

## A Glimpse at Acupuncture

Acupuncture has a long history spanning around several thousand years of practice in Oriental Medicine. Acupuncture means letting out the qi or blood by making holes in the body along certain pathways called jingluo (meridians). The purpose of acupuncture is to help relieve pain and promote good health of an individual, and is done by using slender needles used to access channels and meridians. The cost can range from \$50-250 each session and most often is paid for by insurance. Acupuncture developed from ancient text “Huang Di Nei Jing” (The Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine) during the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It involves a painless cylindrical tube through which a needle is inserted through a small cylindrical tube to gain an energetic balance of the vital energy within the body. This method is still used today and has shown to be effective. It is estimated that 15 million people in the United States have visited an acupuncturist for pain therapy. It should be noted that in 1995, the FDA classified the acupuncture needles as medical instruments.

The big question is does it hurt? Reports have it that it is virtually painless. But it is like taking medication. If you elect to do acupuncture than you will most likely have to repeat it to continue the relief. It would be just like taking medication. You repeat that to continue to achieve relief. Acupuncture is used for chronic pain, arthritis, nausea and digestive problems according to studies that have been done.

There are several signaling systems that can be acupunctured and can increase the rate of a healing response. Acupuncture of the nervous system

transmits signals along its nerve and releases a variety of biochemical's that affect other parts of the body. One part of the body that is mapped for the whole body is the ear in the form of a homunculus (a miniature humanoid form). Systems it covers are anti depressants, shoulder, ankle, headache, elbow, wrist, hip, knee, etc. Needles, pressure or TENS can be use to elicit chemicals releases which can help with the pain in these and other areas. If the appropriate body site is stimulated properly, then the healing response is generated. The first thing to do when there is a problem is find the disturbance, isolate blockage points, and clear the blockage with using the acupuncture treatment. Successful treatment depends on the site needled, depth and direction and even the composition of the needle makes a difference, whether gold, silver or steel is used.

To have a successful acupuncture treatment, consider having the patient experience a "needling sensation". The patient will experience tingling, a sensation of numbness, or warmth. When the acupuncturist inserts the needle he or she will experience an action of getting qi. This is when the needle tends to be pulled by the body, which can be interpreted as the body's' muscle response with reaction to the nervous system.

Acupuncture might be an option if you have exhausted all options when experiencing pain. Remember it is accepted by the FDA and has been around for thousands of years. As always, if you have any questions or comments, please eMail me at [gheffelmire@dearborncounty.in.gov](mailto:gheffelmire@dearborncounty.in.gov)

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