



# Acupuncture

***“Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth.” Jer. 33:6***

Acupuncture is an ancient Chinese procedure, and literally means “needle piercing”. It is one of the oldest and most commonly used techniques in the world. Acupuncture has been around for about 2000 years.

This procedure has been used to treat all sorts of medical problems through out history, however, it is primarily associated with pain relief. While there are different techniques, the one that is most familiar to us uses thin, stainless steel needles. They are carefully and painlessly inserted by a qualified acupuncture practitioner into one of 2000 points located throughout the body.

No one is completely sure as to how this ancient art works. The traditional Chinese view is that each person's body has two opposing forces, the yin and the yang. Health can be maintained only if these two forces are kept in balance. Stimulation of the proper points is needed to help a person regain their perfect balance.

Most Westerners do not go along with this belief, and a variety of theories have been proposed to explain how and why acupuncture works. One theory is that the acupuncture needle blocks the pain impulses to the brain and spinal column. If the pain is not recognized by our nerve center, we cannot feel it. Others believe that acupuncture stimulates the body to make its own endorphins, which are narcotic-like substances. (These are the same substances the body releases when we

are newly in love!). Still another theory is that the procedure produces a placebo effect, or even a hypnotic state, that reduces a person's symptoms.

According to the World Health Organization, acupuncture can be used to treat over 35 different conditions, including cataracts, hiccups, gum disease, asthma, and constipation. However, recent clinical studies in the United States have shown it to be effective in only four areas. It was very effective for postoperative dental pain, and also for the nausea and vomiting which may occur after surgery or chemotherapy. The discomfort of osteoarthritic knees was greatly reduced, but it had no effect on the condition itself. And lastly, headaches associated with tension or migraine pain were greatly eased.

In the U.S., only 2/3's of the states have any licensing laws for acupuncturists. Acupuncturists are not all the same. You may want to get a referral from your family physician, a neurologist, an anesthesiologist, or a physical therapy specialist. Web searches can also be useful. Always check to be sure the acupuncturist is licensed and credentialed. Also, some insurance companies cover this type of therapy, so check before you seek treatment.

It is good to be open to new ideas and treatments. Stay informed and stay safe.

More info:

[www.nccam.nih.gov](http://www.nccam.nih.gov)

[www.holisticonline.com/hol\\_alt-therapies.htm](http://www.holisticonline.com/hol_alt-therapies.htm)