



# Ancient Elements Acupuncture

Acupuncture, Asian Medicine & Herbology in Raleigh, NC

## About Acupuncture & Asian Medicine

Asian medicine is one of the oldest continuously practiced systems of medicine, with recorded instances dating as far back as four thousand years. Asian medicine is quite complex and is based on the Daoist belief that we live in a universe in which everything is interconnected. The mind, body, and spirit are not viewed separately, but as part of an energetic system. Similarly, organs and organ systems are viewed as interconnected structures that work together to keep the body functioning properly.

Many of the concepts emphasized in Asian medicine have no true counterpart in Western medicine. One of these concepts is *qi* (pronounced "chee"), which is considered a vital force or energy responsible for controlling the workings of the human mind and body. *Qi* flows through the body via channels, or pathways, which are called meridians. There are many meridians: 12 primary meridians, which correspond to specific organs, organ systems or functions; eight secondary meridians; and many smaller collateral channels that weave the larger channels into an interconnected whole. Imbalances in the flow of *qi* cause illness, and correction of this flow restores the body to balance.

Acupuncture is one modality that falls under the larger umbrella of Asian medicine. Acupuncture utilizes the insertion of very thin, sterile needles into specific points on the body to influence the flow of energy and restore the body to balance.

## What Can Acupuncture and Asian Medicine Treat?

Asian medicine is a complete medical system that is capable of diagnosing and successfully treating a wide range of conditions including, but not limited to, the following:

- **Eye, Ear, Nose, Throat Disorders** such as sinusitis, allergies, ringing in the ears, dizziness, and sore throat.
- **Circulatory Disorders** such as high blood pressure, poor circulation, and anemia.
- **Gastrointestinal Disorders** such as irritable bowel syndrome, colitis, constipation, diarrhea, gastritis, abdominal bloating, and hemorrhoids.
- **Gynecological / Genitourinary Disorders** such as PMS, irregular or painful menstruation, endometriosis, menopausal symptoms, chronic bladder infections, complications of pregnancy, morning sickness, kidney stones, impotence, and infertility.
- **Immune Disorders** such as chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, multiple sclerosis, and allergies.
- **Emotional and Psychological Disorders** such as stress, depression, anxiety, and insomnia.
- **Musculoskeletal and Neurological Disorders** such as arthritis, neuralgia, sciatica, back pain, tendonitis, bursitis, headaches and migraines, sprains, and muscle spasms.
- **Respiratory Disorders** such as asthma, emphysema, bronchitis, colds, and flu.
- **Acupuncture also treats** the side effects of chemotherapy and radiation, diabetes, symptoms of Parkinson's disease, dermatological disorders, and aids in weight control.
- **Acupuncture is also often used** as a preventative medicine to help prevent disease and promote health, energy, and vitality.

## What can I expect during an acupuncture session?

Your first appointment will be 1.5 – 2 hours in length and will include a full review of your health history and current complaint(s) as well as an acupuncture treatment. Before administering your first treatment, I will perform an Asian medical exam that includes the taking of your pulses (3

on each wrist), the examination of your tongue, and the palpation of some of the energetic channels on your body.

Acupuncture treatments most often incorporate acupoints located on the arms from the elbow down, and on the legs from the knees down. Therefore, it is advised that you wear loose, comfortable clothing with easy access to these areas of your body. Acupuncture points on the back, stomach, scalp, and ear may also be included. It is recommended that you eat a small meal or snack 1 – 2 hours before receiving an acupuncture treatment.

Acupuncture is an extremely relaxing and rejuvenating experience! Acupuncture needles are very thin – about the width of a human hair – and most people do not experience pain upon the insertion of a needle. There are a variety of other common sensations reported such as a feeling of heat, itchiness, distention, heaviness, or a tugging sensation.

Follow-up appointments last one hour and include a brief update on your condition, as well as an acupuncture treatment.

### **How many treatments will I need?**

There is no easy answer to this question. In general, you can expect that the longer you have been experiencing a certain condition or health concern, the longer it will take to resolve. A good range to keep in mind is that you will likely require between 5 and 15 treatments. In general, an acute and/or new concern will take less time to resolve. For example, if you hurt your shoulder playing tennis and start treating the pain with acupuncture right away, you can expect the pain to resolve within a few treatments. For more chronic, long-term concerns, you can expect that a longer course of treatment will be required.

Remember to keep in mind that acupuncture is not a “magic bullet” cure, and that a commitment is required to receive the immense benefits that this type of medicine has to offer. I like to use the example of antibiotics – something with which most everyone is familiar. If you have an infection that requires the use of antibiotics, you will begin the medication and likely not see any benefit or reduction in symptoms until the level of medicine has built up in your system for a few days. It is also necessary to continue taking the medication for the entire prescribed time period – long after the symptoms disappear – so the infection is completely cleared and does not return. Acupuncture works in the same way. Often it will take between 3 and 5 treatments to see a very significant reduction in symptoms, and it is often necessary for you to continue to receive treatments for a number of weeks after your symptoms disappear to address the root condition that was causing the symptoms. After your body’s balance has been fully restored, monthly or seasonal treatments are ideal for maintaining long-term wellness.

### **About Jennifer Spain, Licensed Acupuncturist & Herbalist**

Jennifer sees patients at her private office in Raleigh located at 2600 Fairview Road, Suite 100. She utilizes a combination of Asian medical modalities and customizes each treatment to most effectively meet the needs of each individual patient. A typical treatment may include acupuncture, moxibustion, yin tui na, cupping, gua sha, and/or an herbal formula. Additionally, Jennifer may make nutritional and dietary recommendations.

Jennifer offers private appointments Monday through Friday at her office that is located in the Five Points area near downtown Raleigh. Jennifer also offers a free 15 minute consultation to help you get your questions answered about Asian medicine and find out if it is a good choice to address your health concerns. Call today to find out if acupuncture and Asian medicine are right for you!

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