

ACUPUNCTURE

In many parts of the world acupuncture is practiced as an effective method of restoration and maintaining good health. It has been an important part of Chinese medicine for over 5,000 years. Acupuncture theory states that there is a fundamental energy system that keeps the body alive (chi energy). This energy circulates along specific pathways and nourishes the organs, blood, nerves, muscles and all other parts of the body; when this energy flow is disturbed, physical or emotional imbalances or disease results. In effect, acupuncture attempts to stimulate the body's natural ability to heal itself without using drugs or surgery.

Acupuncturists believe the body has approximately 2,000 energy points that relate to the internal organs or other areas of the body. The acupuncture treatment influences the activity of organs, muscles, tendons, nerves and other parts of the body in a manner that is supposed to assist the body in healing itself. Acupuncturists use the insertion of needles or the application of heat, pressure or electrical stimulation at a point or combination of points on the surface of the body. Acupuncturists are required by law to sterilize their needles in an autoclave as is done with surgical instruments. To further ensure public health and safety, more acupuncturists are using disposable needles.

A good acupuncturist's evaluation will include an extensive consultation with the patient, a detailed review of the medical history, examination of the patient's tongue, palpation of the pulses at the wrist and palpation of specific points on the chest, abdomen and back. Acupuncture is sought for such conditions as arthritis, sciatica, back and neck pain, sinusitis, headaches, obesity, asthma, and many more. However, its effectiveness as a form of treatment is still being explored in this country.

Credentialed acupuncturists graduate from acupuncture school or take a certified course at a medical school, are licensed by the Florida Board of Acupuncture and can become Diplomates of the National Commission for the Certification of Acupuncturists.