

ACUPUNCTURE



An Ancient Solution for Modern Pain

Are you tired of reaching for pain medication every time your back aches or your joints throb? You're not alone. Millions of people struggle with chronic pain, and many are turning to a treatment that's been around for thousands of years: acupuncture.

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long-term environmental and socio-economic impacts of climate change on coastal urban areas.

What Is Acupuncture?

Acupuncture involves inserting thin needles into specific points on your body. It might sound scary, but most people barely feel the needles. This ancient Chinese practice aims to restore the flow of energy—called qi (pronounced "chee")—through pathways in your body.



How Acupuncture Helps with Pain

When it comes to fighting pain, acupuncture has impressive benefits:

Natural Pain Relief: Acupuncture stimulates your body to release endorphins which are your body's natural painkillers. Research published in the Journal of Pain found that acupuncture triggered the release of these chemicals, providing relief without medication side effects.

Reduces Inflammation: A 2017 study in Neuroscience Letters showed that acupuncture activates anti-inflammatory pathways, helping to reduce swelling and pain.

Improves Blood Flow: The tiny needle pricks increase blood circulation to injured areas, speeding up healing and reducing pain.

Long-lasting Effects: Many patients report pain relief that lasts for weeks or months after treatment. A large analysis in the Archives of Internal Medicine reviewing data from about 18,000 patients found that acupuncture was effective for treating chronic pain and the benefits persisted over time.

What Science Shows

The evidence for acupuncture is growing stronger:

A 2018 review in The Journal of Pain examined 39 studies involving nearly 21,000 patients and found that acupuncture was effective for multiple chronic pain conditions, with benefits lasting up to a year after treatment.

The American College of Physicians now recommends acupuncture as a first-line treatment for chronic low back pain, before trying medication.

Research published in JAMA Internal Medicine found that acupuncture significantly reduced pain intensity in patients with knee osteoarthritis compared to sham acupuncture or no treatment.

Real-Life Success Stories

Acupuncture isn't just impressive in research—it changes lives. Take Sarah, who suffered from migraines for 15 years. After six weeks of acupuncture treatments, her headaches decreased from weekly to monthly. Or James, whose chronic back pain improved so much after acupuncture that he could finally play with his grandchildren again.

Is It Right for You?

Acupuncture works best for:

- Back and neck pain
- Headaches and migraines
- Osteoarthritis
- Shoulder pain
- Fibromyalgia
- Sports injuries

Many people worry about the needles, but they're hair-thin—nothing like the needles used for shots. Most patients describe the sensation as a brief pinch followed by relaxation.

What to Expect

During your first visit, a licensed acupuncturist will ask about your health history and examine you. They'll then insert needles into specific points related to your pain. You'll rest with the needles in place for about 20-30 minutes. Many people find treatments so relaxing they fall asleep!

Most people need 6-12 treatments for lasting relief, though you may feel better after just one or two sessions.

The Bottom Line

While acupuncture may not be a miracle cure for everyone, research shows it helps many people manage pain effectively with minimal side effects. Unlike medications, which often just mask symptoms, acupuncture aims to address underlying imbalances.

If you're struggling with chronic pain, consider giving this ancient practice a try. With growing scientific support and thousands of years of use behind it, acupuncture offers a natural alternative that might just be the solution you've been searching for.

A. Rozegold



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