

# Acupuncture

At Argyle Family Chiropractic we utilize several forms of acupuncture depending on the case. **These forms consist of electrical stimulation with (micro-current) very low form of energy, Cold Laser, Acupressure and Needles.**

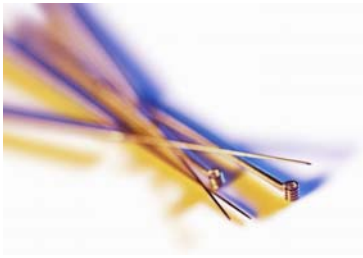


## How might acupuncture work?

Acupuncture is one of the key components of the system of traditional Chinese medicine. A whole medical system that originated in China. It is based on the concept that disease results from disruption in the flow of **qi (pronounced Chi)** an imbalance in the forces of yin and yang. Practices such as herbs, meditation, massage, and acupuncture seek to aid healing by restoring the yin-yang balance and the flow of qi. In the TCM system of medicine, the body is seen as a delicate balance of two opposing and inseparable forces: yin and yang. The concept of two opposing yet complementary forces described in traditional Chinese medicine. Yin represents cold, slow, or passive aspects of the person, while yang represents hot, excited, or active aspects. A major theory is that health is achieved through balancing yin and yang and disease is caused by an imbalance leading to a blockage in the flow of qi. Yin represents the cold, slow, or passive principle, while yang represents the hot, excited, or active principle. Among the major assumptions in TCM are that health is achieved by maintaining the body in a "balanced state" and that disease is due to an internal imbalance of yin and yang. This imbalance leads to blockage in the flow of qi. In traditional Chinese medicine, the vital energy or life force proposed to regulate a person's spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical health and to be influenced by the opposing forces of yin and yang, (vital energy) along pathways known as meridians. It is believed that there are 12 main meridians and 8 secondary meridians and that there are more than 2,000 acupuncture points on the human body that connect with them.

**Preclinical studies have documented acupuncture's effects, but they have not been able to fully explain how acupuncture works within the framework of the Western system of medicine that is commonly practiced in the United States.** It is proposed that acupuncture produces its effects through regulating the nervous system, thus aiding the activity of pain-killing biochemicals such as endorphins and immune system cells at specific sites in the body. In addition, studies have shown that acupuncture may alter brain chemistry by changing the release of neurotransmitters and neurohormones and, thus, affecting the parts of the central nervous system related to sensation and involuntary body functions, such as immune reactions and processes that regulate a person's blood pressure, blood flow, and body temperature.

If you can understand that everything in our lives requires balance, just like there is a winter to every summer, and the fact that we are all created with energy then the basic understanding of acupuncture is not that far off. But if you are one that requires exacts and factual proof of how everything works then the concept of acupuncture may be a little harder to understand. The benefits I have seen with it are remarkable though.



## A History and In-depth Information on Acupuncture

This is an introduction to the ancient medical art of Acupuncture. Today in most western cultures it is considered a "new alternative" medicine. In reality Acupuncture (and its related Moxibustion) are practiced medical treatments that are over 5,000 years old. Very basically, Acupuncture is the insertion of very fine needles, (sometimes in conjunction with electrical stimulus), on the body's surface, **in order to influence physiological functioning of the body.**

Acupuncture can also be used in conjunction with heat produced by burning specific herbs, this is called Moxibustion. In addition, a non-invasive method of massage therapy, called Acupressure, can also be effective.

The first record of Acupuncture is found in the 4,700 year old Huang Di Nei Jing (Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine). This is said to be the oldest medical textbook in the world. It is said to have been written down from even earlier theories by Shen Nung, the father of Chinese Medicine. Shen Nung documented theories about circulation, pulse, and the heart over 4,000 years before European medicine had any concept about them.

