

# Acupuncture

## Acupuncture Rebalances The Body's Energy Forces

Acupuncture is an ancient Chinese procedure in which points on the body are stimulated using a number of very fine needles. The principle basis of acupuncture stems from the idea that the body has an energy or life force running through it. This energy force is known as qi or chi, and involves all elements of health in an individual - the spiritual, emotional, mental and physical aspects.

When one or more of these elements are out of balance in the body, the flow of chi can be blocked (insufficient) or in excess. The resulting imbalance causes illnesses in the body. Acupuncture is used to balance these elements so the body can recover its health.

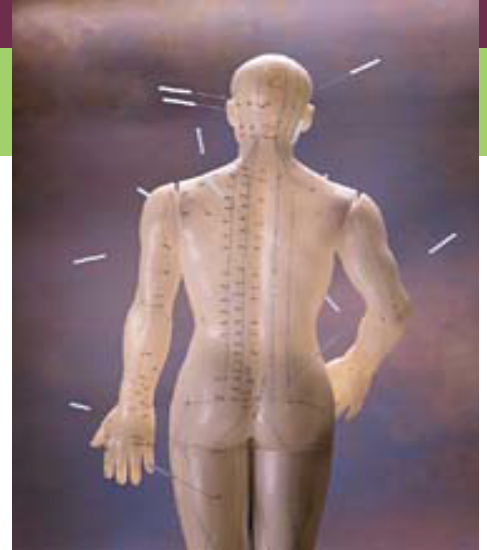
Chi travels through channels in the body called meridians. There are 14 meridians running up and down (vertically) the surface of our body. Twelve organ meridians are in each half of the body (meridians are in pairs), and two unpaired midline meridians. The acupuncture points are specific locations where these meridians come to the surface of the skin, and are easily accessible by needles.

### What Can It Treat?

Many conditions and diseases can be treated with acupuncture, according to the U.S. National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine including, but not limited to:

- Nausea triggered by chemotherapy or surgery.
- Menstrual cramps, low back pain or headaches.
- Fibromyalgia or osteoarthritis.
- Asthma/allergies/sinuses.
- Carpal tunnel syndrome or tennis elbow.
- Stroke rehabilitation.
- Addictions of all kinds.
- Fatigue.
- Facial neuralgia.

Acupuncture seems to be useful as a stand-alone treatment for some conditions, but it's also increasingly being used in conjunc-



tion with more conventional Western medical treatments. For example, doctors may combine acupuncture and drugs to control pain and nausea after surgery.

In addition, research shows acupuncture can help manage postoperative dental pain and alleviate chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting. It also appears to offer relief for chronic menstrual cramps and tennis elbow.

### How Does it Work?

Acupuncturists can use as many as nine types of needles but six are most commonly in use today. These needles vary in length, width of shaft, and shape of head. Today, most needles are disposable, discarded according to medical bio-hazard regulations and guidelines.

Variations include electro-acupuncture which uses a very small electrical impulse to stimulate the needles. Lasers and sound waves (sonopuncture) can also be used. And auricular acupuncture or ear acupuncture is often used for various addictions, including alcoholism and drug addiction.

When chi is in balance, many conditions and ailments can work themselves out.