



“Health is a state of optimal physical, mental and emotional well-being, not merely the absence of disease and infirmity”

What is Acupuncture?

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Acupuncture is an effective form of medical treatment that has evolved into a complete holistic health care system. Practitioners of acupuncture and Chinese medicine have used this noninvasive treatment method to help millions of people become well and stay well.

Acupuncture promotes natural healing. It can enhance recuperative power and immunity, support physical and emotional health, and improve overall function and well-being. It is a safe, painless and effective way to treat a wide variety of medical problems.

What is Qi?

At the core of this ancient medicine is the philosophy that Qi (pronounced (“chee”), or life Energy, flows throughout the body and protects it from illness, pain and disease. A person’s health is influenced by the quality and quantity and balance of Qi.

How does Qi move?

Qi flows through specific pathways called meridians. There are 14 main meridians inside the body. Each of these is connected to specific organs and glands.

Meridian pathways are like rivers flowing inside the body. Where a river flows, it transports life-giving water that provides nourishment to the land, plants and people. Similarly, where meridian pathways flow, they bring life-giving Qi that provides nourishment to every cell, organ, gland, tissue and muscle in the body.

An obstruction to the flow of Qi is like a dam. When Qi becomes backed up in one part of the body, the flow becomes restricted in other parts. The blockage of the flow of Qi can be detrimental to a person’s health, cutting off vital nourishment to the body, organs and glands.

How is Qi disrupted?

Physical and emotional trauma, stress, lack of exercise, overexertion, seasonal changes, poor diet, accidents, or excessive activity are among the many things that can influence the quality - quantity balance of Qi.

Normally, when blockage or imbalance occurs, the body bounces back, returning to a state of health and well-being. However, when this disruption is prolonged or excessive, or if the body is in a weakened state, illness, pain, or disease can set in.

What does an acupuncturist do?

During the initial exam a full health history is taken. Questions are asked regarding health, symptoms and lifestyle. An appropriate physical exam is conducted, including pulse and tongue diagnosis.

Gathering this information enables the practitioner to effectively diagnose and detect any specific imbalance of Qi that may have contributed to a person’s health problems. The practitioner can then create a well-structured treatment plan.

Once the imbalance of Qi is detected, an acupuncturist will place fine, sterile needles at specific acupoints along the meridian pathways. This safe and painless insertion of the needles can unblock the obstruction and balance the Qi where it has become imbalanced. Once this is done, Qi can freely circulate throughout the body, providing adequate nourishment to cells, organs, glands, tissues and muscles. This can eliminate pain and restore balance and harmony, as well as the body's ability to heal itself – ultimately leading to optimal health and well-being.

“A Journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.”

Your First Visit

Congratulations. By choosing acupuncture, you've taken a great step toward a more balanced, healthy lifestyle. The ancient practices of acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) have helped millions of people regain and maintain their health.

Since the system of health care may be different than other care you've received, it's only natural to have questions. Read on to find out what to expect – and how to get the most out of your treatments.

Acupuncture and your health

Acupuncture and TCM take a holistic approach, or whole-body approach to health. This means your practitioner will take into account your whole self, not just your symptoms, in order to get to the root of your health concerns. You will work together to find out how factors like your lifestyle and emotional and mental well-being may be affecting your health.

Getting the chance to really discuss your health concerns with your care provider – and having your provider really listen – may be new to you. Think of it as your opportunity to form a partnership for better health. The more you take part in your healing process, the more successful it will be.

Your first visit

Initial visits generally last from 30 to 90 minutes. Your acupuncturist will take a detailed health history and a physical exam, and will provide you with your unique treatment plan.

During your first exam, your acupuncturist will spend time getting to know you and your health concerns. You may be asked a wide range of questions about your symptoms, eating, exercise, sleep habits, and emotional states – anything that may offer insight into your health.

Your practitioner will also employ diagnostic tools that are unique to acupuncture and TCM such as tongue and pulse diagnosis.

Your treatment plan

Once your acupuncturist has gathered enough information, you'll receive a comprehensive diagnosis and a treatment plan that will explain:

- *Your underlying imbalances*
- *Your time line of care*
- *What types of treatment you will receive*

Getting the most out of treatment

For the best treatment results, keep a few things in mind:

- *Please show up on time*
- *Don't eat a large meal before your visit*
- *Wear loose, comfortable clothes*



- Be sure to discuss any questions or concerns with your acupuncturist
- Refrain from overexertion, drugs or alcohol for at least six hours after treatment
- Keep all of your appointments, as each visit builds upon previous ones

How treatment works

To treat any Qi imbalances, fine, sterile needles will be inserted at specific points along the meridian pathways. Your acupuncturist will concentrate on acupuncture points related to specific organs, based on your unique issues and symptoms.

Your acupuncturist may include other related therapies in your treatment plan, such as cupping, Gwa Sha or moxabustion. Herbal remedies are another important aspect of acupuncture and TCM and it is important to understand and follow your practitioner's directions in order to get the most benefit from these treatments.

Your role in the healing process

Your actions are a key component of your treatment plan. Focusing on your health and committing to a healthy lifestyle are the best steps you can take for your well-being. Together, you and your acupuncturist can heal your imbalances and help you achieve harmony and balance.

Even after your symptoms are resolved, acupuncture can assist you in maintaining your health, and possibly prevent future imbalances. The more you incorporate acupuncture and TCM into your life, the more you'll learn to nurture your body, mind and spirit.

Acupuncture is not an instant fix.

True healing takes time and dedication. Depending on your current health and symptoms, you could feel better right away, or you may need treatments for weeks, months or years to achieve the results you want. Your acupuncturist can give you an idea of what to expect. With a little patience and an open mind, you'll be on your way to health and vitality.

Acupuncture and TCM offer a safe and effective holistic health care system. This natural approach can both resolve symptoms and enhance your overall health.

By taking the right steps and planting the seeds of health, you are on the road to a healthier you!

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