the brain will process different aspects of pain, such as the experience of emotional pain, the perception of what pain feels like, the recognition of how harmful the pain will be and where the pain is coming from.

The blocking of pain is mediated by what we call neuro-hormones that are attached to the receptors which are responsible for blocking pain. Pain relief using the drug morphine acts on the same receptors that are responsible for blocking pain as those addressed by endorphins, which is a natural substance produced by the body for blocking pain.

Studies have shown that the pain killing properties of acupuncture come about by stimulating the flow of natural endorphins in the brain.

This can be scientifically and medically proven by blocking the action of endorphins using a drug called naloxone. When naloxone is administered, the pain killing effect of the endorphin is nullified and the patient feels pain again. Furthermore, when naloxone was given to a patient being actively treated by acupuncture, the pain relieving effects of acupuncture were also reversed. This means that the site where acupuncture is applied is subject to the natural release of endorphins by the brain.

Recent studies have also shown that acupuncture releases the levels of nitric oxide in the region of treatment, and that this, in turn, increases blood circulation in the region.

Hologram Theory

Our lives began in the womb as a single cell. Then (according to acupuncture theory) it is safe to say that there is a part in the whole

and the whole in the part at the same time. This is what is sometimes known as the hologram theory of acupuncture.

If you were to take apart a holographic image, then a fragment of the image will represent the whole image, although it is obviously considerably less detailed. Therefore, every cell in our body is related to every other cell in the body and every one therefore affects every other one. From this perspective, applying acupuncture to a particular region can affect a seemingly unrelated region.

Gate Theory

One of the theories that explain why acupuncture works so well for treating pain is the Gate Theory of Pain. First proposed in 1965, this explains that acupuncture works through the nervous system where there are fibers that both transmit and inhibit pain.

These are found in the substantia gelatinosa of the spinal cord. This substantia gelatinosa is responsible for sending signals to the brain regarding pain, and it is suggested that acupuncture activates the fibers that inhibit pain, thus preventing the signal from reaching the brain and thereby lowering your sensation of pain.

The two types of fibers are called A-beta and C nerve fibers. A-beta fibers have a low volt threshold, conduct faster and are large. C fibers are just the opposite – they are small, conduct slowly and have a high volt threshold.

Increased impulses from the A-beta fiber closes the gate that transmits the pain signals from the C fibers. This is where acupuncture comes in. It acts as a pain reliever by stimulating the acupoint which affects the A-beta fibers. When the needle is stimulated, non-pain impulses are transmitted through the substantia gelatinosa, closing the gate that would otherwise allow pain impulses to get through.

The impulses from the A-beta fibers are then relayed to the thalamus which is the part of the brain that is usually responsible for dealing with pain. Once the final 'gate' is closed, the whole body experiences relief from pain.

Physiology and Acupuncture

When describing our physiology in terms of acupuncture, we need to concern ourselves with meridians and acupuncture points or acupoints (as we will call them now). We have already established that meridians are the channels through which chi flows in our body between the main

twelve organs. Acupoints are various points along these meridians through which we are able to manipulate the flow of energy.

The Channels or Meridians

Channels or meridians are the pathways for chi and the connection between the vital organs. The Standard Acupuncture Nomenclature published by the World Health Organization lists some 20 meridians.

These 20 meridians are further divided into 'standard' meridians, one meridian each for the twelve major organs. Each meridian is responsible for nourishing that particular organ. There are also 8 'extraordinary' meridians – only two of which have their own set points, the other six connecting various points on the other meridians.

The twelve main meridians are the pathways that connect our inner world with the outer world.

Chi is always flowing through our bodies. Chi enters our body at specific points in a particular meridian and flows out of the opposite end. This energy then enters the next meridian in the sequence. It continues to flow through the entire body, one meridian after the other. This flow cycle takes 24 hours to complete.

Each of the twelve main meridians is active for two particular hours in the day. This does not mean that for the remaining twenty two hours the meridian is not functioning, but simply that the activity of chi in those meridians is reduced.

The twelve standard meridians follow the arms and legs. They provide and regulate chi for the lungs, large intestine, stomach, spleen, heart, small intestine, urinary bladder, kidney, pericardium, gall bladder, liver and the triple warmer (the torso). It is important to note that these refer to functions of the mentioned organs rather than the structural organ.

