

Questions and Answers About Acupuncture

What is acupuncture?

Acupuncture is one of many treatment modalities used in Chinese Medicine. The treatment involves the insertion of very small and thin needles into various “acupoints” on the body. There are hundreds of these points on the body and their location is the result of several thousand years of empirical research by the Chinese. Each “acupoint” has a unique effect on the bodies overall health. The points used during a treatment are selected by the acupuncturist based on the patient’s symptoms and overall health constitution. The goal of acupuncture treatment is to relieve symptoms and to help improve general well-being.

Does acupuncture work?

Acupuncture has proven effective for a variety of symptoms and diseases. The Chinese have a long history of research into the effects of

acupuncture. In the United States acupuncture has been the subject of a variety of research trials. Please view the statements on acupuncture from the World Health Organization and the National Institute of Health for more detailed information.

In our clinic we have seen excellent results in the treatment of a wide variety of problems. Pain conditions both chronic and acute such as back pain, headache, neck pain, shoulder and knee pain, hand and foot pain and pain from tendonitis respond very well to acupuncture in our experience. Digestive problems such as nausea, cramping, bloating, stomach pain and bowel problems also have improved with acupuncture. Other conditions treated include stress, anxiety, insomnia, allergies, common cold, sinus congestion, urinary problems, menstrual discomfort, fertility issues, fatigue, weakness and more.

Is acupuncture safe?

Acupuncture is generally regarded as a very safe treatment method. It

should always be performed by a trained and licensed professional. This training includes detailed understanding of anatomy, proper acupuncture technique, safety requirements and precautions. Pacific Healing Arts clinic only uses disposable acupuncture needles to ensure your safety. Disposable needles are used once on one patient and are then properly disposed of to avoid the possibility of infection.

Does acupuncture hurt?

Acupuncture is practically painless. The insertion of the acupuncture needle is generally pain free; sometimes there may be a “pinch” sensation. During the acupuncture treatment a variety of sensations may be felt at the needle location. These sensations may include tingling, warmth, fullness, numbness, a feeling of movement or even no sensation. These various sensations are normal and are a sign of the bodies’ natural energy or “Qi” being activated.

Are acupuncture needles like the needles used for injections?

Acupuncture needles are very different from the hypodermic needles used for injections and blood drawing. Acupuncture needles are solid rather than hollow and they are very thin. Additionally the point of an acupuncture needle is shaped like a pine needle and does not have the cutting edge of an injection needle. Because of these qualities the acupuncture needle tends to cause little or no pain. Let your acupuncturist know if you are very sensitive to needles.

What can I expect after my acupuncture treatment?

Expect to feel better. Patients often experience a full or partial improvement in their symptoms and condition after their first treatment. Many patients also report feeling more relaxed and “centered” after a treatment. Each individual is unique and will respond to acupuncture differently. Some people may

experience immediate improvement. Others may experience a very brief worsening of their symptoms followed by a longer lasting improvement, this is normal. Additionally some people may feel energized after a treatment while others may feel the need for more rest. Please discuss your individual experience with your practitioner.

How many treatments will I need?

The number of treatments required will vary depending on your condition and your response to treatment. Acute conditions often require fewer treatments while chronic and long standing conditions may require more treatments. Acute problems may resolve with just a few weekly or bi-weekly treatments while chronic conditions may require several months or more of treatment. Patients often receive treatment once per week. In some cases several treatments per week are required, for example if a patient with pain has relief for 2-3 days following acupuncture then two or more

treatments a week may be required. Often people will continue to receive periodic “wellness” treatments after their initial problem is resolved.

Do I need to do anything special before or after receiving an acupuncture treatment?

It is best to wear comfortable non-restrictive clothing for an acupuncture treatment. Avoid drinking, using intoxicants or eating heavy meals before receiving an acupuncture treatment. After receiving an acupuncture treatment it is best to avoid stressful or high exertion activities. Making time to relax and enjoy yourself after your treatment is ideal.

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