

Sage Health Centre Acupuncture Clinic

Just How Does Acupuncture Work?



Well over 5,000 years ago, the Chinese began mapping out the energetic pathways (meridians) on the body. On these pathways they marked specific points along each of the pathways (there are hundreds of them). Many of the meridians are associated with different organs and body functions. The different points along the meridians affect the energy in different ways. For example, some points can drain excess, while other points tonify, or sedate, or

stimulate, etc.

Oriental medical theory is generally based on the dichotomy of opposites more commonly known as the yin/yang theory (hot/cold, excess/deficiency, up/down, internal/external to name a few). It involves the evaluation of the energy in a person's body, in the food he/she is eating, and in his/her environment. These factors are integrated together to determine how it is affecting the individual's overall health (or specific condition). Acupuncture involves the manipulation of the body's life-force energy (Qi). A healthy person maintains a harmonious balance in the circulation of qi. It is believed that when this balance is offset (too much here, not enough there, flowing in the wrong direction, etc.) illness ensues, or at times the energy can stagnate (get stuck somewhere) - causing pain. For example, some people could develop a pattern of excess in certain aspects of their energy which could be stemming from environmental influences, food they are eating, organ dysfunctions, and/or excess physical or mental activities. Depending on the individual, this could affect their qi causing possible symptoms like tiredness, pain, sleep disorders, irritability, indigestion, headaches, or any number of problems (it's different for everyone). This can be treated by finding a method of manipulating the qi (energy) to restore balance (like reducing the excess in the above example). This can be done by using acupuncture, herbs, tui na (Chinese massage/bodywork), and qi gong, as well as dietary/nutritional counseling.

Acupuncture is a way of manipulating the qi by inserting very thin needles into specific points on the body in order to achieve the desired (therapeutic) effect. How well this

works is highly dependent on the ability of the practitioner to make the proper diagnosis, to use an effective technique, as well as to choose the right combination of points to correct the problem and restore balance. Although some symptoms may seem mild, if the cause of the problem is not addressed or corrected, it could eventually become chronic and more serious. This can lead to the development of other problems/symptoms. Thus it is usually best (and most effective) when treated in the mild stage before it starts to get really serious. If it already is chronic, it is likely to take longer (with more treatments) to restore balance.

Acupuncture alone can be very effective in treating many health problems. It is known to be therapeutic when used as preventive medicine, for sports enhancement, and to facilitate faster healing of sports/work related injuries (it is used often in martial arts). In many ways, it can be very useful in combination with other forms of medicine (complimentary). Also, other modes of alternative medicine (herbs, tui na, dietary/nutritional counseling, qi gong) have been shown to dramatically increase the effectiveness of acupuncture.

Commonly treated Conditions

Modern medical science and the World Health Organization, has acknowledged the effectiveness of Acupuncture and TCM in many different areas. The following is a representative sample of conditions that are commonly treated with TCM:

-  **Addictions:** smoking, alcohol/drug withdrawal.
-  **Digestive problems:** Constipation, Diarrhea, Irritable Bowel Syndrome, Gas.
-  **Emotional problems:** Anxiety, Depression.
-  **Gynecological problems:** painful menstruation, irregular periods, menopausal concerns and PMS.
-  **Muscular / Skeletal problems:** Fibromyalgia, injuries and sprains, joint problems, back and neck pain, sciatica, bone spurs.
-  **Neurological problems:** headaches, migraines.
-  **Respiratory problems:** Allergies, Asthma, Bronchitis, Cough.

 **Sexual problems:** infertility, impotence.

Other Modalities used in the Acupuncture Clinic

 **Cupping:** Cupping is a technique in which a glass cup is heated and applied to the surface of the skin. The heat reduces the pressure in the cup allowing the superficial musculature to be suctioned into the glass. The local congestion releases any stagnant energy and blood so fresh energy can come in and nourish the tissue. The cup can be held stationary or moved over a large region of the body such as the upper back.

 **Guasha:** Guasha is a similar technique in which an instrument such as a spoon, coin or horn is used to brush the skin releasing stagnation. Oils are used to lubricate the skin prior to applying the technique. Commonly patients experience immediate relief of localized tension and stress.

A practitioner may use cupping and guasha for traumatic injury, pain, chronic respiratory conditions, gastro-intestinal disorders and a variety of other conditions. Though they may be used in by themselves, typically cupping and guasha are used in conjunction with acupuncture.

 **Tuina:** Tuina is a form of medical Asian bodywork distinctive from western massage in that it focuses on promoting free flow energy in the acupuncture channels. Tuina is composed of a series of techniques designed to lubricate joints, relax muscles and promote energy flow. After careful assessment, a practitioner will chose and apply techniques to the affected region. Tui na is commonly used for the following disorders:

- Muscle sprains, strains, spasms/adhesions, herniated disks, neck tension, scoliosis, carpal tunnel syndrome, tennis/golfer's elbow, TMJ, sport injury, accident traumas.

 **Moxibustion:** Moxibustion, or moxa, is a technique in which an herb, mugwort is heated above the skin to stimulate qi, blood and bring warmth to the area. Moxa can be place directly on an acupuncture needle or held over a region of the body to return balance. Moxa is used for a multitude of conditions such as digestive problems, chronic pain, immunodeficiency's, fertility and menstrual disorders.

THE INVESTMENT IN YOUR HEALTH

The cost for the initial consultation, evaluation and treatment is \$195.00. Subsequent treatments cost \$88.00. If medically appropriate, other healing modalities such as Tui Nua and heat therapy are included in the Acupuncture treatment. A sliding fee scale can be arranged by discussing fees with your Acupuncturist before treatment begins.

Acupuncturist and Clinical Herbalist Theresa Girolami



Theresa M. Girolami, B.Sc., M.Ac. -- Bio/Curriculum Vitae

Education and Work Experience

State of Pennsylvania

GED - 1970

Cooper Medical Center, Cherry Hill, NJ

Associates in Radiology - 1975

University of Baltimore

B.Sc. 1985

Johns Hopkins Hospital

Department of Oncology 1977 - 1987

O' Delft Corporation of America

Instructor and Back-up to marketing team 1987 – 1991

Traditional Acupuncture Institute (Now TAI-Sophia University) Columbia, MD

Masters Degree in Acupuncture 1991

Traditional Acupuncture Institute (Now TAI-Sophia University) Columbia, MD

Certificate in Chinese Herbal Medicine 1994

Traditional Acupuncture Institute (Now TAI-Sophia University) Columbia, MD

Clinical Instructor and Clinical Supervisor 1994 -2001

Co-Founder/Owner with Victoria Y. O'Neill, RN, LMT, CNC

Sage Health Centre

Severna Park MD 1999 – Present

David Winston's Center for Herbal Studies

Clinical Herbal Medicine

September 2010 - 2012

Theresa is licensed to practice Acupuncturist by the State of MD Her practice includes Acupuncture, Massage Therapy, and Nutritional Coaching. Theresa has been practicing successfully for 20 years and her areas of certification and specialization include:

-  Women's Health: Obstetrics, Gynecology, Breast Disease & Infertility
 -  Chinese Medical Pulse Diagnosis
 -  Pain Relief with Moxibustion and Other Adjunctive Therapies
 -  TCM Treatment of Allergies and Autoimmune Diseases
 -  TCM Treatment of Mental-Emotional Conditions with Chinese Medicine
 -  Chronic Digestive Disorders
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-  Certified Wellness and Nutrition Counselor 2001 to present

Acupuncture Office Location

Appointments are offered at the following locations:

Sage Health Centre
497 Ritchie Hyw #2-C
Severna Park MD 21146
410-544-5155