The meridians are also divided according to yin and yang. The yin meridians of the arms include the lung, heart and pericardium. The yang meridians of the arms include both the large and small intestine and the triple warmer. The yin meridians of the leg are the liver, kidney and spleen. The yang meridians of the leg include the gall bladder, the urinary bladder and the stomach.

Acupuncture Points/Acupoints

Acupuncture points are specific points found on your body which are the focus of acupuncture and other forms of acupuncture which we will look into a little later.

Hundreds of acupuncture points are found on the meridians but there are also many other extra acupuncture points that are not linked to any particular meridian as such.

As we mentioned before in the discussion of the organs, acupuncturists view the concepts of traditional Chinese medicine in functional rather than structural terms. What this means is that concepts are more crucial in patient diagnosis and treatment than describing anatomy.

The Theory behind Acupuncture Points

Acupuncture points used for treatment may or may not be in the same body region as the symptom. The traditional Chinese medicinal theory is that the selection of these points is based on the fact that they stimulate the meridian system and bring relief to ailments by rebalancing the yin and yang in our body and regulating the flow of chi.

Each point has certain effects upon your body and mind when stimulated. Body acupuncture points are referred to by their traditional Chinese names or through the meridians on which they are found, followed by a number. This indicates the order of the point on the actual meridian.

For example, a common point on the hand is the 'hegu'. It is also known as LI4 which means that is the fourth point on the long intestine meridian.

Types of Acupuncture

Just like there are different styles of music there are different styles of acupuncture. There is TCM acupuncture, Japanese acupuncture, Korean hand acupuncture, electrical acupuncture and auricular (ear) acupuncture.

In my professional quest, I have studied all of these and have used them at various times throughout my career. 90% of all acupuncturists in both the US and China use TCM (traditional Chinese acupuncture). 95% of all schools in the US teach TCM acupuncture.

TCM acupuncture is actually a more recent style of acupuncture. When Mao took over China, acupuncture was standardized. Unfortunately some of the classical literature was thrown out, lost or ignored.

My own personal experience with this style of acupuncture is that the results are slow and the effects do not last as long. The majority of acupuncture clinics in the United States use the TCM method of inserting needles directly into the area of pain. The problems with this approach are: 1) the results are not consistent or reliable and 2) there is a risk of creating micro-trauma at the sick or injured area thereby making the pain worse.

In my quest to find the best possible treatment for my patients I discovered a much older style of acupuncture...one with much better results. I had to go study with a doctor from Taiwan to learn this.

There is a saying in Chinese. It goes like this:

"Stand the pole, see the shadow."

What this means is you should see the results from acupuncture almost immediately. Just like if you placed a pole in the ground, the sun would immediately cast its shadow.

At our clinic we use a different style of acupuncture. This method is over 2,500 years old and originates from one of the oldest books in the world, the I Ching. This method has several names such as: "The Balance Method," or "I Ching Acupuncture," or "Distal Point Acupuncture." Regardless of the name, the effects are nothing less than amazing.

The Balance Method only uses acupuncture points on the arms from the elbows to the fingers, on the legs from the knees to the toes and on the scalp and ears. Consequently, the patient **never has to take off their clothes** and the treatments are **efficient, comfortable and extremely effective**.

Uses of Acupuncture

Chronic Pain

Chronic pain is the kind of pain that persists over a long period of time. Obviously it limits your regular lifestyle and standard of living. So, it is no surprise one of the most popular uses of acupuncture is pain management.

Acupuncture is an effective treatment for many forms of chronic pain. It has also proved to be beneficial for treating postoperative and chemotherapy nausea and vomiting, nausea caused by pregnancy and dental pain. Acupuncture has also been shown to be effective for dealing with various painful conditions including migraines, back pain, neck pain, sciatica, tennis elbow, menstrual cramps and much more.

Acupuncture has offered effective pain relief to mankind for thousands of years. Now to confirm its scientific validity, this treatment of pain has received support in the May 2010 issue of *Anesthesia & Analgesia*, the official journal of the International Anesthesia Research Society (IARS).

Dr. Philip Lang and fellow researchers of the University of Munich used quantitative sensory testing to detect changes in pain sensitivity with acupuncture in 24 healthy volunteers. After applying acupuncture to the leg, the researchers found that pain thresholds increased by up to 50 percent. Effects were noted in both the treated leg and the untreated leg.

