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8-978-9758-975.2Naturheilkundliche KomplexbehandlungInfo:Strukturmerkmale: Klinisch-naturheilkundliches Team mit Behandlungsleitung durch einen Facharzt mit der Zusatzbezeichnung Naturheilverfahren und mit mindestens 3-jähriger Erfahrung im Bereich der klassischen NaturheilverfahrenStrukturmerkmale: Dem Team müssen neben Ärzten und fachkundigem Pflegepersonal mit mindestens halbjähriger naturheilkundlicher Erfahrung mindestens drei der folgenden Berufsgruppen angehören: Physiotherapeuten/Krankengymnasten/Masseure/Medizinische Bademeister/Sportlehrer, Ergotherapeuten, Psychologen, Ökotrophologen/Diätassistenten, Kunsttherapeuten/MusiktherapeutenMindestmerkmale: Behandlung von mindestens 120 Therapieminuten pro Tag durch das klinisch-naturheilkundliche TeamMindestmerkmale: Erstellung eines spezifisch-naturheilkundlichen diagnostischen und therapeutischen Konzeptes zu Beginn der BehandlungMindestmerkmale: Mindestens zweimal wöchentlich Teambesprechung unter Einbeziehung somatischer, ordnungstherapeutischer und sozialer Aspekte mit patientenbezogener Dokumentation der bisherigen Behandlungsergebnisse und der weiteren BehandlungszieleMindestmerkmale: Naturheilkundliche erweiterte Pflege durch fachkundiges PflegepersonalMindestmerkmale: Einsatz von mindestens 5 der folgenden 8 Therapiebereiche: Ernährungstherapie, Hydrotherapie/Thermotherapie, andere physikalische Verfahren, Phytotherapie, Ordnungstherapie, Bewegungstherapie, ausleitende Verfahren oder ein zusätzliches Verfahren (manuelle Therapie, Akupunktur/Chinesische Medizin, Homöopathie, Neuraltherapie, künstlerische Therapie (Kunst- und/oder Musiktherapie))Gleichzeitige weitergehende akutmedizinische Diagnostik und Therapie sind gesondert zu kodieren8-975.22Mindestens 7 bis höchstens 13 Behandlungstage und weniger als 1.680 Behandlungsminuten8-975.23Mindestens 14 bis höchstens 20 Behandlungstage und weniger als 2.520 Behandlungsminuten oder mindestens 10 bis höchstens 13 Behandlungstage und mindestens 1.680 Behandlungsminuten8-975.24Mindestens 21 Behandlungstage oder mindestens 14 Behandlungstage und mindestens 2.520 Behandlungsminuten8-975.3Anthroposophisch-medizinische KomplexbehandlungInfo:Die Behandlung erfolgt unter Anwendung mehrerer spezifischer Therapieverfahren mit insgesamt mindestens 30 Therapieeinheiten (jeweils von mindestens 30 Minuten) aus den Bereichen: Anwendungen und BäderDie Behandlung erfolgt unter Anwendung mehrerer spezifischer Therapieverfahren mit insgesamt mindestens 30 Therapieeinheiten (jeweils von mindestens 30 Minuten) aus den Bereichen: Massagen, Einreibungen und WickelDie Behandlung erfolgt unter Anwendung mehrerer spezifischer Therapieverfahren mit insgesamt mindestens 30 Therapieeinheiten (jeweils von mindestens 30 Minuten) aus den Bereichen: Bewegungstherapien (Heileurythmie und Krankengymnastik)Die Behandlung erfolgt unter Anwendung mehrerer spezifischer Therapieverfahren mit insgesamt mindestens 30 Therapieeinheiten (jeweils von mindestens 30 Minuten) aus den Bereichen: Künstlerische Therapie (Kunst- und/oder Musiktherapie)Die Behandlung erfolgt unter Anwendung mehrerer spezifischer Therapieverfahren mit insgesamt mindestens 30 Therapieeinheiten (jeweils von mindestens 30 Minuten) aus den Bereichen: Supportive Therapie und Patientenschulung Acupuncture, the practice of treating conditions through triggering certain points on the skin with needles, may help with allergies, migraines, or insomnia. 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Doesn’t that hurt?Well, no, it’s definitely not the overtly painful procedure you may be imagining, andconsideringthat it’s been studied and practiced for over 2,500 years, it seems acupuncture enthusiasts could seriously be onto something.Some people swear by acupuncture, citing it as a “miracle” to improving their quality of life because it’s said to be able to treat everything from depression and allergies to morning sickness and cramps.Acupuncture is an ancient Chinese medicine-based approach to treating a variety of conditions by triggering specific points on the skin with needles.Paul Kempisty, licensed acupuncturist with a MS in traditional Oriental medicine, explains, “[Acupuncture is] a minimally invasive method to stimulate nerve-rich areas of the skin surface in order to influence tissues, gland, organs, and various functions of the body.”“Each acupuncture needle produces a tiny injury at the insertion site, and although it’s slight enough to cause little to no discomfort, it’s enough of a signal to let the body know it needs to respond,” Kempisty says.“This response involves stimulation of the immune system, promoting circulation to the area, wound healing, and pain modulation.” Contemporary research on acupuncture relies mainly on this theory.The Chinese philosophy behind acupuncture is a bit more complicated, as the ancient practice isn’t traditionally based in science and medicine.“They believed that the human body was filled with and animated by an invisible life-giving force which they called ‘qi’ (pronounced ‘chee’) and when the qi was flowing well and going to all the right places, then a person would experience good mental and physical health. 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If not, we have compiled this article highlighting what to expect after acupuncture, followed by tips on what not to do after acupuncture treatment. But our suggestions don’t stop there! Keep reading to learn more! Common Immediate Reactions After Acupuncture Treatment After an acupuncture treatment, the body often undergoes noticeable changes as it responds to the stimulating effects of the needles. A feeling of deep relaxation and tranquility frequently washes over the patient, promoting a serene, almost meditative state. Muscles that were previously tense and knotted loosen up, releasing held tension. While every experience is different, here are some of the common bodily reactions after acupuncture: Physical sensations During and shortly after a session, patients often feel a variety of physical sensations as their bodies respond to the acupuncture treatment. One common sensation is slight muscle soreness or tenderness at the needle insertion sites. This discomfort is typically very mild and short-lived, resembling the feeling after a massage. Patients may also notice tingling or warmth in certain areas, even those far from the needle sites. These sensations indicate improved circulation and energy flow along the targeted meridians. As the session progresses, many people experience profound relaxation and tranquility. Their tension melts away as their bodies shift into a parasympathetic state, which promotes healing and rejuvenation. Some describe it as a floating sensation as if they drift into a peaceful, meditative state. By the end of the treatment, patients often feel calm yet energized, enjoying a renewed sense of vitality and well-being that can last for hours or even days. While experiences vary, these sensations are positive signs that acupuncture stimulates the body’s innate healing mechanisms, helping restore balance and optimize functioning. Emotional reactions Acupuncture can impact a person’s emotional state during and after treatment. While physical sensations like tingling or warmth are common, many patients also notice distinct changes in their mood and emotions, such as: – Euphoria: Some individuals report feeling a blissful, almost euphoric sensation as the acupuncture needles stimulate the release of endorphins and other feel-good neurotransmitters in the brain. – Emotional release: Acupuncture unlocks pent-up emotions, leading to an unexpected release in the form of laughing or crying. This release is the body’s way of processing stuck or stagnant emotional energy. – Relaxation: Many patients experience a profound sense of tranquility and peacefulness during acupuncture as their nervous system shifts into a parasympathetic state. Some even drift into a sleep-like state on the table, waking feeling refreshed and renewed. – Catharsis: For some, acupuncture can trigger a powerful emotional catharsis. Long-buried traumas or unresolved issues may surface to be acknowledged, felt, and released. Afterward, people often report feeling unburdened, cleansed, and more at peace. By regulating the flow of Qi and balancing the body’s energy, acupuncture allows emotional healing to occur naturally, without the mind’s inhibitions and defense mechanisms getting in the way. Skin reactions Minor skin reactions are normal after an acupuncture treatment. Patients notice small red dots, slight bruising, or mild itchiness at the needle insertion sites. This is because acupuncture needles, although very thin, still mildly puncture the skin’s surface. The body reacts to these tiny “injuries” by increasing blood circulation to the area to promote healing. The stimulation of nerve endings and release of histamine can also result in localized itching sensations. Rest assured, these skin reactions are brief and harmless, usually subsiding within a few hours to a day. They are simply signs that your body responds to the treatment and activates its self-healing mechanisms. Positive Changes After Acupuncture Treatment Acupuncture acts as a catalyst, stimulating the body’s innate healing abilities and enhancing overall well-being. Patients often experience a range of positive changes following treatment, including physical, mental, and emotional improvements that can have long-lasting benefits, making daily life easier. Physical benefits The therapeutic effects of acupuncture often lead to an overall improvement in physical well-being. As the body starts to heal and rebalance itself, many people feel more “in tune” with their physical self. They notice the little aches and pains subside as their body moves more easily and fluidly. Some of the key physical benefits patients commonly experience include: – Reduces pain and stiffness in muscles and joints – Increases mobility and flexibility – Enhances circulation and blood flow – Improves sleep quality and addresses various insomnia symptoms – More energy and vitality – A strengthened immune system – Faster recovery from injuries or surgery Mental and emotional benefits As the ultra-fine acupuncture needles precisely target specific points on the body, they can have a profound impact on mental health and emotional well-being. The gentle yet powerful stimulation helps to clear away the hazy mental fog that so often clouds the mind, allowing thoughts to flow more freely and focus to sharpen.  