

# ACUPUNCTURE

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## WHAT IS ACUPUNCTURE?

Acupuncture, simply stated, is a health science which is used to successfully treat both pain and dysfunction in the body.

Acupuncture has its roots deeply planted in China. In fact, authorities agree the science is between 5,000 and 7,000 years old. Its use spread throughout ancient Egypt, the Middle East, the Roman Empire and later into Western Europe as merchants and missionaries to China told of the amazing discoveries the people of the Orient had developed. Acupuncture did not become known on a national level in the U.S. until 1971 when diplomatic relations between China and America were relaxed.

At first glimpse, Acupuncture appears strange, as its primary notoriety is the utilization of needles placed in the skin at various locations to relieve pain or affect a body part.

Early Chinese physicians discovered there is an energy network traversing just below the surface of the skin which communicates from the exterior to the internal organs and structures at over 1,000 "Acupoints" on the body. This energy works in harmony with the body's circulatory, nervous, muscular, digestive, genitourinary and all other systems of the body. When this vital energy becomes blocked or weakened, an effect in a body system or anatomic location becomes evident. Stimulation of one or a combination of key "Acupoints" on the body may restore harmony to the affected area.

Historians have stated, "More people have benefited from Acupuncture over the course of fifty centuries than the combined total of all other healing sciences, both ancient and modern."

## WHAT IS MERIDIAN THERAPY?

Meridian therapy is the accepted name employed by those who practice the principle of Acupuncture without the use of a penetrating needle.

Acupuncture is a principle, not a technique. Therefore, there are many ways to stimulate an Acupoint other than a needle, just as there are many different strokes used in swimming.

Many practitioners use electronic stimulation, laser beam or pressure massage to treat an Acupoint. The principle of Acupuncture does not change, only the technique.

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

Far too often in the medical professions, a patient is told after extensive examination, "There is nothing wrong," "It is all in your head," or "Sorry, you'll have to learn to live with it." The examining doctor unable to find the cause of the problem has little else to tell the patient. Fortunately, many physicians are now referring their patients for an Acupuncture evaluation as a last resort.

The human body's energy flow courses over twelve meridians or channels that are normally well balanced. If a disruption of energy flow exists, it can alter the entire system, producing pain or symptoms in the body.

If we were to compare a 175 pound man on one end of a seesaw and a 45 pound child on the other end, it becomes obvious the seesaw would be "broken" due to the fact the heavier person would be sitting on the ground and the lighter would be dangling in the air. Even though the seesaw is producing a symptom of being broken—extensive examination would not reveal anything wrong with the seesaw. The obvious answer is in the balance. Correction of the balance corrects the problem.

This is Acupuncture's goal—to restore normalcy to the body's energy balance by utilizing a combination of Acupoints located on the twelve meridians. This is accomplished by a variety of means, the needle is just one.

Medical research continues in this country and others to attempt to explain in western scientific terms what the ancient Chinese seventy centuries earlier described. Today, many theories have been postulated as to why Acupuncture is so effective in pain control. However, as more discoveries are made, more research is indicated.

## IS TREATMENT PAINFUL?

One would assume inserting a needle into the skin would be painful since most of us can relate to being stuck with a pin or having a hypodermic injection. However, four Acupuncture needles can easily be inserted into the hollow tube of a hypodermic needle. Because of the extreme slenderness of the needle, most people compare the sensations "less than a mosquito bite." A phenomena referred to as "TEHCHI" occurs when the energy is contacted. This sensation is felt as a mild to moderate heaviness or tingling.

Needles obviously still have their place in clinical practice. However, many physicians certified in Acupuncture and licensed Acupuncturists are employing electronic and laser stimulation to the Acupoint with equal effectiveness as the needle. Both of these procedures are painless and are quickly becoming standard worldwide.

The tapping needle "teishen" is not really a needle as it does not pierce the skin. It produces a mild to moderate sensation. Compare it to tapping a ball point pen on the skin. This form of stimulation has been used successfully for centuries. Thumb pressure is equally impressive and not considered painful.