Studies Show Measurable and Specific Effects of Acupuncture on Pain

Quantitative sensory testing is used clinically to help physicians understand specific injuries in nerve fibers associated with chronic pain. It includes tests of both thermal perception (heat and cold), and mechanical perception (pressure applied to the skin). The patterns of response provide diagnostic information in patients with nerve injury regarding the type of nerve involved, and possible treatments.

That acupuncture benefits patients with pain would have come as no surprise to the father of modern medicine, Sir William Osler, who practiced acupuncture over half a century before Chairman Mao and the "new" Traditional Chinese Medicine. Near the end of the 19th century, Osler wrote in his most famous work, *"The Principles and Practice of Medicine"* (1892) that acupuncture for acute back pain provided *"the most efficient treatment."* In addition to lumbago, Osler suggested acupuncture for sciatica and neuralgia.

Following in the footsteps of physiologist and physician Sydney Ringer, Osler wrote, *"In many instances the relief is immediate, and I can corroborate fully the statements of Ringer, who taught me this practice, as to its extraordinary and prompt efficacy in many instances."*

A 2009 study by the Mayo Clinic indicated that acupuncture showed a much larger effect on the ultimate neurologic recovery from acute

spinal cord injury than any pharmacologic intervention to date. It's hard to ignore the value and safety of acupuncture treatment for patients with disk disease.

A British study found that acupuncture provides a less expensive way of easing lower back pain in the long-term. Patients who received 10 sessions of acupuncture said they had less pain at a two-year follow-up, when compared with those who did not get the treatment. Study co-author Hugh MacPherson, Ph.D., said, *"Acupuncture definitely has a role in the treatment of low back pain....and it seems to be associated with longer-term effects than anyone has realized."* Researchers analyzed 33 studies and concluded that acupuncture was an effective treatment for lower back pain.

"Our analysis suggested that the benefits of acupuncture for low back pain are NOT due to a placebo effect." Eric Manheimer, University of Maryland

One of the most compelling studies regarding acupuncture for the treatment of pain was conducted at Sheffield University in England and published in 2006. Two hundred forty-one patients participated, and even a short course of acupuncture had long-term effects on the pain of many of the patients. The majority had just ten treatments over a three-month period, and they reported experiencing less pain than before even two years after they had discontinued treatments. Many of them **reported that they no longer needed pain medications.**

A study conducted in Beijing, China in 1994 reported that 98.3% of the 56 patients in the study experienced substantial relief from chronic lower back pain.

Unfortunately, acupuncture is often the last resort for people. They try massage therapists, their family doctor, pain medications, muscle relaxers, chiropractors, physical therapists, and even hypnotherapists before they try acupuncture. This is sometimes due to the fear of needles because they don't realize that the needles are inserted so superficially into the skin that they are usually barely felt.

As a result of this fear or lack of understanding of the effectiveness of acupuncture, people who have chronic pain often feel trapped in hopelessness for years. In one example, a client at our clinic presented with chronic pain after open heart surgery. He thought there was nothing that could be done to relieve his suffering because he had tried almost everything. When he finally tried acupuncture at our clinic, he found relief that he had not believed possible.

“After open heart surgery I began acupuncture. Steven Sonmore immediately proved himself at problem solving areas of pain and inflammation not only from the surgery itself but also with other over worked areas and joints I had difficulties with for years.”

- Daniel Dollif

“I have tried many treatments to help reduce my pain. The acupuncture I received from Steven Sonmore has made me feel better than anytime in the last ten years.”

- Greg Shaughnessy

Gastro Intestinal Disorders

The World Health Organization recommends acupuncture treatments for dealing with a variety of gastric disorders such as GERD, gastritis, gastric hyper acidity, ulcers, colitis, constipation and diarrhea.

According to traditional Chinese medicine, the key organ to take note of when looking at such gastric disorders is the spleen. It has the primary responsibility for the transportation and transformation of food around the body, including the excretion of waste from the body.

For the spleen to function well, it must be moist. However, if there is a deficiency of chi in the spleen, it may become too moist and a condition known as ‘damp heat’ will develop.

For the stomach to function well, it must be dry. When it is imbalanced, it can easily overheat and create a painful condition known as ‘stomach fire.’ The liver can also contribute to gastric infections.

There are four main reasons for gastric disorders according to traditional Chinese medicine:

- Deficiency of chi in the spleen: this can be brought on by severe fatigue or severe illness.
- Retention of damp heat: this could be caused by infections, improper diet and environmental factors.
- Disharmony in the liver and spleen: this could be caused by emotional disturbances.
- Deficiency of yang in the spleen and kidney: this is caused by illnesses or aging.