Stress and anxiety, which can feel like a constricting vise around the head, begin to melt away as acupuncture triggers the release of endorphins and other feel-good chemicals in the brain. Research shows that acupuncture can help change the levels of certain chemicals in the body called neurotransmitters, such as: – Monoamines: Increased levels in the blood can positively affect the immune system. – Catecholamine (CA): Reduces inflammation while increasing anti-inflammatory substances. – Serotonin: Affects immune cells and helps regulate various immune functions through different receptors. Long-Term Improvements The cumulative benefits of regular acupuncture sessions can be truly transformative for those suffering from chronic conditions. Each strategically placed needle activates and amplifies the body’s innate healing mechanisms. Hormones begin to regulate and rebalance, and chronic pain that once seemed an inescapable part of life starts to fade. Some key examples of the long-term benefits of regular acupuncture include: – Regulates menstrual cycles and improves fertility – Dramatically reduces frequency and intensity of migraine headaches – Alleviates chronic joint pain and improves range of motion – Lowers stress levels and better overall mood and emotional balance – Enhances immune function and fewer sick days – Better quality sleep and more stable energy throughout the day Side Effects to Be Aware Of While acupuncture is generally considered a safe and well-tolerated treatment, there are some potential side effects to be aware of. The most common side effects are relatively mild and include: – Pain or soreness – Bleeding or bruising – Lightheadedness – Fatigue – Infection On rare occasions, symptoms may briefly intensify, or new symptoms can arise after the treatment. This could be part of the healing process as your body adjusts. Alert your practitioner if symptoms persist or concern you. Extra precautions are needed for people with certain conditions like bleeding disorders, pacemakers, or pregnancy. Always disclose the full health history to your acupuncturist. Post-Acupuncture Care Tips for Optimal Recovery After an acupuncture session, it’s important to take care of yourself to help your body heal and get the most out of the treatment. Here is what you need to focus on: Rest and hydration Proper rest and hydration support your body’s innate healing mechanisms stimulated by acupuncture. They benefit in restoring balance and allowing the positive effects to unfold. Make sure to: – Get plenty of sleep the night of your treatment to allow the body and mind to deeply relax and heal. – Drink ample water before and after to help flush out toxins that may have been released. – Take it easy and avoid strenuous physical activity for the remainder of the day. – If you feel tired, listen to your body and rest. Activities to embrace or avoid Prioritize activities that support your body’s natural healing process while avoiding those that could disrupt the delicate rebalancing initiated. During this time, gentle, mindful practices like yoga, meditation, and light walking are highly beneficial. On the other hand, it’s best to steer clear of intense workouts, saunas, hot tubs, or cold plunges immediately following acupuncture. Journaling your experience Journaling your experience after each acupuncture session can provide valuable insights to help optimize future treatments. Take note of how you feel physically, mentally, and emotionally in the hours and days following your appointment. Are certain issues improving? Do you notice changes in your sleep, appetite, energy levels, or mood? Tracking these details can illuminate patterns and help you and your acupuncturist fine-tune the treatment plan. You might discover that certain points or techniques are particularly effective for you. The Bottom Line While these effects should not be a cause for alarm, you’re the expert of your own body. If any of the following side effects seem too severe or prolonged, or if you observe any other unpleasant responses to an acupuncture treatment, you should contact your acupuncturist.  And if you have a specific condition that you’d like to treat with acupuncture, consider scheduling an appointment at the American Institute of Alternative Medicine (AIAM). AIAM provides an array of acupuncture options to fit each client’s needs, including: – Traditional Needle Acupuncture – Electric Stimulation & Microcurrent – Needleless Acupuncture / Tui Na – Community Acupuncture – Cupping & Gua Sha – Korean Hand Therapy / Reflexology – Moxibustion Book an appointment today for a healthy life! Frequently Asked Questions How long do acupuncture benefits last? The benefits can last from a few days to several weeks, depending on the individual and the condition being treated. Can I resume my routine immediately after? Yes, you can typically return to your routine immediately after an acupuncture session, but it’s advisable to take it easy for the rest of the day. What should I eat after acupuncture? It’s best to eat light, nourishing foods such as fruits, vegetables, or whole grains, and stay hydrated to support your body’s healing process. Acupuncture, the practice of treating conditions through triggering certain points on the skin with needles, may help with allergies, migraines, or insomnia. Acupuncture is an evidence based medicine that has been proven by literally thousands of studies.Share on PinterestAubrie LeGault/StocksyIf you’re new to holistic healing as a type of treatment, acupuncture can seem a bit terrifying. How could pressing needles into your skin possibly make you feel better? 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Doesn’t that hurt?Well, no, it’s definitely not the overtly painful procedure you may be imagining, andconsideringthat it’s been studied and practiced for over 2,500 years, it seems acupuncture enthusiasts could seriously be onto something.Some people swear by acupuncture, citing it as a “miracle” to improving their quality of life because it’s said to be able to treat everything from depression and allergies to morning sickness and cramps.Acupuncture is an ancient Chinese medicine-based approach to treating a variety of conditions by triggering specific points on the skin with needles.Paul Kempisty, licensed acupuncturist with a MS in traditional Oriental medicine, explains, “[Acupuncture is] a minimally invasive method to stimulate nerve-rich areas of the skin surface in order to influence tissues, gland, organs, and various functions of the body.”“Each acupuncture needle produces a tiny injury at the insertion site, and although it’s slight enough to cause little to no discomfort, it’s enough of a signal to let the body know it needs to respond,” Kempisty says.“This response involves stimulation of the immune system, promoting circulation to the area, wound healing, and pain modulation.” Contemporary research on acupuncture relies mainly on this theory.The Chinese philosophy behind acupuncture is a bit more complicated, as the ancient practice isn’t traditionally based in science and medicine.“They believed that the human body was filled with and animated by an invisible life-giving force which they called ‘qi’ (pronounced ‘chee’) and when the qi was flowing well and going to all the right places, then a person would experience good mental and physical health. 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They’ll look at your symptoms, medical history, and overall health to help determine if acupuncture is right for you.Danielle Sinay is a writer, musician, and educator living in Brooklyn, New York. She’s written for Bushwick Daily where she serves as Contributing Editor, as well as Teen Vogue, HuffPost, Healthline, Man Repeller, and more. Danielle has a BA from Bard College and an MFA in Nonfiction Creative Writing from The New School. You can email Danielle.Healthline has strict sourcing guidelines and relies on peer-reviewed studies, academic research institutions, and medical journals and associations. We only use quality, credible sources to ensure content accuracy and integrity. You can learn more about how we ensure our content is accurate and current by reading our editorial policy.Acupuncture (PDQ®)–Patient version. (2016). What you need to know. (2022). H, et al. (2016). Integrating acupuncture within a wellness intervention for women with multiple sclerosis. H, et al. 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They’ll look at your symptoms, medical history, and overall health to help determine if acupuncture is right for you.Danielle Sinay is a writer, musician, and educator living in Brooklyn, New York. She’s written for Bushwick Daily where she serves as Contributing Editor, as well as Teen Vogue, HuffPost, Healthline, Man Repeller, and more. Danielle has a BA from Bard College and an MFA in Nonfiction Creative Writing from The New School. You can email Danielle.Healthline has strict sourcing guidelines and relies on peer-reviewed studies, academic research institutions, and medical journals and associations. We only use quality, credible sources to ensure content accuracy and integrity. You can learn more about how we ensure our content is accurate and current by reading our editorial policy.Acupuncture (PDQ®)–Patient version. (2016). What you need to know. (2022). H, et al. (2016). Integrating acupuncture within a wellness intervention for women with multiple sclerosis. H, et al. 