

ACUPUNCTURE

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What is acupuncture?

Acupuncture is one component of traditional Chinese medicine that has been used for over 2,000 years to treat various health conditions. It is a method of inserting fine sterile needles into the body to help promote natural healing and pain relief. In some cases, electrical stimulation may be used in conjunction with the needles.

How does acupuncture work?

The main idea behind acupuncture is that there is energy called Qi (pronounced "chee") flowing through the body along energy pathways called meridians or channels. Pain results when the flow of Qi becomes blocked. Acupuncture helps the Qi flow more easily. Breathing, thinking, and exercising moves the Qi as well. Western research has shown that it stimulates the nervous system to release natural substances (like endorphins) that reduce pain and may help change how the brain perceives the pain.

What can I do to make acupuncture more effective?

You can make the acupuncture more effective by participating in exercise programs, learning deep breathing, relaxation and stress management techniques, losing excess weight and looking at the positive aspects in your life. Please do not overwork or exercise strenuously if you feel more energetic after the acupuncture.

Is acupuncture safe?

Acupuncture is safe because we use sterile, disposable needles. Possible risks from acupuncture include but are not limited to slight bleeding, bruising, swelling, skin infection, headache and fainting. Patients may also experience a temporary increase of pain during and/or following the treatment. If electricity is used, only a very small amount of current is used and it is very safe. You may feel a pulsating or mild tingling sensation during the electro-acupuncture treatment.

Who benefits from acupuncture?

Acupuncture is used only for those conditions where it has been proven through clinical research to have beneficial results. These include certain chronic conditions such as neck, back, shoulder or knee pain, headaches and migraines, tinnitus, nausea and vomiting induced by chemotherapy, dental pain, TMJ and much more.

How do I know if acupuncture will work?

You and your acupuncturist will generally know within three to four treatments if acupuncture is helping you. In Chinese medicine, acupuncture is not used alone. Other components of Chinese medicine involve looking at other things that could contribute to the pain. For example, Chinese medicine encourages the patient to change his or her lifestyle, such as losing weight, quitting smoking, doing regular exercises and stretches and reducing stress.

Will acupuncture cure my pain?

For some people, acupuncture can help reduce pain for hours, days, or weeks. Although relief may last a long time, it is usually temporary. Acupuncture is one way to reduce your pain while you learn other ways to manage it.

Before your treatment

- Eat a small meal.
- Take all medications as prescribed, even your pain medicines.
- Wear comfortable clothes with accessibility to legs and back if needed.
- If treatment is located on your neck or shoulder and you have long hair, please bring a hair tie.
- Use the restroom before as needles will be placed in for 20 minutes.

After your treatment

- You will be able to drive yourself home.
- Continue to take your prescription medications.
- Keep notes of your response to treatment.