

WHAT IS WESTERN

MEDICAL ACUPUNCTURE?

Western Medical Acupuncture involves the insertion of sterile, single-use acupuncture needles directly into the skin. This procedure causes biochemical changes within the body, which help reduce pain.

Essential features of Western Medical Acupuncture:

- Medical history and examination are used to establish a diagnosis.
- A tailored treatment is given and repeated according to the patient's initial response and changes they report.

IS IT THE SAME AS TCM ACUPUNCTURE?

Western Medical Acupuncture uses the same needles as Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) acupuncture; however, it is not the same technique.

Western acupuncturist makes a medical diagnosis and uses needles to influence the physiology of the body.

TCM acupuncturist make diagnosis in terms of a disturbance in the body's 'balance', which needs to be corrected by needles.



If you have any additional questions, ask
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WESTERN MEDICAL ACUPUNCTURE



CONDITIONS THAT ARE TREATABLE:

- ✓ Back and Neck pain
- ✓ Postural problems and tension
- ✓ Arm pain (shoulder impingements, tennis or golfer's elbow)
- ✓ Headaches
- ✓ Buttock and Leg pain (including sciatica pain)
- ✓ Hamstring strains
- ✓ Knee pain
- ✓ Calf tightness or cramps

These are just some of the musculoskeletal conditions that can be treated successfully.



5 MECHANISMS FOR UNDERSTANDING HOW IT WORKS

- 1. LOCAL EFFECTS**
Acupuncture produces many of its effects by stimulating nerve fibers in skin and muscles. This will cause the local blood vessels to dilate, so the local blood flow increases.
 - ✓ **Acupuncture promotes local healing**
- 2. SEGMENTAL ANALGESIA**
Acupuncture inhibits pain from any part of the body by targeting nerves in the spinal cord that targets that body part.
 - ✓ **Acupuncture reduces pain in the segment where the needles are inserted**
- 3. EXTRASEGMENTAL ANALGESIA**
The signals produced by the acupuncture needle then travel up to the brainstem. Here, the signals stimulate the body's own pain-suppressing mechanism, which decreases pain throughout the whole body.
 - ✓ **Acupuncture reduces pain throughout the body**
- 4. CENTRAL REGULATORY EFFECTS**
The signals produced by the acupuncture needle then travel up to the brain. This is where the acupuncture needle gets registered and affects the deeper structures such as the hypothalamus and limbic system.
 - ✓ **Acupuncture has a calming effect and improves wellbeing**
- 5. MYOFASCIAL TRIGGER POINTS (MTrP)**
When a muscle has been heavily overloaded or suddenly stretched it can develop a small area of damage that can be slow to heal and cause persistent pain.
 - ✓ **Acupuncture can inactivate MTrP**

IS IT PAINFUL?

The initial insertion of the needle does not usually cause any discomfort. Most patients describe treatment as feeling uncomfortable, but not painful. It is common to feel some soreness post treatment as with many manual therapy techniques. Typically, soreness can last anywhere between 1 hour and 2 days post treatment.

However, once soreness has subsided there should be an improvement in the initial symptoms. Some patients require 1-2 sessions, while others require 8-10. Individual results will vary.



WHAT CAN I DO AFTER THE TREATMENT?

You may be advised to use heat or ice over the area to help alleviate post-treatment soreness. You may need to temporarily modify your exercises or activities for 1 to 2 days afterwards.