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(2002). Relationship of acupuncture points and meridians to connective tissue planes. PJ. (2020). Acupuncture and seasonal allergies. R, et al. (2016). Acupuncture-movement therapy for acute lumbar sprain: a randomized controlled clinical trial. W, et al. (2009). The value of acupuncture in cancer care. Chinese medicine: What you need to know. (2019). AJ, et al. (2012). Acupuncture for chronic pain. QT, et al. (2016). Observation of the efficacy of acupuncture in patients with hypertension. L, et al. (2017). The long-term effect of acupuncture for migraine prophylaxis. Acupuncture benefits may include pain management, stress relief, and physical and emotional well-being. A traditional Chinese medicine practice, acupuncture is based on the idea that a blockage or disturbance in the flow of the body's life energy, or qi, can cause health issues. Research into the benefits of acupuncture is mixed. Acupuncturists insert thin needles into specific points throughout the body. This is believed to help balance the body's energy, causing a reduction or resolution of symptoms. This article explains acupuncture's benefits and the potential side effects. It will also cover what conditions acupuncture may be used for. Science Photo Library - ADAM GAULT / Getty Images The research into the effectiveness has been mixed, with some studies showing effectiveness and others showing that acupuncture is no better than “sham” or placebo treatments. Many of the existing studies have been small or poorly designed. Researchers don't fully understand how acupuncture might work, but some theories include: Acupuncture may stimulate the release of endorphins, the body's natural pain-relieving chemicals. Acupuncture may influence the autonomic nervous system, and needle placement may impact breathing, blood pressure, and heart rate. Research into the various conditions that are treatable with acupuncture has been ongoing for decades, with some uses more well-studied than others. Some research supports acupuncture to treat symptoms associated with the autonomic nervous system, including many different types of pain, mental health conditions, gastrointestinal problems, and sleep disorders. Acupuncture may be useful for a variety of conditions, including: Anxiety Arthritis, which describes conditions that involve joint inflammation Long-term pain Depression Insomnia, a condition that involves sleep-related difficulties Migraines, which are intense headaches that often include other symptoms Nausea Sinus congestion, or nasal stuffiness Stress Infertility, which describes difficulty getting pregnant Addiction Skin appearance The health benefits of acupuncture can vary depending on the individual. Keep in mind that it may take several acupuncture sessions before you notice any benefits. Acupuncture is often combined with other therapies to treat various kinds of pain. Sometimes acupuncture is used as the only treatment for pain. Acupuncture may help provide pain relief for people with chronic lower back pain. Studies have found that combining acupuncture with conventional therapies may be more effective at reducing lower back pain than conventional therapies alone. Some studies have found that acupuncture may even be more effective for controlling lower back pain than conventional therapy for up to six months after treatment. Acupuncture has also been studied for its effectiveness in reducing other types of chronic pain, such as shoulder pain, nonspecific musculoskeletal pain, neck pain, and others. Studies have found that acupuncture can help relieve pain for these conditions and that the benefits can't be completely explained as a placebo effect. Research that looked at multiple studies suggested that acupuncture may be able to improve the physical function of the knee in the short and long term in individuals who have knee osteoarthritis. With this condition, the connective tissue in the knee breaks down. This study also found that acupuncture helped those with knee osteoarthritis decrease their knee pain, but this was only helpful in the short term. Another review that looked at multiple studies found that acupuncture delayed and reduced the use of pain medication in those who had knee replacement surgery. Acupuncture has also been studied for its effectiveness in treating other types of arthritis pain, including arthritis of the spine, hands, and feet. One study found that acupuncture helped reduce pain, swelling, redness, and stiffness in all patients in the study group. Because this was a small study group without a control or placebo group, however, more studies are needed to confirm the results. Acupuncture has been used to treat a number of mental health conditions, including depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and anxiety. Depression: There is some low-quality evidence that acupuncture may reduce the severity of depression symptoms. However, the effects appear to be mild to moderate. Acupuncture's effectiveness for treating depression is unclear, and more well-designed studies are needed to support its use for this purpose. Acupuncture should not be used as the sole treatment for depression. Post-traumatic stress disorder: Acupuncture has also been studied for its effectiveness in treating other mental health conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). A review of studies, however, advised caution in promoting acupuncture as a treatment for PTSD, since the evidence to support this use is limited. Generalized anxiety disorder: A review of studies and meta-analysis did find that acupuncture had some benefits for people with generalized anxiety disorder. The study found that people receiving acupuncture experienced a greater reduction in symptoms than those in control groups. Addiction: Acupuncture is sometimes used to treat substance use conditions such as alcohol or drug use. However, the evidence to support its effectiveness for this is mixed. Studies have been poorly designed, small, or have used different protocols, treatment durations, and acupoints and have had contradictory results. Therefore, it is difficult to draw any conclusions about how well acupuncture might work for addiction. Acupuncture has been well-studied for treating headache pain, including migraine headaches and tension headaches. Migraines: Research on migraines done over a six-month period showed that acupuncture was able to reduce the frequency of migraine symptoms by half in 41% of those in the study compared to those not getting any acupuncture. It was also noted as being about as helpful as preventative migraine medications. Tension headaches: According to research, having at least six acupuncture sessions may also be helpful for those with frequent head pain or pressure, also known as tension headaches. This study also noted that acupuncture added along with pain medication led to less headache frequency when compared to those only given medication. Acupuncture is sometimes used to treat insomnia. There is some evidence that it is effective for this, though it's unclear whether it is acting as a placebo. One review of studies found that acupuncture provided better relief of symptoms after more than three weeks of treatment than pharmacological treatments. Acupuncture is sometimes used to treat infertility. Much of the research into this use has focused on women undergoing assisted reproductive techniques such as in vitro fertilization. One review of studies found that combining acupuncture with other fertility treatments might help improve the chances of pregnancy, but the authors also noted that the evidence is not yet robust enough to form a solid conclusion. Other studies have found no benefit compared to placebo for women undergoing in vitro fertilization. Acupuncture has also been used to treat male infertility. A review of studies, however, noted that most of the scientific evidence to support this use comes from poorly designed studies or studies with a small sample size. Some studies have also reported that control groups receiving "sham" treatments also experienced a therapeutic benefit. A separate review study also concluded that acupuncture does not seem to help improve sperm quality, though it noted that research has so far been limited and larger studies are needed. Cosmetic acupuncture, also known as facial acupuncture, is used to improve the appearance of the skin on the head, face, and neck. This use has not been well studied, but a 2018 review of studies found that existing trials were well-designed and showed positive benefits. The authors did note that further research is needed. Acupuncture is sometimes used as an adjunctive or complementary therapy for people with chronic respiratory conditions.  For example, one review of studies found that people with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) experienced significant improvement in symptoms when acupuncture was used as an adjunctive therapy. People with advanced cancers may also benefit from acupuncture. Another review of studies found that acupuncture could help reduce breathlessness and improve quality of life for people experiencing severe breathlessness as a result of advanced cancers or COPD. People undergoing treatment for cancer or recovery from surgery often experience nausea and vomiting. Some studies have found that acupuncture can help reduce these symptoms. For example, one review of studies concluded that using acupuncture alongside standard treatments could help control vomiting compared to standard treatments alone. However, the study authors noted that the quality of the evidence was low, and more studies are needed to confirm the usefulness of acupuncture for treating chemotherapy-associated nausea and vomiting. A small trial looked at acupuncture as a preventative measure for postoperative nausea and vomiting in children undergoing tonsillectomy. It found that the incidence of nausea and vomiting was reduced significantly when acupuncture was used during early recovery. Prior to getting acupuncture, your acupuncturist will ask about your health history and may give you a physical examination. During the acupuncture session, thin needles are placed in specific areas to address your concern or condition. The acupuncturist may gently twist the needles for added effect. The needles are often left in for 15 to 20 minutes, with the total session lasting anywhere from 30 minutes to an hour. Your acupuncturist may use additional techniques during your session including: Moxibustion: This involves the use of heated sticks, made from dried herbs, held near the acupuncture needles to warm and stimulate the acupuncture points. Electroacupuncture: An electrical device is connected to several needles, providing a weak electrical current that stimulates the acupuncture needles during the treatment. Cupping: Glass or silicone cups are applied to the skin so that there is a suction effect, which aims to help stimulate blood flow and balance your energy. After the treatment, some people may feel relaxed, while others may feel energetic. If you experience any unusual symptoms, you should contact your healthcare provider. You may feel a slight sting, pinch, ache, or some pain as the acupuncture needle is being inserted. Some acupuncturists move the needle after it has been placed in the body, which can cause additional pressure. Once the needle has been properly placed, you may feel a tingling or heavy feeling, which is referred to as de qi. Let your acupuncturist know if you are uncomfortable or in a lot of pain at any point during the session. Intense pain may mean the needle has not been inserted or placed correctly. Some people believe that acupuncture helps relieve pain by releasing endorphins, which are pain-relieving chemicals produced by the human body. This may be why some people report immediate relief of symptoms. This type of pain relief, however, may be short-term. How long acupuncture takes to work also depends on the condition being treated. For some people, it may take a few sessions before considerable improvement is noted. The effects may persist for some time after treatment ends, but it is unknown how long acupuncture can continue to provide relief after stopping sessions. As with any treatment,