Most patients who are suffering from gastric disorders have a lower than usual immune response.

The cells of the immune system produce a protein called immunoglobulin in the blood serum and tissue fluids. This protein helps

to exterminate antigen bearing micro-organisms in the blood stream and tissues. Extensive research has proved that applying acupuncture to certain points increases the levels of this protein.

This helps the body to deal with a multitude of health conditions including chronic gastritis, antral gastritis, gastric ulcer and atrophic gastritis.

Let us look at another way in which acupuncture helps the function of the digestive system. When we eat, the stomach secretes a hormone called gastrin in the digestive tract.

This helps the stomach produce more acid and helps the contraction of muscles in the walls of the stomach and colon. This action moves the food along the digestive tract. Acupuncture techniques along the relevant acupuncture points can raise the levels of gastrin and ensure a more efficient digestive system. Maintaining a health digestive system is extremely important for your whole health. Some chronic digestive problems can lead to very serious diseases when untended.

Headaches

The causes of headache can be extremely varied. One of the most common and annoying types of headaches that most people experience is a rhythmic throbbing in the temple area. This is known as a vascular headache.

In acupuncture, the treatment for such a headache will most commonly involve stimulating the acupuncture points located in the middle of the webs between the thumbs and palms of the patient.

These points are indicated for treating the face and head and are therefore the most crucial acupuncture points for dealing with anything affecting the face and head.

“I began acupuncture out of desperation to relieve my headaches. Immediately after seeing Steven Sonmore and receiving treatments my headaches were gone. This has been wonderful because I now can function normally again. I was also pleased with the other benefits of acupuncture, such as the relaxation and sense of well-being.”

-Christina Boehm Carlson

Weight Loss

Most of us know that our ideal weight is often more difficult to achieve than it really should be, and that there are numerous expensive designer diets out there designed to help us.

However, more and more people are trying acupuncture to help them in their weight loss efforts.

Acupuncture for weight loss works in the same way as acupuncture for other conditions, as inserting needles into particular spots still helps the body function properly.

We already know that acupuncture helps the body in releasing endorphins, natural 'feel good' pain relieving chemicals. Acupuncture weight loss treatments play on this through helping to control appetite by releasing endorphins.

However, the course of treatment will be different from most other acupuncture procedures and treatments. The acupuncture practitioner will most likely ask a variety of questions and perform various examinations to understand the primary causes of the excess weight. There could be either a behavioral or physiological reason, or even both. Once the primary reason has been identified, acupuncture is applied to different parts of the body to improve body function so that it promotes weight loss.

Acupuncture weight loss treatment involves a multi-targeted approach. Body weight can be reduced by increasing the hormone output from the pituitary gland. It could also include work on reducing cravings for certain 'danger' foods or even dampening our natural appetite. Some needle placements are even known to lower the levels of insulin and lipids in the blood stream.

One of the major advantages of weight loss through acupuncture treatment is that, unlike certain weight loss medications, it has no harmful side effects. However, it is important to note that acupuncture weight loss treatments need to be repeated on a regular basis to maintain and reinforce its effects.

One also needs to pay careful attention to diet and get some exercise as well, for a well rounded weight loss program. Many acupuncture practitioners also provide their patients with a diet guide – one that ensures the regular flow of energy throughout the body.

"I decided to go with Steven Sonmore's Acupuncture Weight Control and it is one of the best decisions I've made. He taught me what foods would be healthy to eat, put me on natural supplements and I lost 20 pounds in 6 weeks. And it wasn't hard at all. The program has also taken care of other issues I was having like acid reflux, headaches and just not feeling well. I feel great!"

I had no idea what acupuncture was or what it was about. The sessions are so relaxing I totally look forward to each one. I would recommend anyone looking for a good weight loss program to call and make the first appointment to talk to Steven about the program and what it can do for you. You'll be amazed."

- Karen Pettit

Insomnia

Insomnia can have serious debilitating effects on a person, as it is so much more than simply tossing and turning in bed.

Insomnia can manifest itself in many ways. The most common symptom of insomnia is being unable to fall asleep for extended periods of time, if at all. Other symptoms include the inability to fall into deep sleep. The accumulated effects can and do include physical tiredness, difficulty in concentrating, lethargy, depression and irritability. Sleep needs in terms of hours vary for each person.

The important issue when dealing with insomnia is the quality of daytime activity.