As the basis of Acupuncture, Shen Nung theorized that the body had an energy force running throughout it. This energy force is known as Qi (roughly pronounced Chee). The Qi consists of all essential life activities which include the spiritual, emotional, mental and the physical aspects of life. A person's health is influenced by the flow of Qi in the body, in combination with the universal forces of Yin and Yang . (I will discuss Yin and Yang a little later). If the flow of Qi is insufficient, unbalanced or interrupted, Yin and Yang become unbalanced, and illness may occur. Qi travels throughout the body along "Meridians" or special pathways. The Meridians, (or Channels), are the same on both sides of the body (paired). There are fourteen main meridians running vertically up and down the surface of the body. Out of these, there are twelve organ Meridians in each half of the body (remember they are in pairs). There are also two unpaired midline Meridians. There will be a diagram of Acupuncture points for treating diseases of the Meridians at the end of the digestive system paper. (See Appendix 1). The acupuncture points are specific locations where the Meridians come to the surface of the skin, and are easily accessible by "needling," Moxibustion, and Acupressure. The connections between them ensure that there is an even circulation of Qi, a balance between Yin and Yang.

Energy constantly flows up and down these pathways. When pathways become obstructed, deficient, excessive, or just unbalanced, Yin and Yang are said to be thrown out of balance. This causes illness. Acupuncture is said to restore the balance.

Yin and Yang is an important theory in the discussion of Acupuncture treatment, in relation to the Chinese theory of body systems. As stated earlier Qi is an energy force that runs throughout the body. In addition, Qi is also prevalent throughout nature as well. Qi is comprised of two parts, Yin and Yang. Yin and Yang are opposite forces, that when balanced, work together. Any upset in the balance will result in natural calamities, in nature; and disease in humans. Yin is signified by female attributes, passive, dark, cold, moist, that which moves medially, and deficient of Yang. Yang is signified by male attributes, light, active, warm, dry, that which moves laterally, and deficient of Yin. Nothing is completely Yin or Yang. The most striking example of this is man himself. A man is the combination of his mother (Yin) and his father (Yang). He contains qualities of both: This is the universal symbol describing the constant flow of yin and yang forces. You'll notice that within yin, there is

Yang, and within Yang, there is the genesis of Yin. Whether or not you believe in Taoist philosophy, (which all this is based on), one thing is indisputable: Acupuncture works.

Acupuncturists can use as many as nine types of Acupuncture needles, though only six are commonly used today. These needles vary in length, width of shaft, and shape of head. Today, most needles are disposable. **They are used once and discarded in accordance with medical biohazard regulations and guidelines.** There are a few different precise methods by which Acupuncturists insert needles. Points can be needled anywhere in the range of 15 degrees to 90 degrees relative to the skin surface, depending on the treatment called for. In most cases, a sensation, felt by the patient, is desired. This sensation, which is not pain, is called deqi (pronounced dah-chee). The following techniques are some which may be used by an Acupuncturist immediately following insertion: Raising and Thrusting, Twirling or Rotation, Combination of Raising/Thrusting and Rotation, Plucking, Scraping (vibrations sent through the needle), and Trembling (another vibration technique). Once again, techniques are carefully chosen based on the ailment.

There are a few related procedures that fall into the range of Acupuncture treatments. The first is **Electro-Acupuncture**. This is the using of very small electrical impulses through the Acupuncture needles. This method is generally used for analgesia (pain relief or prevention). The amount of power used is only a **few micro amperes**, but the frequency of the current can vary from 5 to 2,000 Hz. The higher frequencies are generally used for surgery (usually abdominal), and the lower frequencies for general pain relief. The first reported successful use of Electro-Acupuncture was in 1958 in China for a tonsillectomy. Today, it is a common method of surgical analgesia used in China. **Other methods for stimulating Acupuncture points have used Lasers** and sound waves (Sonopuncture). A very commonly used treatment in the United States is Auriculotherapy or Ear Acupuncture. The theory is that since the ear has a rich nerve and blood supply, it would have connections all over the body. For this reason, the ear has many Acupuncture points which correspond to many parts and organs of the body. Auricular Acupuncture has been successful in treating problems ranging from obesity to alcoholism, to drug addiction.

**One of the most popular alternatives to Acupuncture is Acupressure.** This is simply Acupuncture without needles. Stimulation of the Acupuncture points is performed with the fingers or an instrument with a hard ball shaped head. Another variation of Acupressure is Reflexology (also called Zone Therapy). This is where the soles of the feet and the posterior-inferior regions of the ankle joints are stimulated. Many diseases of the internal organs can be treated in this manner.

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