acupuncture may cause side effects in some individuals. Side effects may include: In order to reduce the risk of side effects, acupuncture should always be done by a licensed and properly trained healthcare provider using clean, disposable needles. Acupuncture is generally considered safe as long as it's done by a licensed professional using clean, sterilized needles. Still, it's a good idea to speak with your primary care physician before getting acupuncture, as this treatment may not be right for people with certain health conditions. One of the risks of acupuncture is the accidental insertion of a needle into the space between the lungs and the chest wall. This can lead to pneumothorax or collapsed lung. However, this is uncommon. It is also possible to experience blood vessel and nerve injury, complications from the needle breaking during treatment, organ injuries, as well as brain and spinal cord injuries. While rare, acupuncture complications can lead to death. Acupuncture is not recommended for people who have a pacemaker. You should not have acupuncture if you are at high risk for infection or you have chronic skin problems. People with bleeding disorders or who are taking a blood thinning medication should also avoid acupuncture. You should also avoid getting acupuncture in any areas where you have had lymph nodes removed, as acupuncture could increase the risk of infection. People who are pregnant or who have cosmetic implants such as breast implants should ask a healthcare provider before having acupuncture. Make sure to tell your healthcare provider about any medications or dietary supplements you're taking. Not every insurance policy covers acupuncture, but some do. It is best to check with your insurance company before setting up an appointment. Be sure to ask your provider whether they accept your insurance. Researchers aren't exactly sure how acupuncture works, however, theories suggest that it may help release endorphins, as well as influence the autonomic nervous system. Acupuncture may be helpful for a variety of concerns, including some mental health disorders, pain, inflammatory conditions, stress, and skin appearance. However, keep in mind that acupuncture can lead to mild or serious side effects in some individuals. An acupuncture session can take anywhere from 30 minutes to an hour and usually involves about 20 minutes with the needles in. Some individuals may feel some pain or pressure while the needles are inserted, while others may feel different sensations while the needles are in. Acupuncture has been practiced for thousands of years and is a key component of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). It has stood the test of time because it offers numerous advantages, especially for people dealing with chronic pain and stress, fertility issues, or those seeking a holistic approach to overall health improvement.  But did you know preparing for your acupuncture appointment is crucial to maximizing the benefits of acupuncture? If you're new to this healing modality or simply looking to ensure an enjoyable acupuncture experience, understanding what not to do before your acupuncture session is just as important as knowing what to do.  We'll go through a list of important things not to do before acupuncture, providing you with practical tips to ensure an effective acupuncture session and a smooth, comfortable experience. What Shouldn't You Do Before Acupuncture Treatments?  You might be wondering, "How do I prepare myself for acupuncture?" or "How do I get the best results from acupuncture?" What many first-time acupuncture clients don't realize is that simple lifestyle choices made right before an acupuncture visit can impact how they feel during and even after their session. Here's a list of things to avoid to prepare properly and ensure a productive acupuncture session. 1. Don't Skip Meals or Eat Heavy Meals You may be wondering, "Should I eat before or after acupuncture?" This is one of the most common questions people have before their treatment, and the answer lies somewhere in the middle. One of the most common mistakes people make is showing up to their acupuncture appointment either on an empty stomach or after a very heavy meal. Avoid heavy meals: A large meal right before your acupuncture treatment can leave you feeling bloated, uncomfortable, and even nauseous. This discomfort might distract from the benefits of acupuncture and make it harder for your body to relax. Eat a light meal: Instead, aim for a light meal about 1-2 hours before your session. This will keep your blood flow steady and ensure you won't feel lightheaded during the acupuncture therapy. Quick Tip: If you're unsure what not to eat after acupuncture, stick to light, nutritious foods that are easy on the stomach, such as steamed vegetables, broth-based soups, lean proteins like chicken or fish, whole grains, and fresh fruit. These options help support your body's healing process without overloading your digestive system. 2. Avoid Stimulants and Alcohol Acupuncture professionals recommend avoiding stimulants like caffeine, alcohol, and energy drinks before your session. These substances can interfere with your body's natural processes, as well as the effects of acupuncture.  Why avoid caffeine? Caffeine, in particular, increases heart rate and can make it harder for your body to relax during the treatment. Since relaxation is a big part of a successful acupuncture session, it's best to skip that cup of coffee beforehand. Studies have shown it can even inhibit certain effects of acupuncture. Why not alcohol? Alcohol can numb your senses, which might dull your awareness of how the acupuncture needles are affecting you. It's important to remain in tune with your body during your acupuncture therapy. Stick to water before your appointment, as hydration supports better blood flow and circulation during the session, but don't go overboard (you'll learn why in a minute). 3. Don't Overexert Yourself Physically Heavy workouts or intense physical activity on the day of the acupuncture appointment can tire out your body. You may think, "Exercise helps reduce stress, so why not?" But over-exercising can deplete your energy, making it harder for your body to respond to the treatment. Gentle exercise is fine: Light stretching or a gentle walk is great for stress management and promoting healthy blood flow. However, avoid anything that leaves you feeling exhausted before your acupuncture visit.  Rest is key: Giving your body a chance to reset before the actual acupuncture treatment will enhance its effectiveness. 4. Don't Forget to Share Your Current Medications / Medical History In general, acupuncture is safe for most people, but it's crucial to share your current medications and any health conditions with your acupuncture practitioner. Why does this matter? Your certified acupuncture practitioner needs to know about your current conditions and if you're on any medication that might affect clotting, healing, or your nervous system. This insight into your health history ensures a safer, personalized acupuncture treatment plan and helps avoid any unwanted acupuncture side effects. There are no one-size-fits-all approaches when it comes to acupuncture. That's why Dr. Mitra takes this a step further and collaborates with other medical specialists to tailor custom treatment plans and provide integrative care for each patient in our Beverly Hills Acupuncture Health Clinic.  When Is Acupuncture NOT Safe? Certain conditions should be approached with caution and discussed with professionals to ensure you are a fitting candidate for acupuncture and tailor your treatment accordingly, such as: Bleeding Disorders or Blood-Thinning Medications: Individuals with clotting issues or those taking anticoagulants (like warfarin) may be at higher risk for excessive bleeding or bruising from acupuncture needles. Serious Skin Infections or Open Wounds: In case of active skin infections, rashes, or open wounds at the intended acupuncture sites, treatment should be postponed to avoid further complications. Pacemaker or Other Implanted Electrical Devices: Some acupuncture techniques, such as electroacupuncture, use electrical stimulation, which can interfere with the functioning of pacemakers or other implanted devices. Always inform your practitioner if you have any medical implants. Allergies to Metals: Some acupuncture needles contain trace amounts of metals like nickel or stainless steel. If you have a known allergy to certain metals, it's important to inform your practitioner to avoid potential allergic reactions during treatment. Hypoallergenic needles can often be used as an alternative. 