

HEALTHY LIVING NEWSLETTER

SOUTH DENVER ACUPUNCTURE AND HERBAL MEDICINE CLINIC

Summer 2014 Issue, Volume 1, Issue 1

HEALTH ADVOCACY

Prevention versus Reaction

One of the best features of Chinese medicine is its ability to prevent disease. Prevention is the key to keeping us healthy, well, and living our lives to the fullest, however most of the time we will not act on a health issue until there is no other choice but to receive medical treatment.

There are a few sayings in

Chinese medicine that "The good doctor stops disease before it

starts" and "Preventing disease is easier than treating disease".

What does this mean and how can we apply it to our lives?

One of the best illustration of the difference between prevention and reaction was described to me in a somewhat ridiculous story about a pair of round tables that grew corners and two very different carpenters. There were two carpenters that had both crafted themselves beautiful round wooden tables, but these tables were made of a strange wood and the two men noticed that

hard corners started appearing on the edges of tables. Both of the carpenters wanted to keep the tables round, but they had very different approaches. The first carpenter thought that early prevention was the key and so every day he would take some sand paper and spend a few minutes sanding his table edges

smooth, sanding off the newly emerging corners, because of

this, the table stayed beautiful and round as long as he had it. The second carpenter however noticed the corners emerging, but decided to ignore them, eventually the corners grew larger and larger to the point where he was beginning to have a square table. He had no choice but to get a saw and cut off the corners, tearing up the beautiful wood grain in the process, leaving the table much different from how it had originally looked.

This story illustrates the difference between a

PREVENTING DISEASE
ALWAYS IS EASIER THAN
TREATING DISEASE.



IN THIS ISSUE:

Editorial: Health Advocacy: Prevention versus Reaction

Research: Pain Relieving Effects of Acupuncture Explained

Home Health: Acupressure for Pain in a Pinch!

Food As Medicine: Eating with the Seasons: Summertime

Clinic News: We are now accepting Insurance!

preventative approach and a reactionary approach. Spending a little time each day being aware of our situation and working on prevention can help us in the long run from having major problems. If we ignore early warning signs and symptoms or health problems, eventually we can be faced with a large problem requiring costly medical intervention.

Here is where the beauty of Chinese medicine comes in. TCM is in its heart a preventative system, when you go to your acupuncturist or herbalist, the system allows them to see what is going on right now, as well as issues that are beginning to creep in from the edges, those corners that are starting to come in. Hopefully the practitioner will treat any immediate issues as well as take actions to keep those corners at bay, sanding down those rough edges, stopping the disease before it starts. However, your health is also your responsibility, no one else can make health choices for you, and ultimately we decide how

healthy we want to be. Your practitioner may treat you once a week, but you are on your own the rest of the time. They can provide dietary advice and herbal medicine, but you decide what to eat and whether or not to take the herbal medicines. Exercises and Stretching can be recommended and taught, but we decide whether or not we do them.

We must be advocates for our own health, no one else can do it for us.

One of my instructors would often say that she would agree with her patients when they said that treatments were expensive or that herbs would taste bad, or they didn't like the foods that were recommended, but she would add that treatment is cheaper than surgery or a hospital stay, that the momentary bad taste was better than a long term health problem. Prevention is better than reaction.

Chinese medicine has a wealth of preventative measures to keep our bodies balanced and healthy, things that are

meant to be done daily, because the medical system was developed as a people's medicine, where self-care was key. Eating with the seasons keeps us in tune with our environment, taking time to relax each day keeps stress and excessive negative emotions from building up, daily exercise keeps our muscles, tendons, organs, and immune system strong, regular checkups (western or eastern) and health screenings allow us to spot problems early and head them off at the pass.

Of course, Life happens and sometimes we cannot avoid large health problems, trauma and accidents happen, people can inherit genetic diseases, deadlines with work and school will inevitably come calling and then work has to get done. However, after the event, after the unavoidable, we can choose to get back on the path, to keep sanding down the edges, and keeping our table round and smooth.

