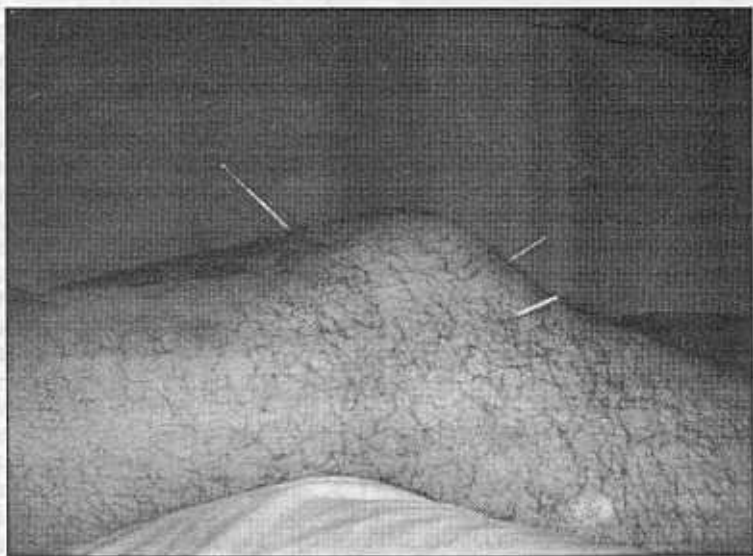


# Acupuncture for relief

Pain is an obstruction in the energy and blood flow.

LORNE BROWN SPECIAL TO THE JEWISH BULLETIN



The objective of acupuncture is mobilizing *qi* (energy) to suffuse the painful area with *qi* and blood, so strained tissue can be repaired and nourished.

**T**raditional Chinese medicine (TCM) is one of the oldest continuously practised professional medicines in the world. It is a complete system with its own model and understanding of the human being, unrelated and dissimilar to western medicine. Based on Taoist philosophy, TCM promotes a balanced lifestyle to prevent disease and create vitality.

Pain is understood as an obstruction in the free and smooth flow of *qi* (energy) and *xue* (blood) in the meridians, the main channels of *qi* flow. If there is free flow, there is no pain. If there is no free flow, there is pain.

Good health requires free circulation of *qi* (pronounced chee), or life force energy, throughout all organs and meridians of the body. When impeded along a meridian, the resulting imbalance causes pain. Lack of exercise, repetitive movement (using your computer mouse), injury, trauma and emotional stress can all lead to the impediment of *qi* flow to an area, impairing the smooth and free circulation of *qi* and blood.

Acupuncture is the insertion of thin needles into acupuncture points (energy gates) in the skin to adjust the flow of *qi* and *xue* in the meridians of the body. Acupuncture can treat pain through its ability to open these points, allowing *qi* to flow uninhibited throughout the body.

The choice of acupuncture points to use is determined by many factors. The location of pain provides information as to the channels involved. For acute pain, distal points (furthest away from the area) usually are chosen along the meridian affected. For chronic conditions, local

points along the meridian experiencing pain, as well as points on channels adjacent to the area of discomfort, are used. The objective is mobilizing *qi* to suffuse the painful area with *qi* and blood, so strained tissue can be repaired and nourished.

Points are also chosen based on their function and ability to treat the nature of the pain. Pain that comes and goes, and feels heavy and numb, will receive a different prescription of acupuncture points than pain that is fixed and stabbing in nature. For example, inflamed areas with a burning pain that are red and swollen may be treated by points that clear heat and drain dampness.

The number of treatments will vary with each individual and the condition being treated. For acute problems, only a few treatments may be required. In some cases, one treatment will be sufficient. For complex or long-standing conditions, one or two treatments a week for several weeks may be recommended, requiring less frequent treatments with improvement.

Some people obtain relief immediately, some notice improvement after a few hours and some after a few days. Occasionally, symptoms become worse (24 to 48 hours after treatment) before they improve. □

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