5. Avoid Brushing Your Tongue Before the Session One thing you probably haven't thought about but made our "things not to do before acupuncture" list: brushing your tongue. Why not brush the tongue before acupuncture? Strange as it may sound, acupuncturists often examine the color, shape, and coating of your tongue as part of your diagnosis. In Traditional Chinese Medicine, the tongue actually provides valuable insights into your overall health and energy balance. Brushing it before your session can wipe away this diagnostic information, potentially leading to less accurate treatment. 6. Don't Arrive in a Rush or Stressed Arriving at the acupuncture clinic in a calm, centered state will allow you to fully embrace the healing potential of the session (unless you're there to find relief with acupuncture for stress, in which case, we've got you covered). If you're rushing, your nervous system is already in a heightened state of alert, which could counteract the calming effects of the treatment. Your emotional and mental state before a session can greatly impact the outcome and can make it difficult for your body to fully relax and absorb all the acupuncture health benefits. A relaxed mind helps your body respond more effectively to the acupuncture treatment, resulting in a more enjoyable and fruitful experience.  How Do I Prepare Myself for Acupuncture? The Dos Before Acupuncture By following a few simple "dos" that mostly revolve around avoiding the things not to do before acupuncture that we've discussed, you'll set yourself up for a smoother and more enjoyable experience. So, here's a quick recap: Eat a Light Meal: Have a small, balanced meal 1-2 hours before your appointment to keep your energy levels steady and avoid feeling lightheaded. Stay Hydrated: Drink water moderately before your session to promote healthy blood flow and help your body respond better to the treatment. Wear Comfortable Clothing: Comfortable, loose-fitting clothing makes it easier for your practitioner to access various acupuncture points during the session and will make you more relaxed than tight clothing. Arrive Early & Relax: Give yourself enough time to arrive at the clinic without stress, allowing you to settle in and calm your mind before the treatment. Engage in calming activities like deep breathing, meditation, or light stretching before your appointment to help quiet your mind. What Time of Day Is Best for Acupuncture? Although the time of day doesn't directly impact the treatment, ideally, choose a time when you can relax afterward and avoid jumping straight back into work or other stressors. A 2014 study did find stronger neural activation in the AM compared to PM among subject groups for one specific acupoint (ST36); however, more studies are needed to explore the effects of timing. Dos and Don'ts After an Acupuncture Session While this blog is focused on what not to do before your session, it's equally important to follow some aftercare tips to maximize the acupuncture benefits. What Not to Eat After Acupuncture: Avoid greasy, processed foods that can disrupt digestion and energy flow. Stick to whole, nourishing foods that help your body recover and balance its energy. Don't Shower Right After Acupuncture: Why can't you shower after acupuncture? While there's no strict rule against it, many acupuncture professionals advise waiting for a few hours before showering. This allows your body to fully integrate the effects of acupuncture without being interrupted by sudden temperature changes or water pressure. Go to the Bathroom: The treatment stimulates your body's natural detox processes, so it's normal to feel the need to urinate more frequently. Showering can interfere with these processes as your body continues to release toxins. Make the Most Out of Each Acupuncture Session Preparing properly for your acupuncture visit is essential to ensure you get the most out of your treatments. By keeping this list of things not to do before acupuncture in mind, you're setting yourself up for an enjoyable and effective healing experience. Whether you're managing chronic pain or stress or simply seeking relaxation and balance through Traditional Chinese Medicine and different types of acupuncture treatment, these tips will help you make the most out of the numerous benefits it has to offer. Feel ready to book your session with an experienced certified acupuncture practitioner? Dr. Mitra would be glad to see you. Whether you're ready to schedule or still have some questions on your mind, please don't hesitate to reach out. We're here to help you feel fully confident and ready to take the first step toward a more balanced and healthier you. Acupuncture, an ancient healing practice rooted in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), has been used for thousands of years to treat various physical, mental, and emotional ailments. This holistic approach to health focuses on stimulating specific points on the body to restore balance, relieve pain, and promote healing. Today, acupuncture is widely recognized and even recommended by health professionals for its therapeutic effects. From managing pain and reducing stress to improving sleep and digestion, the benefits of acupuncture are vast and varied. In this article, we'll explore the top 10 benefits of acupuncture that make it a powerful tool for enhancing wellness. Whether you're considering acupuncture for the first time or looking to deepen your understanding of its advantages, this guide provides insight into the many ways acupuncture can support a healthier life. One of the most well-known benefits of acupuncture is its ability to relieve chronic pain. Acupuncture is frequently used as an alternative treatment for conditions like arthritis, lower back pain, neck pain, and migraines. How it works: Acupuncture stimulates the release of endorphins and activates the body's natural pain-relieving mechanisms. It also reduces inflammation, promotes circulation, and helps ease tension in muscles and joints. Research: Studies have shown that acupuncture can be as effective as pain medication, without the side effects often associated with pharmaceutical treatments. Tip: Regular acupuncture sessions can provide long-term relief for those dealing with persistent pain conditions. Stress and anxiety are prevalent in today's fast-paced world, and acupuncture is a natural and effective way to manage these conditions. By targeting specific acupoints, acupuncture helps reduce stress hormones and promotes relaxation. How it works: Acupuncture stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system, which helps calm the mind and body. It reduces cortisol levels, lowering stress and helping alleviate anxiety symptoms. Research: Clinical trials have shown that acupuncture is effective in reducing both acute and chronic stress and may serve as a beneficial adjunct therapy for anxiety disorders. Tip: Consider incorporating acupuncture into your weekly or monthly self-care routine to keep stress and anxiety at bay. Insomnia and sleep disturbances affect millions of people worldwide, but acupuncture offers a natural alternative to improve sleep quality. By addressing underlying imbalances, acupuncture promotes restorative sleep. How it works: Acupuncture regulates the body's circadian rhythms and balances energy flow, which can help those struggling with insomnia or poor sleep quality. It also boosts the production of melatonin, the hormone responsible for sleep. Research: Studies suggest that acupuncture may help reduce sleep onset latency, decrease nighttime awakenings, and improve overall sleep quality. Tip: For those suffering from sleep disorders, regular acupuncture can be a drug-free solution to enhance sleep. Digestive issues like irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), acid reflux, and bloating are common problems, but acupuncture can help manage these symptoms and promote digestive wellness. How it works: Acupuncture stimulates the digestive organs, balances gut microbiota, and reduces inflammation, helping to alleviate digestive issues. Research: Studies indicate that acupuncture may improve gastric motility and reduce symptoms of indigestion and IBS, providing a holistic approach to digestive health. Tip: For ongoing digestive health, consider acupuncture along with dietary adjustments to support a balanced gut. Acupuncture helps boost the immune system, making it a valuable treatment for those looking to prevent illness and recover faster from infections. It enhances the body's natural defense mechanisms and promotes resilience against pathogens. How it works: Acupuncture stimulates immune cells, increases the production of white blood cells, and regulates immune function, making the body more resilient. Research: Research shows that acupuncture can improve immune response by enhancing T-cell and antibody production, crucial components in fighting off infections. Tip: Regular acupuncture treatments, especially during cold and flu season, can help keep the immune system strong and responsive. Acupuncture is known for improving energy levels and reducing fatigue. By balancing energy flow throughout the body, acupuncture helps individuals feel more alert, focused, and revitalized. How it works: Acupuncture stimulates energy pathways, also known as meridians, to improve circulation and restore vitality. It supports adrenal health, reducing burnout and fatigue. Research: Several studies show that acupuncture can reduce symptoms of chronic fatigue syndrome and boost physical and mental energy. Tip: For those experiencing low energy or burnout, acupuncture can be a rejuvenating practice to restore balance. Acupuncture is often used to support hormonal health, particularly for women dealing with menstrual irregularities, PMS, and menopause symptoms. It helps balance hormone levels naturally and alleviates symptoms related to hormonal imbalances. How it works: Acupuncture stimulates the endocrine system, helping regulate hormones like estrogen and progesterone. This can lead to more regular menstrual cycles and reduced PMS symptoms. Research: Studies have found acupuncture effective in reducing hot flashes, menstrual cramps, and irregular cycles, making it a natural option for managing menstrual health. Tip: Monthly acupuncture sessions can be beneficial for menstrual and reproductive health, promoting hormonal harmony. Acupuncture