PAIN RELIEVING EFFECTS OF ACUPUNCTURE REVEALED

Researchers find the reason for acupunctures pain relieving effects

In a recently published article in the research journal *Molecular Neurobiology*, researchers have stated that they have found a biochemical link between manual acupuncture and the reduction of pain and swelling.

In the article the researchers stated that they were able to demonstrate that manual acupuncture clearly down-regulated the production of M1 macrophages which are pro-inflammatory, while

simultaneously up-regulating the production of M2 macrophages which are anti-inflammatory. Up-regulation is the increased production of a substance in the body, while down-regulation is

the decreased production of a substance.

M2 macrophages produce a substance called interleukin-10 (IL-10), which is a major anti-inflammatory molecule that helps to regulate the actions of cells.

During an injury or in most conditions that cause pain there is local inflammation, inflammation is the body's natural protective mechanism that begins the healing process. Inflammation has several factors including swelling, redness, pain, heat, and loss of function or range of motion. This is often started by a series of biochemical factors including M1 macrophages that essentially isolate the area while allowing

tissue repair and immune cells to come to the area of the body.

Scientists are finding however that many of our most devastating chronic diseases and disorders such as autoimmune diseases are caused by chronic inflammation throughout the body, inflammation that has continued past the point of the bodies healing process. Prolonged inflammation can cause damage to tissues in addition to pain, swelling, redness, heat, and lack of function.

The researcher's method was to chemically block IL-10 in the body and then use acupuncture on a single point to measure the effects. They found that if IL-10 was blocked, there was no

production of IL-10 and no reduction in pain or swelling with acupuncture. When there was no chemical block, the acupuncture produced an increase in IL-10 production, more M2 macrophages, and a reduction in pain and swelling.

This study is a great find as more and more researchers are taking interest in acupuncture and Chinese medicine, using western science to find out why and how it works.

Original Article Source :
<http://www.healthcmi.com/Acupuncture-Continuing-Education-News/1336-acupuncture-pain-killing-mystery-revealed>

Journal Article Abstract:
<http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs12035-014-8790-x>

HOME HEALTH: ACUPUPRESSURE FOR PAIN IN A PINCH!

Use acupressure for minor aches and pains before reaching for the pain medicine.

Many of us have aches and pains throughout our day, some can be debilitating, but thankfully sometimes we just have a little stiffness in our neck or back. Often when this happens, if it doesn't quickly go away a lot of us will reach for an aspirin or Tylenol to help with the pain, however, for minor aches and pains acupressure can provide instant relief without having to take medication.

Acupressure is the application of strong stimulation to acupuncture points using the hands or a small blunt tipped tool. I find using the thumbs work the best to provide a good amount of pressure and control. When performing acupressure, it works best if you stimulate the point and then move the affected area through its complete range of motion while continually stimulating the point.

You should feel some relief almost immediately with motion and stimulation of the point. To stimulate an acupoint, use the tip of your thumb to press hard into the point and then stimulate it by using a pulsing action of hard pressure followed by soft pressure, repeating this hard/soft stimulation as you move the affected area. Continue this for 15-30 seconds. Often you will find that the acupoint on one side of

the body is more tender than the other, if this is the case, stimulate the side that is more sensitive. As a general note, almost all of the acupuncture points are found in little hollows and spaces, so they should be easy to find.

For Stiff Neck:



If you wake up in the morning and feel that your neck is stiff, or if you have been reading or at the computer a long time and feel neck stiffness when taking a break, this is the point for you!

This point is called Luo Zhen (pronounced Low Gin), and is found on the back of the hand, in a space directly behind and between the knuckles of your index and middle fingers. It is somewhat easier to find if the hand is pulled into a loose fist. As stated above, apply strong stimulation with the pulsing action while moving your neck through its entire range of motion, look up and down, side to side, do some circular movements as well during the stimulation, you should notice some relief almost

immediately if you have correctly found the point.

