

Pinpointing Pain: What is Behind Acupuncture?

“The fine Doctor acts even before there is anything wrong”.

Huangdi Neijing, 200BC.


Over the past centuries, many people have been successfully treated with acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). From detecting subtle energy imbalances before symptoms arise to treating disease and chronic pain, acupuncture is very diverse and effective. In TCM, it is believed that the body consists of channels or rivers (meridians) that can become blocked by a variety of factors such as stress, lifestyle, poor diet and the environment. These “blockages” can manifest into a variety of symptoms or syndromes causing disease, chronic pain or generally feeling unwell. Also, a meridian can have an excess of Qi (energy) or a deficiency of Qi, which can damage the body’s natural harmony. In short, acupuncture is based on the manipulation of the energy lines in the body. By adjusting the flow of Qi, an acupuncture treatment can relieve chronic pain and can even cure disease. Due to its positive results and holistic nature, acupuncture has given rise to the increasing popularity of alternative medicine practices in modern western society. With a fascinating history and an exciting future, the practice of acupuncture still plays a significant role in the healing arts.



Although the exact date is unknown, acupuncture originated in China. It has been practiced for centuries based on the philosophy of Yin and Yang and the Five Elements (Metal, Earth, Wind, Fire and Water). These theories provided the intellectual framework of Chinese scientific thinking. It is believed that a disturbance in the balance of Yin or Yang or the Five Elements causes illness. Historically, the practice of acupuncture was so influential that it spread throughout Asia, where different styles of this ancient art form were created, and eventually appeared in the west in the 1700s in Paris. From there, it has expanded to almost every country in the world. From ancient healers to modern day doctors, the effectiveness of acupuncture and TCM is continually practiced and supported.



Currently, acupuncture is practiced by a wide range of health professionals from a variety of backgrounds. As diverse as the people who practice acupuncture is how diverse the field has become. Acupuncture is even practiced in some veterinarian clinics and it is applicable for almost any type of disorder. Today, acupuncture is used for cosmetology, weight loss, drug rehabilitation, smoking prevention, impotence and acne – just to name a few. It also proves to be highly effective as prophylactic care and can be combined with electricity, color light therapy, tuning forks and other tools to promote the flow or manipulation of Qi. As the development of these ancient practices continues to grow and be refined, acupuncture is gaining a lot of momentum in western countries.

With advances in science and research, the future of acupuncture is extremely compelling. We have been given an opportunity to start gathering more information and scientifically prove what the ancient Chinese knew as fact. For example, Kirlian photography was accidentally created by a Russian scientist in the 1930s. Although this type of photography is not well-known, it has supported the existence of acupuncture meridians as well as acupoints. This photography uses a photographic plate and a high-tension spark in order to take pictures of auras (the energy that surrounds us) as well as the same energy that creates all life. Similarly, there is further research being done which combines traditional and modern medicine to find out precisely which areas of the brain are being stimulated when certain acupoints are applied. Of particular interest however, is the combination of western and eastern medicine. There is an increasing appeal in combined health clinics in which the “east meets west” relationship is harmonious and can provide its patients with diverse medical knowledge and a holistic approach. Most importantly, doctors can work together towards the common goal of what is most effective and least invasive for the patient. 

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**Integrative Medicine:
As natural as possible,
as scientific as necessary.**

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