Acupuncture treatment for insomnia treats patients on an individual basis and creates a holistic treatment system. Insomnia can be caused by anxiety, stress, depression, taxing work schedules, medications, alcohol and drug abuse, chronic pain etc.

Acupuncture has proven to be good for each of these insomnia causes and symptoms. It is therefore able to treat insomnia at the grassroots for the vast majority of sufferers.

Traditional Chinese medicine sees insomnia in relation principally to the heart but other organs may also be involved.

Insomnia is often caused by stress. Stress weakens the liver system which has a direct affect on our nerves. The five element theory says that there is a relation between the liver and the nerves. This means that the liver is weakened by things that tend to get on our nerves.

When the liver is unbalanced and required to deliver chi it does not have, then the uneasy symptoms brought on by this are the body's way of signaling that something is wrong and needs to be put in order.

Acupuncture also calms our nerves. It helps to clear obstructions of the muscle and nerve channels. The most commonly noted advantages of acupuncture include deeper breathing, better digestion, decrease in

pain, improved sleeping patterns and all over well being. These benefits in themselves are excellent treatment for insomnia.

Respiratory Problems

According to the World Health Organization, acupuncture is indicated for treating six different kinds of respiratory problems. These are acute rhinitis, acute sinusitis, the common cold, acute tonsillitis, acute bronchitis and bronchial asthma.

In traditional Chinese medicine, asthma is known as xiao chuan which translates as wheezing and dyspnea. It incorporates various kinds of respiratory disorders, and such wheezing and shortness of breath symptoms are manifestations that are seen in many types of respiratory syndromes such as bronchitis and asthma.

Asthma is a chronic lung disease and occurs when the inner walls of the airways, the bronchial tubes, become inflamed. Swelling of these bronchial tubes and the excessive mucus emanating from the inner walls cause the tubes to become narrow and this partially blocks the airways. Allergies, bronchiole infection and hyper-irritability of the airway tubes are among the most common causes of asthma.

Traditional Chinese medicine has been treating asthma for many thousands of years. Acupuncture helps the prevention of respiratory problems by balancing and improving the immune system. It also reduces the risk of allergic reactions and bronchial inflammation. Acupuncture can also adjust the nervous system to expand the walls of the airways whilst at the same time increasing lung capacity as well as reducing and removing excess mucus and phlegm.

"I want to thank you for all the help you have given me with my allergies and asthma. Since we started, my allergy and asthma problems have decreased substantially. I took allergy shots every other week for thirty years and they helped but my improvement was very slow. I have now seen you for two years and my allergy problems have decreased significantly and quickly."

"I go and see my physician once a year and he gives me two different breathing tests. Each of these has shown a significant improvement in lung capacity and the speed with which my breath flows. As a person gets older, the test results usually go in the opposite direction. Thanks again for your good care."

- R.Young, Minneapolis

Quitting Smoking

Nicotine is probably one of the most powerful addictions known to man, as it is no less addictive than cocaine or heroin. It is estimated that

smokers will try to quit the habit two or three times before they are successful.

So, when measures such as nicotine gum or patches fail, many smokers often turn to alternative methods for help. Acupuncture is often the preferred alternative method to help break the habit and, in some cases, acupuncture is actually mandated by the court of law to help those with drug addictions.

It is important to note that acupuncture is not the magic cure-all 'bullet' for stopping smoking instantly. Acupuncture will be part of a program to help someone break the habit that must also include preparation, commitment and an understanding of what acupuncture can and cannot do for the patient. Nevertheless, acupuncture treats the smoking addiction in a unique and very individual way.

A typical treatment by acupuncture for smoking will include a detailed interview to determine the patient's specific smoking habits. This will be followed by a physical exam which will include taking blood pressure and pulse measurements and observation of the tongue.

These indications as well as the patient's emotional state will create a picture for the acupuncture practitioner who can then create a specific, tailored program of acupuncture treatment for the patient.

Acupuncture treatments focus on the restlessness, irritability and cravings that one experiences when trying to break the habit. They also help to detox and relax the body.

As mentioned earlier, acupuncture treatments for smoking are unique for each patient. However, in most cases, a combination of acupuncture points on the body and ear are used. These points are said to influence the organs and the chi pathways that are connected to smoking.

Various points on the ear deal with different symptoms of smoking. Acupuncture alleviates tension, diminishes appetite and craving as well as increasing will power.