For Stiff Mid to Upper Back:

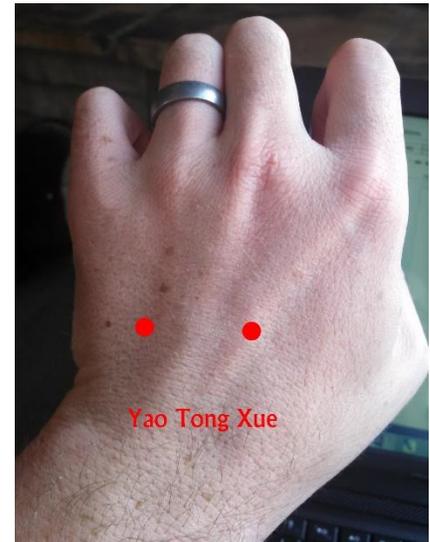


This is another common problem that can come with lots of deskwork and studying, but again, for some minor stiffness and pain, acupressure can provide some relief!

The point to use here is called Hou Xi (pronounced Hoe Shee), and is found on the side of hand below and to the side of where your pinky finger attaches to your hand. You are looking for the space between the bone and the muscle close to the knuckle of your pinky (photo 2). Again, it is somewhat easier to find the correct point if the hand is curled into a loose fist. The index finger of the opposite hand can be better than the thumb for stimulating this point. Move your back and shoulders through their range of motion, bending and arching your spine back and forth and side to side as you stimulate the point and you

should find some relief if you are in the correct area.

For Stiff Low Back:



This is the big one that almost everyone feels at some point in the day, once again though, acupressure can help with minor pains and stiffness in the lower back!

For the low back we are going to use a pair of points called Yao Tong Xue (pronounced Yow Tong Shwea). These points both need to be stimulated at the same time and for this I will usually use my thumb and index finger simultaneously. These points are found on the back of the hand above the wrist, one point is located between the hand bones of the pinky and ring finger, and the other between the hand bones of the middle and index fingers. If you place your thumb where you found the point Luo Zhen, and your index finger in the equivalent spot between your pinky and ring finger, and then slide thumb and

index finger towards then wrist and between the hand bones, you will find a natural stopping point that may be quite tender (photo 3), these are our points. Again, strong pulsing stimulation on these points combined with movement through the lower back's complete range of motion should provide some immediate

relief for minor aches and stiffness of the low back.

Hopefully you will find these points easy to use and effective for minor aches and pains. It should be noted that these are for little discomforts, if you are experiencing severe pain or the inability to move your neck or back, or if the pain lasts more than 3 days without improvement

or worsens you should seek professional medical attention.

If you want to learn more about acupressure, be on the lookout for our upcoming classes on acupressure that will cover these points and many more that can be used to treat yourself, family and friend's minor aches and pains.

FOOD AS MEDICINE

Eating with the Seasons: Summertime

One of the best ways to help keep your body healthy and in balance is by eating correctly. We all know that we need to have a varied, balanced, and complete diet to make sure that we get all of our vitamins, minerals, essential acids, and everything else that our bodies need to thrive, but Chinese Medicine has held that we should also keep in mind the changes that occur seasonally in our environment and eat accordingly. So here are some tips and a few recipes to get you started for the summer season!

Summertime is the season related to the Fire Element in Chinese Five Element Theory. Fire is related to Joy, Laughter, Strong Growth, The Heart and Small Intestines, Tongue and Pulse, has a bitter taste and a scorched smell. Summertime is the height of Yang energy in the year as opposed to its Yin opposite winter. While in winter we want

to sleep and hibernate, eating heavy foods and conserve energy, Summer is the opposite where we want to get out and be active, enjoy the sights, sounds, colors and warmth as we reach our closest point in the year to the sun.

Summer foods should be cooked somewhat similarly to springtime foods, lots of color and fresh vegetables and sprouts, cooked on high heat for a shorter time. Try some quick sautés and stir-fry's. Add some spicy flavors to your dishes like red or green peppers, chilies, some fresh ginger, as well as pungent and aromatic herbs like dill, horseradish, and black pepper. If it seems strange to eat hot foods during hot weather, the idea is to use foods that have dispersing and warm qualities to bring the surface of the body into a similar temperature to the environment so that it is not bothersome or noticeable. Drinking warm drinks

and taking warm showers will quickly make the body sweat, venting heat, and cooling the body.