supports weight loss efforts by balancing hormones, reducing cravings, and boosting metabolism. While it's not a standalone solution, it complements a healthy diet and exercise routine. How it works: Acupuncture regulates the hunger hormone ghrelin and boosts metabolism, making it easier to control appetite and burn calories effectively. Research: Studies show that acupuncture can improve metabolic function and reduce body mass index (BMI) when combined with lifestyle changes. Tip: Pair acupuncture with a balanced diet and regular exercise for optimal weight loss results. Inflammation is the body's response to injury or infection, but chronic inflammation can lead to various health issues. Acupuncture's anti-inflammatory effects help manage chronic pain and promote faster recovery. How it works: Acupuncture modulates the immune system, reducing inflammatory markers and promoting circulation, which aids in faster healing. Research: Research shows that acupuncture effectively reduces inflammation in conditions like arthritis, sports injuries, and autoimmune disorders. Tip: For individuals with chronic inflammatory conditions, acupuncture can be a natural and effective tool for pain relief and inflammation management. Acupuncture can enhance cognitive function, helping individuals feel sharper and more focused. It's beneficial for those struggling with mental fatigue, memory issues, or attention problems. How it works: Acupuncture promotes blood flow to the brain and releases neurochemicals that improve focus, memory, and cognitive abilities. Research: Studies suggest acupuncture may improve brain function and mental clarity, making it useful for those with cognitive concerns. Tip: Acupuncture can be an excellent choice for students, professionals, or seniors looking to enhance mental acuity. Acupuncture offers a wealth of therapeutic benefits that address physical, mental, and emotional well-being. From alleviating pain and reducing stress to supporting immune health and enhancing sleep, the benefits of acupuncture are profound and accessible. By incorporating acupuncture into your wellness routine, you can experience a balanced, holistic approach to health that complements traditional medicine. Whether you're seeking relief from specific conditions or aiming for general wellness, acupuncture may be the key to unlocking a healthier, more harmonious life. 1. How long do the effects of acupuncture last?The effects can last from a few days to a few weeks, depending on the condition treated and the individual's response. Regular sessions provide longer-lasting results. 2. Is acupuncture safe for everyone?Generally, yes. However, it's essential to consult with a licensed practitioner and discuss any medical conditions, especially if pregnant or taking blood-thinning medications. 3. Does acupuncture hurt?Acupuncture uses thin, fine needles, and most people experience little to no pain. Some may feel a slight tingling or warming sensation at the insertion point. 4. How often should I have acupuncture treatments?For chronic conditions, weekly treatments are common initially, tapering off as symptoms improve. Consult your practitioner to determine the best schedule for you. 5. Can acupuncture help with emotional issues?Yes, acupuncture is effective for stress, anxiety, depression, and other emotional concerns. It helps by balancing energy and releasing calming endorphins. 6. Are there side effects to acupuncture?Side effects are rare but may include slight bruising or minor discomfort at needle sites. It's important to see a licensed practitioner to minimize risks. 7. Can acupuncture be used alongside traditional medicine?Yes, acupuncture complements conventional treatments well and is often used alongside them. Always consult your healthcare provider for integrated treatment plans. 8. How soon can I expect results?Some people feel relief immediately, while others may need multiple sessions. Acute conditions may improve quickly, while chronic issues may require ongoing treatment. 9. What conditions can acupuncture treat?Acupuncture is versatile and can treat pain, digestive disorders, respiratory issues, mental health concerns, hormonal imbalances, and more. 10. How should I prepare for an acupuncture session?Wear comfortable clothing, eat a light meal, and avoid heavy caffeine intake. Arriving relaxed and hydrated can improve the experience. Sticking needles into your skin might not sound like a good way to feel better. But that's exactly how acupuncture works. In fact, the traditional Chinese practice has been used for centuries to treat all sorts of health conditions — and it's still very common. Here's how acupuncture works and what you can expect. What is acupuncture? Acupuncture is a type of traditional Chinese medicine that's been around for about 2,500 years. It's used to help heal illness and improve well-being. This is done by placing needles into specific points on the skin to help activate an energy in the body, called qi (pronounced "chee"). According to traditional Chinese medicine, qi is the life force energy in the body — it helps regulate and move things in the body to keep us well. Stress, environmental factors, lifestyle behaviors, and genetics are some of the things that can block qi in the body. Acupuncturists use needles to unblock or move qi to other areas in the body to help you heal. What does acupuncture treat? Acupuncture is most commonly used for pain management. It can be part of a care plan for conditions like chronic low back pain or joint pain. It's also used to treat nausea and vomiting during pregnancy or when getting chemotherapy treatments. What can you expect during an acupuncture session? The acupuncturist will ask about your medical history and symptoms. They'll also do an exam — similar to what you'd experience in a doctor visit. In addition, they may look at your tongue. This is a way for them to find any imbalances in your body. Based on the exam, they'll select the appropriate points to insert needles. They'll typically treat what's bothering you, plus any other underlying conditions that may be connected. You'll lie down or sit on a table, and the acupuncturist will put needles into various points on your body, called meridians. These are energy channels in the body. Through thousands of years of learning, traditional Chinese medicine has compiled very complete and complex systems of meridians. The acupuncturist puts needles into those meridians to help regulate and move the body back to homeostasis, or wellness. Typically, sessions may go for 20 to 30 minutes depending on your treatment. The acupuncturist will usually dim the lights and put on quiet music to help you relax. They'll come in and check on you throughout your session to make sure you're comfortable. Some patients actually fall asleep during the treatment. How do you feel after acupuncture? People usually feel very relaxed afterward. Some feel more energy. You shouldn't be in more pain or more anxious. What kind of needles are used for acupuncture? When most people think of needles, they think of ones that are used for vaccines or drawing blood. These hollow needles have to puncture the skin — and can be painful. But these hollow needles aren't used for acupuncture. Acupuncture needles are solid, stainless steel needles that are usually not much larger than a strand of hair. Acupuncture needles go between tissues, making them less painful. Does acupuncture hurt? You might be more sensitive in certain areas, but it shouldn't hurt. Acupuncture needles are usually not painful on areas of thicker skin and muscles. For example, your belly and back are less sensitive. Certain points like your hands and feet might be more sensitive. If you feel pain, tell your acupuncturist. They'll adjust the needles or choose other points. Their goal is not to make you feel pain. They do a lot of work to position you properly and make sure you feel comfortable. How can you find an acupuncturist? Look for a licensed acupuncturist. For example, in California they have to go through an extensive education program, followed by a state board licensing exam. And to maintain their license, they must do ongoing continuing education. So, make sure you choose someone who is licensed. Other than that, approach it the same way you would try to choose any other type of doctor — ask friends and family, and look at reviews. Explore resources to support your health It's important to check your benefits to see if acupuncture is part of your plan coverage. You can also help improve your overall well-being through activities like yoga, meditation, stretching, and massage therapy. Learn more about our many health and wellness resources to support your physical and mental health.   A 2016 evaluation of 11 studies of pain after surgery (with a total of 682 participants) found that patients treated with acupuncture or related techniques 1 day after surgery had less pain and used less opioid pain medicine after the operation.The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has created a website, NIH Clinical Research Trials and You, to help people learn about clinical trials, why they matter, and how to participate. The site includes questions and answers about clinical trials, guidance on how to find clinical trials through ClinicalTrials.gov and other resources, and stories about the personal experiences of clinical trial participants. Clinical trials are necessary to find better ways to prevent, diagnose, and treat diseases. Website: thanks Pete Murray, Ph.D., David Shurtleff, Ph.D., and Helene M. Langevin, M.D., NCCIH for their review of the 2022 update of this fact sheet. This publication is not copyrighted and is in the public domain. 