An acupuncture point found on the wrist is another crucial point for helping to break the addiction.

The treatment lasts between five and thirty minutes, with the patient being treated once or twice a week. Ear press needles or silver pellets may be applied to the acupuncture points in between treatments to lessen cravings. A stop smoking program consists of four to six

treatments in the first few months and then they become less frequent, falling to monthly treatments for four to six months.

Disorders of the Eye

The World Health Organization has indicated acupuncture as a valid treatment for eye disorders including (particularly in children) conjunctivitis and cataracts. According to Traditional Chinese Medicine, diseases of the eye are directly related to the liver.

The eye is nourished by all of the internal organs in the body. The lens of the eye and the pupil is 'attached' to the kidney, the sclera belongs to the lungs, the arteries and veins to the heart, the top eyelids are associated with the spleen, the bottom eyelid belongs to the stomach, and the cornea and the iris belongs to the liver. The spleen and stomach control circulation in the eyes. An imbalance in any of the internal organs can lead to sight problems or eye disease.

There are particular acupuncture points indicated for treating different disorders of the eye. Some point combinations are used for dealing with eye disease ranging from early stage cataracts to vision loss that comes with hysteria.

Acupuncture is good for dealing with eye problems caused by stress, too much studying and other kinds of mental strain. Acupuncture also treats conjunctivitis, sore eyes, photophobia, dry, itchy eyes, cataracts and blurred vision.

How Safe is Acupuncture?

So far we have discussed the numerous ways in which acupuncture can help us improve our health and general well being.

The key to any successful therapy – whether alternative or conventional – is the accuracy of diagnosis. Once you have had the condition correctly diagnosed, the selection of treatment can then be based on the balance between the benefits and risks of the treatment, and of course the benefits should always be greater than the risks.

Throw out all those images of nasty needles causing great pain every time you have to visit your licensed acupuncturist.

Acupuncture is an extremely safe way of encouraging your body in promoting natural healing and improving bodily functions. When done correctly, acupuncture does not cause any side effects. The Truth is that acupuncture is safer than Tylenol.

The key to avoiding any risk with acupuncture is to find and use a properly qualified acupuncturist. Do so and your experience with a fully trained, licensed and experienced acupuncturist should be a fulfilling experience and not a dangerous one.

Acupuncture is very safe when practiced by a genuine professional.

At our clinic we only use sterile, disposable needles to assure you that there is no transmission of diseases. Extremely fine needles are inserted with minimal stimulation and are left in place for about 30 minutes. Most clients are unaware of the needles. They [rest comfortably and experience a very deep relaxation](#), often drifting off to sleep and awaking rested and revitalized.

Conclusion

We have touched upon many aspects of acupuncture. Acupuncture is an ancient medical science and art, and it has evolved and developed over many centuries and much research has been and continues to be carried out.

There are a variety of approaches to the learning and practicing of the many variations and types of acupuncture. In Minnesota it *is* sadly legal for chiropractors to do acupuncture after only taking only 100 hours of training in acupuncture. Would you get brain surgery from someone who had just a weekend of training? So you might ask...

“How do I select an acupuncturist?” “Aren’t they all the same?”

The fact is that each acupuncturist is unique and, like in any other profession, there are acupuncturists who are great, some who are good, some mediocre and some who should never be allowed to work!

1.) You should call an L.Ac. (“licensed As an acupuncturist”) who is a full-time acupuncturist *and* has had years of experience. Why? The answer is simple: You can relax and rest assured that your acupuncturist had the superior training and experience (not a recent graduate) to do what it takes.

You want to make sure your acupuncture is done right. That it comes off without a hitch.

2.) A big mistake many people make when hiring an acupuncturist is basing their decision totally on price. Of course, price *is* a factor when hiring an acupuncturist however, many people place too much emphasis

on price and not enough on the overall impact the acupuncturist will have on their health.

Is hiring the highest priced acupuncturist always the best? Maybe not. On the other hand, hiring the least expensive person is rarely the best way to go either.

Acupuncturists are perceived as a dime a dozen – a commodity – by many people, and because of this they try to find the lowest price.

You need to base your decision on the person who will best fulfill your needs and help you to achieve your desired outcomes. One way you can know whether an acupuncturist is going to meet your needs is by whether or not he or she asks you what your needs are and what outcomes you want to achieve with acupuncture. When you call them, do they just tell you how great they are without finding out what you want and need?