In the summertime we naturally want to eat less and have more energy to burn as we work off the excesses and storage of winter. As such we should still take care to avoid overeating heavy meals, lots of fatty foods, excessive sweets and dairy products as all of these can lead to sluggishness and tiredness in the hot weather.

We should also avoid excessively cold foods as well. Cold causes contraction which can trap heat and cause more problems than we would have by venting them. Avoid excessive amounts of iced drinks, ice creams and desserts, raw vegetables and fruits, all of which can negatively affect the digestive organs resulting in poor digestions and low energy. That being said, when you are

overheated and feeling dehydrated, nothing beats a big slice of watermelon to cool you down and help to regain some lost fluids and minerals. Just remember the main rule of Chinese Lifestyle therapy:

Everything in Moderation

By eating with the seasons, you can help keep your body in balance on another level, being aware not only of your internal situation, but the external situation of the world around us.

Here are a couple of easy summer recipes that you can add to your meals from one of

my favorite food books: Healing with Whole Foods by Paul Pitchford (ISBN: 978-1-55643-4303)

Pressed Cucumber Salad

Cucumbers, sliced paper-thin
 ½ teaspoon salt in 1 cup water
 Pinch of Dill

- Soak Cucumbers in brine 30 minutes.
- Drain and dry slightly by pressing between paper towels.
- Sprinkle with Dill and serve.

Jade Green Soup

½ cups tofu, diced
 2 cups leafy greens, chopped
 ¼ teaspoon sea salt
 ½ teaspoon oil (optional)
 3 cups broth
 ½ tablespoons kudzu (kuzu)

dissolved in 2 tablespoons of water

- Sauté or steam tofu 5 minutes. Add Salt
- Add greens, Sauté 2 minutes.
- Add broth and simmer until greens are bright-colored.
- Add kudzu mixture and simmer until thickened.
- Serves 3-4.

CLINIC NEWS

We Are Now Accepting Insurance!

We are proud to announce that we have begun to accept health insurance! We currently are only able to accept patients with Cigna health insurance and Optum/United Healthcare insurance starting August 7th, 2014 but we are working hard to get in-network with more insurance groups.

Not sure if you have acupuncture benefits? Give us a call at 720-260-1892, we will be happy to take down your information and call your insurance company to verify your coverage and any acupuncture benefits that you may have.

Have Insurance coverage with another carrier? We are always happy to prepare a superbill for you to submit to your insurance company for reimbursement.

Have a health care spending account? We are able to accept these cards for payment of acupuncture services as well.

Many plans include coverage for acupuncture and using your insurance can be a great way to supplement the cost of treatment to limit your out of pocket costs. Some plans can have restrictions on what can be treated by acupuncture, but most aches

and pains are accepted. We can also verify if you have any specific diagnoses that your plan limits coverage for acupuncture.

If you have any questions or wonder if acupuncture or Chinese medicine would be appropriate for your situation, please do not hesitate to give us a call at 720-260-1892 or send us an email at southdenvertcm@gmail.com, we are always more than happy to talk with you and help you to make the right decisions.



25% Off Your Next Treatment!

Bring in this coupon and get a discount on your next treatment,
or give it to a friend or family member!

Valid for Single Treatment Only, One Coupon Per Patient, New Patients Accepted
Not Valid with any other offer. Expires 11/31/2014

We are always happy to speak with you about acupuncture, traditional Chinese medicine, and any other health concerns that you may have! Please do not hesitate to contact us either by phone (720-260-1892) or by email (southdenvertcm@gmail.com). Please visit our website (www.southdenvertcm.com) for more information about acupuncture, traditional Chinese medicine, and our clinic.



SOUTH DENVER ACUPUNCTURE AND HERBAL MEDICINE CLINIC
3035 S. Parker Rd, Suite E-560
Aurora, CO 80014