

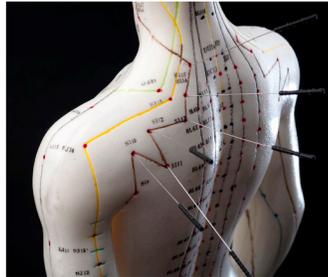
# What is Acupuncture?

Acupuncture is a type of traditional Chinese medicine. It has been used for thousands of years. An acupuncturist puts very thin needles in certain points in your body to treat different conditions.



## HOW DOES ACUPUNCTURE WORK?

Traditional Chinese medicine says that acupuncture balances “qi” or “chi.” Qi or chi is the energy flow in your body. This energy is sometimes blocked in parts of your body. Western medicine says that acupuncture stimulates nerves, muscles, and connective tissue.



## WHAT IS ACUPUNCTURE GOOD FOR?

Acupuncture has been used to treat many conditions. It has been shown to help with the following conditions:

| Condition        | Benefits   |
|------------------|--|
| Pain             | Helps with pain, including lower back, neck, and knee pain.  |
| Headache         | Helps with pain from migraines and tension headaches. Also helps them happen less often.   |
| Osteoarthritis   | Helps with pain from osteoarthritis.   |
| Other conditions | Acupuncture can also sometimes help with substance use, anxiety, asthma, depression, fibromyalgia, menstrual issues, nausea or vomiting after surgery, pain with labor, sinusitis, and urinary problems. |

Speak with your health professional. In some cases, acupuncture can work better when combined with other types of care.

## ARE THERE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ACUPUNCTURE?

Yes. The main type of acupuncture done in the United States is Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) based acupuncture. There are other types of acupuncture as well. Acupuncture can be done one on one or in a group setting.

## ARE THERE ANY SIDE EFFECTS OR RISKS?

Acupuncture is generally safe. Minor bruising and bleeding can sometimes happen where the needle is put in. Sometimes the needles can hurt a little bit when they are put in, but most times it does not hurt at all.

For more information, scan the QR code below, or visit [nciph.org/acupuncture](http://nciph.org/acupuncture)

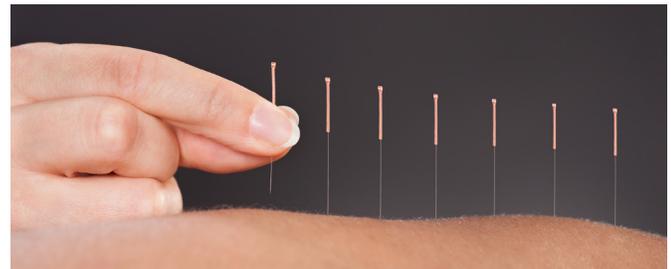


## WHO SHOULD BE CAUTIOUS ABOUT USING ACUPUNCTURE?

- People with bleeding disorders: You must be careful if you have a bleeding disorder or are taking blood thinners.
- Having a pacemaker: Some types of acupuncture use electrical pulses. This can be a problem if you have a pacemaker.
- Being pregnant: Some types of acupuncture might stimulate labor.
- Please inform your health professional if you have any of the above conditions.

## HOW DO I FIND AN ACUPUNCTURIST?

Different types of health professionals can be trained to do acupuncture. Some are medical doctors (MDs), some are licensed acupuncturists, and some are naturopathic physicians or Oriental Medical doctors (OMDs). Talk to your primary health care provider to find someone in your area. Group or community acupuncture is sometimes the least expensive!



## WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT FROM MY FIRST VISIT?

Your acupuncturist will ask about your symptoms, behaviors, and lifestyle. He or she may closely examine:

- Any body parts that are painful
- Your tongue
- The color of your face
- Your pulse

Your acupuncturist will come up with your treatment plan. It may include several visits. The first visit may take up to one hour. Your visits after the first one will be shorter.