How would you feel if you went to a doctor because you weren't feeling well and the doctor instantly prescribed some medicine without first finding out what was wrong with you? It's the same with acupuncturists. They should find out what you want and need first and see if they have a program that can fulfill those needs.

3.) Make sure your acupuncturist has experience treating your specific problem. You wouldn't go to a fertility expert to treat your chronic pain. Go to www.orientalmedcare.com to review the many health problems we treat.

4.) Ask the acupuncturist: "Do you have any testimonials from clients you've worked with in the past?" This is vitally important. You want to see what the acupuncturist's clients have to say about him and his service. Check out our testimonials at <http://www.orientalmedcare.com/testimonials.html> .

5). Another big mistake people make is making sure they benefit from a style of acupuncture that is **effective**. 95% of all acupuncturist in the U.S. and China practice TCM style acupuncture. The results are usually slow. You want to select a professional who offers the **most powerful style of acupuncture**. I have researched and tried almost every style – TCM, Japanese, Korean, auricular...in search of finding the method that would help my patients the most. But, what I offer is a very ancient method of acupuncture with **quick, long lasting results**.

The majority of U.S. acupuncture clinics use a method of inserting needles directly into the area of pain. There are two problems with this approach: One, the results are not consistent or reliable; and two, there is a risk of creating micro-trauma at the sick or injured area, thereby making the pain worse. At Complete Oriental Medical Care, LLC, Steven Sonmore, L.Ac. is an expert in a different style of acupuncture. This method is over 2,500 years old and originates from one of the oldest books in the world, the I Ching. This method has several names: "The Balance Method," or "I Ching Acupuncture," or "Distal Point Acupuncture." Regardless of the name, the effects are nothing less than amazing.

6.) A big concern for many people is "Do I have to undress to receive acupuncture?" In our clinic the acupuncture points used are on the arms from the elbows to the fingers, on the legs from the knees to the toes and on the scalp and ears. Consequently, the patient never has to take off their clothes and the treatments are **efficient, comfortable and extremely effective.**

5 Outstanding Reasons To Choose Complete Oriental Medical Care, LLC

1. Get Out of Your Chronic Pain Forever...naturally, without drugs.
2. We are the only clinic that offers a complete, money-back guarantee on your first 3 sessions.

If all you want is the cheapest acupuncturist, please call someone else. Our office will make your treatments unforgettable, relaxing and amazingly successful. I will help you create the best therapeutic outcome possible, or I will refund your money, guaranteed.

3. You will see results quickly.
4. We treat far more than just pain. We also treat digestive problems, depression, stress, PMS, anxiety, weight control, insomnia, hot flashes, tingling and numbness, morning sickness, colds, flu, facial rejuvenation, allergies, sinus infections and much more!
5. You will be working with an acupuncturist who is trained, experienced and well known. Steven has been interviewed by *The New York Times*, The Buzz TV, My 29 TV, *Women's World* magazine and many others.

So, if you want to make your acupuncture successful, call Ann or Jackie at **612-866-4000** to schedule an appointment with Steven, the only full-time professional Licensed Acupuncturist in Minneapolis who guarantees you will be thrilled with his service.

Call right now for a free consultation. **612-866-4000**.

(You must Respond By One Week After Receiving This Report.
Otherwise
we'll have to wait until we get a cancellation to schedule your
appointment)

When you come in, you'll have the chance to meet with us, get to know us, and tell us about your problem. If, after the appointment, you believe there's no benefit to working with us, you simply leave and that is that. However, if you do find that you can use our help, then we will discuss how we proceed from there, including discussing our low package-rate options.

So, if you're experiencing symptoms, have been treated with little or no improvement or want a second opinion to compare what we have to say to the care you're currently receiving, please CALL US RIGHT NOW at 612-866-4000. Our appointment calendar is always booked solid - so don't procrastinate. If you're concerned, make that call now. What have you got to lose? Why not finally get better? Either way, we wish you good luck, with a bright future, shining in the light of excellent health!

Sincerely,
Steven Sonmore
L.Ac. Clinic Director of Complete Oriental Medical Care, LLC
www.orientalmedcare.com

P.S. No matter what else you do, please find out what's really wrong with you with our Free Acupuncture Exam and Assessment. You will be given our findings of the exam to take home with you. Don't suffer needlessly. You can get better quickly, without drugs or surgery!

This is a testament to acupuncture's acceptance and increasing validity in the modern medical system.