

the point of acupuncture

Good health is not just the absence of pain or disease. Traditional acupuncture works to maintain the body's equilibrium by focusing on all aspects of wellbeing, physical, mental and emotional.

According to traditional Chinese philosophy, our health is dependent on the body's motivating energy moving in a smooth and balanced way through a series of channels beneath the skin. This energy is known as qi.

The flow of qi can be disturbed by any number of factors. These include emotional states such as anxiety, anger, or grief, as well as poor nutrition, hereditary factors, infections, and trauma. When the qi is unbalanced, illness may result.

The acupuncturist inserts ultra fine needles at chosen points along the channels of energy. The aim is to stimulate the body's own healing response and restore its natural balance.

Treatment is aimed at the root of your condition, as well as your symptoms. This approach can lead to a more permanent resolution of your problem.

The British Acupuncture Council

The British Acupuncture Council is a registering body for professional acupuncturists. Our aim is to ensure the health and safety of the public at all times. We do this by maintaining high standards of education, ethics, discipline and practice. Acupuncturists registered with the BAAC carry the letters MBAC after their name.

When you choose to visit a BAAC member you can be sure that your practitioner:

- has completed a first degree level training in traditional acupuncture including appropriate elements of western medical sciences, or its equivalent
- abides by the Council's Code of Safe Practice and Code of Professional Conduct
- complies with current health and safety legislation
- is approved by the National Blood Service
- is covered by full Professional Indemnity and Public/Products Liability insurance
- updates their practice skills by following an individual programme of continuing professional development.

The BAAC publishes a Register of Practitioner Members annually. Copies can be obtained by sending a cheque for £5.00 to the address below. Alternatively, a list of practitioners in your local area can be requested free of charge.

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Council

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A large print version of this leaflet is available on request

Find your local practitioner:

acupuncture
for you

British
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Council

All you need to
know to make the
right choice

acupuncture works

Acupuncture is a tried and tested system of medicine. The Chinese and other eastern cultures have been using acupuncture to restore, promote and maintain good health for thousands of years.

Nowadays more and more people are finding this long established therapy can offer an effective solution to all manner of today's ills.

Acupuncture is now accepted all over the world as a valid system of healthcare and in the UK there are currently over 2,800 qualified acupuncturists registered with the British Acupuncture Council.

Who has acupuncture?

Many people come to acupuncture for help with specific symptoms or conditions. Others choose acupuncture as a preventive measure to strengthen their constitution, or because they just feel generally unwell. Acupuncture is considered suitable for all ages, including babies and children. It can also be used alongside conventional medicine.

What happens when I go for treatment?

You will be asked about your current symptoms, what treatment you have received, your medical history, your diet, digestive system, sleeping patterns and emotional state. The acupuncturist is also likely to feel your pulses on both wrists, and may ask to look at your tongue. The acupuncture points used are not always close to the part of the body where you experience the problem. For example, although you might suffer from headaches, needles may be inserted in your foot or hand.

How many sessions will I need?

Frequency and length of treatment depends on your individual condition. Some change is usually felt after five treatments, although occasionally only one or two treatments are required. Some patients may need long term treatment. Your acupuncturist will normally ask to see you once or twice a week at first.

Should my doctor know?

If you have been prescribed medication it makes sense to tell your doctor that you are planning to have acupuncture. You should always tell your acupuncturist about any medication you are taking as this may affect your response to the acupuncture treatment.

Is it safe?

Acupuncture has a very sound track record. The needles used are single-use, sterile and disposable. Responses to treatment can sometimes include tiredness or mild dizziness, and on occasion minor bruising may occur. However, all such reactions are short-lived.

What does it feel like?

Acupuncture needles are much finer than needles used for injections and blood tests. When the needle is inserted, the sensation is often described as a tingling or dull ache.

What can acupuncture do for me?

Acupuncture is widely considered to be beneficial for a range of illnesses and symptoms, from clearly defined complaints such as headaches, vomiting, neck ache, and back, arthritic and dental pain, through to more general feelings of ill health such as nausea or low energy.

Conditions commonly treated fall into the following categories of disorder: eye, ear, nose and throat; circulatory; gastrointestinal; gynaecological; genito-urinary; immune; musculo-skeletal; neurological; respiratory; emotional and psychological; addiction.

Many women choose to have acupuncture throughout pregnancy and childbirth. In addition, it is increasingly used by couples dealing with problems of fertility or to support IVF treatment.

To find out more about what acupuncture can do for you please speak to your local BAAC acupuncturist or contact the British Acupuncture Council. (Details on the back of this leaflet.)