

Strong and Weak Responders to Acupuncture

Some people are much more sensitive to treatment than others which makes it very difficult to prescribe a standard "dose" of acupuncture. In practice I find that roughly 1 person in 10 responds strongly to acupuncture and does best with a short treatment and extremely fine needles. At the other extreme there are some weak responders who seem unaffected by acupuncture and for them I would suggest using other methods of treatment.

Most people are somewhere between these two extremes and generally will do best with on average, 5–8 treatments over a 4–8 week period.

Acupuncture Needles



I use single use sterile disposable acupuncture needles on all patients

Acupuncture Response Rates

Most Likely to Respond:

Muscle and joint pain, arthritis and headaches, IBS and gynae problems

Less Likely to Respond:

Psychiatric disorders, anxiety, depression, neuropathic pain, shingles

Least Likely to Respond:

ME and MS

Treatment Fees

First Appointment, allow up to 1 hr	£79
Subsequent treatments	£49

Bill Ferguson

REGISTERED OSTEOPATH

Osteopathy, Cranial Osteopathy, Acupuncture

Sports Injuries

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Tenterden, Kent

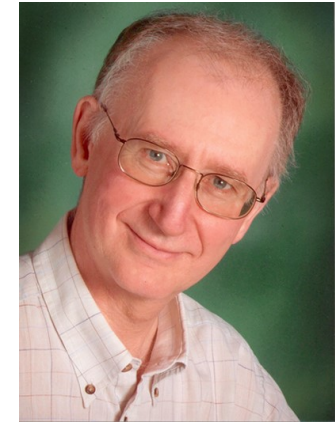
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Acupuncture



Bill Ferguson

MSc, DO, LCSP (Phys)

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History of Acupuncture

There is a common misconception that acupuncture was invented by the Chinese. It is true that the oldest written records are Chinese, but these only go back 3,000 years. In fact the oldest evidence we have of acupuncture being used to treat a person comes from Europe.

Several years ago the frozen body of a prehistoric hunter (christened "Otzi the iceman" by the press) was found in a melting glacier between Austria and Italy. Carbon dating showed that he died around 5,000 years ago and his body was so well preserved that it was possible to identify where he had been treated with acupuncture for arthritic pain in his spine and for stomach pain.

Modern Acupuncture

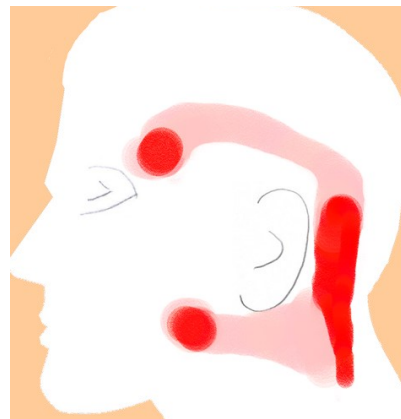
The style of acupuncture that I practice is called Western Medical acupuncture, to differentiate it from Traditional Chinese acupuncture. There is a growing body of medical research that helps us to understand the effects of acupuncture in terms of anatomy and physiology. We know for example that putting an acupuncture needle into a muscle has the effect of drawing more blood into the area. With this increased circulation the muscle is warmed and "flushed through" giving a

similar result to massage - increased relaxation and easing of pain.

This increase in circulation we call a "local effect", there are other "central effects" that happen at the same time. The stimulation of acupuncture causes the brain to release endorphins, which are opiate-like chemicals that reduce pain and make you feel relaxed. Many people feel pleasantly drowsy after acupuncture treatment for this reason.

Trigger Points

Trigger points are small areas of contraction within muscles that cause pain in nearby areas. Treating the trigger point with acupuncture is a quick way of reducing its activity. Many of the common locations of such points have been mapped along with the areas that they refer pain to. Here is an example of a trapezius muscle trigger point on a model.



Conditions that Respond well to Acupuncture

- Painful trigger points. Typically in low back and shoulder muscles.
- Frozen shoulder and tennis elbow
- Joint pain due to arthritis. Typically knee, hip and hand joints
- Headaches and migraines, trapped nerves
- Functional bowel problems such as IBS (irritable bowel syndrome)
- Congested sinuses and chronic catarrh, hay fever and allergic rhinitis
- Nausea, especially morning sickness during pregnancy

For acupuncture to be the treatment of choice you need to have a functional nervous system. Much of the benefit of acupuncture relies on the brain being aware of the stimulus given to the body by the acupuncture needle and if the nervous system is damaged and not able to carry this information I would not expect such good results.