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Your generated images will be more polished than ever.See What's NewExplore how consumers want to see climate stories told today, and what that means for your visuals.Download Our Latest VisualGPS Report Although most people aren't aware, acupuncturists do more than just needles! Non-needling techniques such as moxibustion, cupping, and herbs are often used. They also offer advice... Like elsewhere in life, some people will take advice and others ignore it. In any case, there are many simple practices that, when done regularly, can drastically improve a person's health and overall quality of life. If only we could all remember to do them! Here are 10 health tips that acupuncturists around the country wish everyone would remember: 1. Connect with people "I have come to believe that people need connection more than anything else," says Richard Mandell, an acupuncturist from Brookline, Massachusetts who founded The PanAfrican Acupuncture Project. "We acupuncturists use needles as a starting point, but it is our relationship with patients—the conversations, the gentle touch—that is most important. Isolation, and holding independence as the ultimate goal, separates us from healing potential." "Connection in the simplest sense can begin with acknowledgement of its importance. Helping others, greeting a homeless person, looking people in the eye, recognizing the good in each moment... These things increase our potential to heal ourselves and others. From an acupuncture perspective, they build and move qi." 2. Breathe deeply into your belly "In acupuncture, the Lungs govern the circulation of qi in the body," explains Corvalis, Oregon-based acupuncturist Brodie Welch. "When we feel stress, the breath automatically becomes more shallow and rapid. Shallow, tense breathing tells the body to remain in a state of fight-or-flight. By inviting our breath to be slow, deep, easy, and gentle, we rein in the stress response, protect the adrenals from exhaustion, and activate the self-healing (parasympathetic) mode. "A daily breathing practice, which can be as simple as five minutes a day, or 10 breaths every hour, is the fastest way I know of to re-pattern the nervous system." "While you're breathing deeply, it's helpful to focus on your belly," adds San Francisco acupuncturist Jeremy Rothenberg. "People can coax their own bodies into relaxation by focusing on deep belly breathing," he says. "There are so many parasympathetic nerve endings in the belly, so deep breathing into that area shifts the body into rest-and-digest mode." "If everyone spent time each day breathing into their bellies, many physical problems would be reversed. It's like doing acupuncture on yourself." 3. Exercise "If only all of my patients would take the time to exercise every day," says acupuncturist Lara Ferguson Diaz, from Asheville, North Carolina. "I'm not talking about running a marathon. There's nothing quite as simple yet profoundly helpful as a daily brisk walk in the park, or dancing with your kid in the living room. Our bodies are not designed to be static. They are designed to be in fairly constant motion except while sleeping or resting." "From an acupuncture perspective, too much sitting injures the Spleen, which affects digestion, energy level, and even makes us more likely to gain weight. Blood and qi stagnation, the most common cause of pain that I see in my clinic, also occur when people have sedentary lifestyles." "Daily exercise will make you happier, less stressed, and better equipped to handle life. So, go take a hike!" 4. Meditate "I wish all of my patients would engage in a meditation practice," says Brooklyn, New York acupuncturist Melanie Severo. "So many of the issues that hold us back in our lives can be transformed through the simple act of awareness, and a meditation practice can be the doorway to heightened presence in all of our activities." 5. Stretch before bed "Stretching in the evening is just as important as in the morning, which is when most people think about doing it," says Laurel, Maryland acupuncturist Allison Vaccaro. "Like acupuncture, stretching helps break up stagnation and encourages movement throughout the channels. Stretching in the evening helps loosen the muscles that haven't been used during the day. Many people spend their evenings sitting on the couch watching TV. Some hit the gym first thing in the morning, then sit at a desk all day. These routines prime the body for stiffness, and can produce pain at night and upon waking." "Patients of mine who follow my advice to stretch at night report better sleep quality, and less pain and stiffness in the morning." 6. Get to bed by 11pm "I encourage all of my patients to go to bed at 11 pm so that they are sleeping soundly by 1 am," says Susan Wadden, an acupuncturist in Shoreline, Washington. "Each organ system in acupuncture has an assigned two-hour time frame. One o'clock in the morning is when when the Liver time cycle begins. Between 1 and 3 am is the optimal time for the Liver to cleanse itself. This cleansing, which plays a big role in whether we feel rested when we wake up, happens most efficiently when a person is in a deep state of sleep." 7. Find a spiritual practice "I wish everyone would find a spiritual outlet to address their concerns, stress, and grief," says Kari-Ann Hubbard, an acupuncturist in Tempe, Arizona. "These natural emotions can consume us and, from an acupuncture perspective, stagnate our qi and blood. This on its own can cause pain and other ailments, and it sets the stage for future imbalances." "A spiritual practice can be anything from journaling to prayer to meditation. Whatever works for you." 8. Choose tea "I wish more of my patients would drink warm herbal teas instead of cold soft drinks and diet sodas," says acupuncturist Lindsay Long, of Maple Grove, Minnesota. "The phosphoric acid in colas can be harmful to bone health, and it can soften tooth enamel. According to acupuncture dietary theory, warm drinks are most supportive to the digestive system, and the bitter flavor of tea clears excess heat and dries dampness from the body." Eric's note: In addition, tea is much more gentle on the body than coffee. Tea will rarely cause any of the digestive or urinary problems I see in so many of my patients. In addition tea is much less likely to cause anxiety or other nervous system problems. 9. Stop waiting for perfect "Stop waiting for the perfect time to engage in perfect behavior," says Wayland, Massachusetts acupuncturist Marisa Fanelli. "Many of my patients consider anything less than a dramatic life change to be a failure. So, they wait until the perfect time to start eating the perfect diet. Or they wait until the perfect time to start working out again, since anything less than seven days a week at the gym is a failure." "This kind of all-or-nothing thinking leads to being perpetually stuck. In acupuncture-speak, we call this stagnation. Remember that even small steps forward are beneficial—and far easier to maintain in the long run." 10. Engage in conscious eating "I wish all of my patients practiced conscious eating," says Kathleen Port, an acupuncturist in Los Angeles. "This means being sensitive to portion size but also quality of food and eating habits—for example, not eating in the car or late at night, or not eating highly processed foods." "When we don't bring consciousness to our eating habits, our Spleen and Stomach systems can become easily overwhelmed. When this happens, digestion slows down and cannot convert food into qi and blood. Qi and blood deficiencies give rise to a variety of issues, including poor sleep, poor digestion, menstrual dysfunction, infertility, and mood disorders." Bonus tip! 11. Listen to your body "When we are in a state of balance, our bodies stay healthy on their own, without much effort on our part," says acupuncturist Michelle McGlade, from Mendota Heights, Minnesota. "When we are out of balance, our bodies signal alarms. These alarms can show up as fatigue, pain, or depression, to name just a few." "If everyone listened for these signals and took action when they happened (for example, made a diet change or started going to bed earlier) we'd all be much better off. When we take care of ourselves, we are better able to take care of the people we love." Acupuncture is becoming more mainstream in the US. This can be seen as more insurance plans cover acupuncture treatment, and more doctors are referring their patients to acupuncturists for complementary care. At Sparkes Acupuncture in Oakland, NJ, we work together with Dr. Charles S. Corallo, a board certified chiropractic physician with 30 years experience in pain management and holistic healthcare. Acupuncture has been in use for thousands of years, and is effective as a standalone therapy as well as in combination with other therapies. Acupuncture can treat a wide variety of conditions from all types of pain to insomnia to digestive issues to bells palsy (and lots more!). Even though there is a lot of "buzz" about acupuncture, it's still new to most people. And just knowing that it exists doesn't mean you know what to expect! Understanding what to do and not to do can make all the difference in helping you to be confident when you come to your first session.The following 9 tips will help you understand a little bit about our process, so that you know what to expect and can get the most of out your treatment.1. Wear (or bring) loose fitting clothes. Many acupuncture points are on the legs below the knees and the arms below the elbows. This means skinny jeans and tight, long sleeved shirts will likely interfere with treatment. If you're being treated for pain or a specific injury, your acupuncturist will want to examine the affected area and possibly also treat that area locally. To access certain areas, such as the lower back, your clothing may need to be adjusted. Wearing layers when you come for treatment is a good idea. When clothing is adjusted or removed, your acupuncturist will always make sure you are properly & modestly draped, so that you are comfortable and warm throughout treatment.2. Answer interview questions honestly & completely.Acupuncture is a holistic health therapy. This means that in addition to details about your specific concerns, acupuncturists are also interested in how the body functions as a whole. When filling out your intake forms as well as in the initial interview, the more information we have about your history + current health as well as your lifestyle, the better.Your acupuncturist will use this information to create an individualized treatment plan for you. As your treatments go on, you may find acupuncture helping you in ways you didn't expect! Patients often notice "side effects" of better sleep, improved digestion, etc. While we don't recommend having a full meal right before treatment, it's best to have a light meal or snack before receiving acupuncture treatment. Patients who come to treatment on an empty stomach may feel light headed or dizzy after treatment. To optimize healing, eat just enough that you're not hungry, but not so much that you're stuffed. It's also best to avoid caffeine right before your appointment.4. Don't brush your tongue before treatment. