

## **Some facts about Acupuncture**

TCM Anti-Cancer Centre  
Zhao Cheng R.TCMP, R.Ac., Ph.D.

### **What Diseases can Acupuncture Treat?**

Acupuncture can be remarkably effective in many conditions. The effectiveness is strongly dependent upon a thorough and accurate TCM diagnosis. The needling skills and techniques of the practitioner will also influence the effectiveness of the outcome.

### **Does Acupuncture Hurt?**

The patient should feel a slight sensation as the needle contacts the Qi. This feeling is known as 'deqi', or getting Qi. Deqi is not unpleasant and the sensation can either be a dull ache, a numbness, a tingling or a sensation of heat. In some instances the sensation travels along the line of the meridian and can affect whole areas of the body or limbs.

### **What are the Needles Like?**

Acupuncture needles have a coiled handle and an extremely fine shaft with a sharp point. The needles are solid and no substances are injected into the body. Needles come in different lengths and thicknesses according to the area of the body which is to be treated. The majority of practitioners use pre-packed and sterilized disposable needles that are used only once. Some will still prefer to use re-usable needles that require to be sterilized. Patients should inquire about the types of needles used prior to treatment.

### **What Happens During Treatment and How Many Treatments do I need?**

Treatment protocols, frequency and duration are a matter of professional judgment for the practitioner, in consultation with the patient. During a treatment, the practitioner selects appropriate points for their specific actions in relationship to the identified disharmony. The points are then needled and the needles may or may not be subsequently manipulated, either manually, or with a small electrical device, to achieve certain effects. The needles are usually retained in the body for approximately 15 to 30 minutes. A common course of treatment may initially involve 10-15 treatments, once every second or third day, but may be more or less frequent depending on the condition of the disorder. Multiple courses of treatment may sometimes be required.

### **What Is Medical Acupuncture?**

This generally refers to acupuncture performed by MDs, physiotherapists and chiropractors who do not use TCM theories and approaches in their diagnosis and treatment. Many Medical Acupuncturists obtained only short-term training in Acupuncture and use it as a tool to complement their regular practices, dealing mainly with pain related disorders.

# Health Benefits of Acupuncture

- asthma
- anxiety
- fibromyalgia
- depression
- cystitis
- headaches
- insomnia
- Irritable bowel syndrome
- chronic low back pain
- fibromyalgia
- strengthens the immune system
- Improves blood circulation
- overcoming certain addictions like smoking, alcohol, and drugs

