

# **What is Acupuncture and how does it work?**

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**The basic principle of acupuncture is to improve the overall well-being of a patient by means of balancing the energetic meridian system by clearing blockages and stimulating weaknesses.**



Acupuncture (AP) is part of the Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). TCM is based on ancient Chinese concepts of health and disease, including the theories of Yin-Yang, Qi, Change, Five Phases, the Six Evils, oriental diagnostic methods and the necessity for balance/control in all aspects of life. The Chinese maintained that illness is a state of imbalance in the normal energy flow of the body and that AP acting on the channels of energy (the meridians or AP channels) restores this natural flow.

In the western understanding of AP is based on the knowledge of the input/output terminals of a two-way system of data transmission between superficial reflex (reactive) points and the organs or parts that are related to these points via the neuro-endocrine system.

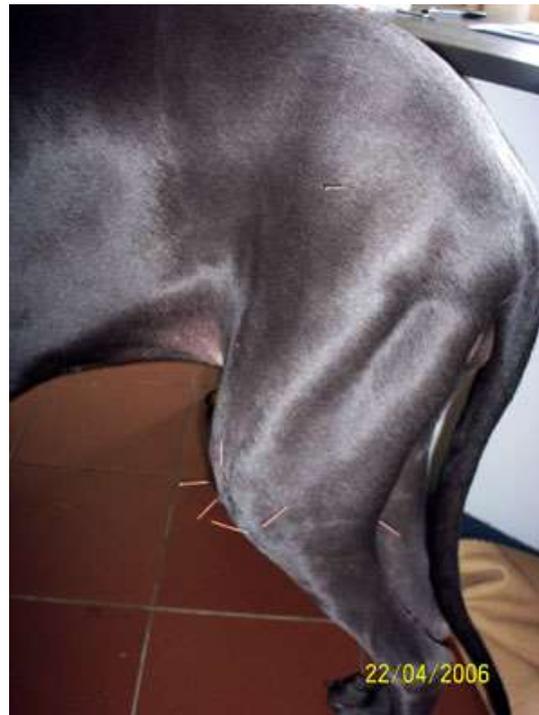
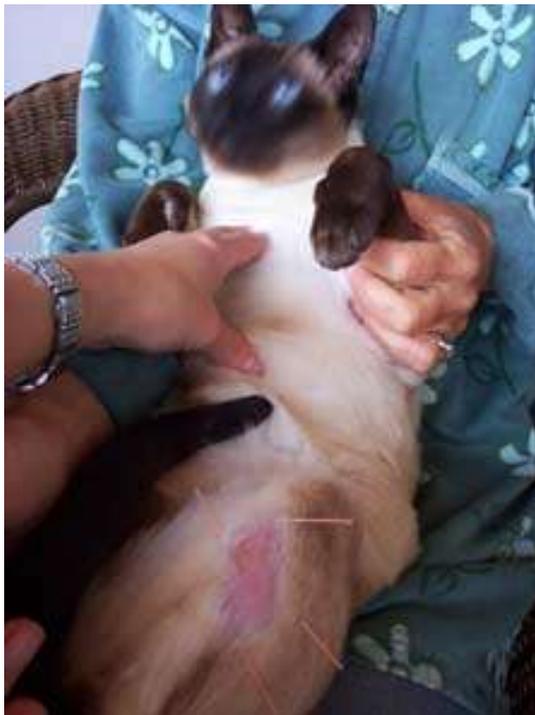


Both ways of looking at and understanding AP are equally valid and helpful.

Treatment involves placing either very fine needles, laser or digital (finger) pressure on / into specific points of the body to produce the desired balancing effect which would lead to healing. If electrodes are attached to the needles and a current passed through to enhance the effect, it is called Electro-Acupuncture. This is often needed in paralysis cases or where nerve damage has occurred.



Individuals vary in their sensitivity to acupuncture treatment. Also different conditions require different rates of stimulation; so it is hard to accurately predict how often treatment will be required. On the whole, chronic conditions are treated weekly for 4-6 weeks and then as often as is required to maintain the response. Acute conditions may require more frequent treatments.



**Most patients respond very well to acupuncture and accept the needles well, often relaxing or falling asleep during treatments.**

It is specifically useful in conditions that do not respond well to orthodox medication, or in cases where there is much side effects to orthodox medication, thus reducing, minimizing or avoiding side effects all together. Typical conditions that can be treated with acupuncture include:

Seizures / Epilepsy

Spondylosis - Vertebral

Degenerative Myelopathy	Traumatic Nerve Injury	Arthritis	Urinary Incontinence
Disc Injuries	Long Term Injuries	Fecal Incontinence	Allergic Dermatitis
Cruciate Injury	Hip Dysplasia	Intervertebral Disc Disease	Lick Granulomas
Wobblers	OCD	Non-healing Fractures	
Spondyloarthritis	Some Types of Paralysis	Bone Spurs	
Sensory Neurodermatitis	Stifle problems	Elbow & Knee Arthritis	
	Surgical Analgesia		

Acupressure is the massage version of acupuncture. It is used in our practice to enhance the healing process of the acupuncture treatment given in consultation where continued stimulation is necessary. You can do this at home yourself. It is important only to repeat these points as often as is prescribed, as not all patients require the same amount of stimulation. Only trained practitioners can decide when, which points and how often they need to be stimulated.

Acupressure is administered by someone specially trained in the technique or may be practiced at home by anyone who learns the location of the points, their corresponding symptoms or conditions, and how to apply the pressure.

The force recommended for different points varies. In general, most points call for a steady, downward (2 pound) pressure lasting one to two minutes. If you plan to apply pressure to a specific point several times in a row, do so on one side of the body before switching to the corresponding point on other side.

The risks of acupressure are minimal, provided certain cautions are observed. Never stimulate the points named Large Intestine 4 and Spleen 6 nor any points in the abdominal area unless specifically advised during pregnancy.

Do not apply pressure to open wounds, varicose veins, directly over tumours, inflamed or infected skin, sites of recent surgery, or areas where a bone is still broken, unless specifically indicated to do so by your practitioner.