

Medical Acupuncture

Techniques resembling acupuncture may have been used for over 5,000 years with its foundation developed in the Far East, but considerable scientific research has been done in the West over the last thirty years, and we now know much more about how acupuncture works.

It stimulates nerves in the skin, muscle and other tissues and can produce a variety of effects, increasing production of the body's natural painkillers, modifying the way pain signals are received by the brain. Since it harnesses some of the body's own pain relieving mechanisms, people can vary in their response to it, with up to 80% experiencing benefit.

Research shows that it can affect many of the body's systems, rather than simply reducing pain; people often notice an improved sense of wellbeing after treatment.

Acupuncture can be effective in a wide range of painful conditions, particularly musculoskeletal pain, eg, in the back, neck, shoulder and leg. It has been used successfully not only in the treatment of tension headache, migraine, 'trapped nerves', chronic muscle strain, sports injuries and various kinds of rheumatic and arthritic pain, but also in functional bowel or bladder problems such as IBS or overactive bladder, sinus problems and chronic catarrh, and nausea/vomiting in pregnancy.

A typical treatment involves fine needles being inserted through the skin and left in position for a short time, sometimes with manual, and occasionally, electrical stimulation. Treatment might be once a week to begin with, then at longer intervals as the condition responds. A typical course of treatment lasts five to eight sessions.