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) uses some diagnostic techniques that are not commonplace in Western Medicine. This includes looking at the tongue to help make a diagnosis. Its shape, quality, color, and coating are all taken into account. For this reason, it's best not to eat colorful candy or brush your tongue before your treatment. Pulse diagnosis is also commonplace in TCM. Feeling your pulse on each wrist gives your acupuncturist an idea of the state of your energy, and can provide them with important diagnostic information. At the time of treatment, you may be asked to remove watches or jewelry that puts any pressure on your wrists.5. Don't worry about the needles!Acupuncture needles are about as fine as a cat whisker: they are nothing like the hypodermic needles you are used to from the doctor's office. For this reason, we often refer to them as "pins"--however, this still doesn't do their size justice--they are much thinner than a typical pin! While some patients occasionally feel a slight pinch at insertion, or a temporary heavy sensation after a point has been stimulated, acupuncture is not a painful experience. Our needles are sterile, hypoallergenic, and never reused. While acupuncture is more like a medical office visit rather than a spa appointment, it is very relaxing. After the pins have been inserted in the acupuncture points, you will relax on the table for around 15 minutes. This is a great time to clear your mind, meditate, or take a nap. Most people go into a deep state of relaxation--this is a state where profound healing occurs.7. Keep relaxing after treatment.While it's not strictly forbidden, if you want to get the most out of your sessions, plan to go to the gym or do any strenuous activity before rather than after your treatment session. Acupuncture activates a healing process that continues after you leave the office. This doesn't mean you need to stay in bed for the rest of the day--going on a walk or other light activity is encouraged, just be aware of your energy levels and try not to overdo it. Being hydrated is vital to the body's natural healing processes, and optimizes the effects of your acupuncture treatment. Have a cup of water in our office before you leave, or bring your reusable water bottle with you. Warm water with lemon & a pinch of sea salt is a great way to hydrate & restore electrolyte balance. 9. Give your acupuncturist feedback.After your sessions, pay attention to how you feel--your acupuncturist will ask you at the start of your next treatment! Some patients like to make a journal or take notes to help them remember how they felt between treatments. This information will help your practitioner continue to tailor your treatment to fit your needs.If you've had acupuncture before, do you have anything to add to this list? Let us know!We hope this helps you to feel prepared as you walk into your first acupuncture session.To schedule your first acupuncture appointment, click the Book Now button on the home page or give us a call. We look forward to learning about you & helping you heal! 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025 Billable/Specific Code ICD-10-PCS 8E0H30Z is a specific/billable code that can be used to indicate a procedure. Code History 2016 (effective 10/1/2015): New code (first year of non-draft ICD-10-PCS) 2017 (effective 10/1/2016): No change 2018 (effective 10/1/2017): No change 2019 (effective 10/1/2018): No change 2020 (effective 10/1/2019): No change 2021 (effective 10/1/2020): No change 2022 (effective 10/1/2021): No change 2023 (effective 10/1/2022): No change 2024 (effective 10/1/2023): No change 2025 (effective 10/1/2024): No change Convert 8E0H30Z to ICD-9-CM Acupuncture, the practice of treating conditions through triggering certain points on the skin with needles, may help with allergies, migraines, or insomnia. Acupuncture is an evidence based medicine that has been proven by literally thousands of studies.Share on PinterestAubrie LeGault/StocksyIf you're new to holistic healing as a type of treatment, acupuncture can seem a bit terrifying. How could pressing needles into your skin possibly make you feel better? 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The treatment room is typically a quiet, private space, and patients are often given a means of communicating with the practitioner through a bell or call device, he adds.New patients should expect to complete a medical history intake form upon arrival, just like at any other healthcare visit. You'll also spend time, from a few minutes to longer, discussing with the provider your concerns, similar to a medical doctor taking a history. "There's a little back-and-forth of questioning and diagnosing," Sheinberg says. This helps the provider understand any health concerns you're hoping to address through acupuncture, so they can create the best treatment plan for you, usually in a collaborative way. From there, you may undress, lie on the treatment table, and cover yourself with the sheets, as you would prepare for a traditional massage. Or, the practitioner may provide you with a gown to wear over your undergarments.Once you're on the table, the practitioner will insert the acupuncture needles. Acupuncture needles typically range from 0.5 to 2.5 inches in length, and are often tiny enough that people refer to them as "painless needles."You may feel nothing or you may feel a mild discomfort when the needles are placed in the skin, but there shouldn't be any pain once the needles are in place. "If there is persistent pain, notify the practitioner," Chu says.While you shouldn't feel pain, you should feel a deep ache or pressure in the regions where the needles were inserted. That deep ache signifies that the needles have been inserted at just the right level within the fascia to stimulate the acupoint. "Sometimes, I ask patients for feedback because I want to ensure I'm in the right place," Sheinberg says.Acupuncture sessions can last for a few minutes of up to an hour, depending on the purpose of your visit and the provider's style of practice. Forty-five to 60 minutes is pretty typical, Sheinberg says.According to Johns Hopkins Medicine, some people report that acupuncture makes them feel energized, whereas others say they feel relaxed.What's more, you may feel sleepy, drowsy, or light-headed after your acupuncture session. "Drinking warm water or tea afterward is encouraged," Chu says.Before leaving the clinic, check your body to make sure all acupuncture needles were removed. "It's uncommon, but acupuncture needles are sometimes unintentionally left in," Chu says. Don't be alarmed if you find a needle; simply notify the practitioner and they'll remove it.The results of acupuncture typically aren't immediate. It can take several months of weekly treatments to see lasting changes, depending on your desired outcome. Some short-term effects may indicate that the acupuncture sessions are working. One sign is you notice slight improvements in your symptoms. Curiously, the other is a worsening of symptoms. "It's actually not a bad sign if you feel worse after acupuncture," Sheinberg says. "It means we've stirred things up."On the other hand, if you don't notice any changes following acupuncture, that may indicate that you haven't landed on the right acupoints yet. "Just like everything in medicine, there's a bit of experimenting to find what works best for any one person," says Sheinberg. Take notice of how you feel after your acupuncture sessions and share that information with the practitioner at the next appointment. This will help the practitioner fine-tune your treatment. Acupuncture, the practice of treating conditions through triggering certain points on the skin with needles, may help with allergies, migraines, or insomnia. Acupuncture is an evidence based medicine that has been proven by literally thousands of studies.Share on PinterestAubrie LeGault/StocksyIf you're new to holistic healing as a type of treatment, acupuncture can seem a bit terrifying. How could pressing needles into your skin possibly make you feel better? 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There are hundreds of acupoints in your body along 14 major meridians, also called energy-carrying channels.The needles stimulate your body's central nervous system and immune system to:React to an illness or symptom.Rebalance your body.Release natural chemicals, such as endorphins, your body's natural painkillers, and neurotransmitters, chemicals that control nerve impulses.What happens during an acupuncture treatment?During your first appointment, your acupuncturist will talk to you about your condition. Then, they'll examine your body for areas that'll react to acupuncture. Your acupuncturist will tap the needles into points in your skin throughout your body.The acupuncture needles are sterile, disposable and as thin as a human hair. Your acupuncturist inserts needles at various depths, from a fraction of an inch to a couple of inches. The needles stay in for a few minutes or as long as 20 minutes.Does acupuncture hurt?You may feel a small prick with each needle. It's less painful than the feeling when you get a vaccine or blood draw. Acupuncture needles are much thinner than medical needles. And they're solid, not hollow.The needles may cause some muscle sensations, such as dull aches or tingling. Your practitioner will ask you to report when you feel a deep heaviness or numbness. Those sensations usually mean the treatment is working.What happens after an acupuncture treatment?Acupuncture has a calming effect, so you may want to get a ride home from your appointments — especially the first one. If that's not possible, try to rest for five to 10 minutes before you drive. Your practitioner may suggest that you take it easy for a day or two after each session.