

WHAT IS ACUPUNCTURE?

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), a division of the National Institutes of Health, defines acupuncture as “the insertion of dry needles at specially chosen sites for the treatment or prevention of symptoms and conditions.” Acupuncture can be defined to include traditional body needling, electric acupuncture (electro-acupuncture), and microsystem acupuncture such as ear (auricular), face, hand and scalp acupuncture.

WHO GETS ACUPUNCTURE?

Traditional acupuncture has become popular in the United States. Data released by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in 2008 reported that 3.1 million American adults and 150,000 children used acupuncture in 2007.

WHAT DOES ACUPUNCTURE TREAT?

The 2003 World Health Organization Report, *Acupuncture: Review and Analysis of Reports on Controlled Clinical Trials*, concluded that diseases, symptoms or conditions for which Acupuncture has been proved-through controlled trials-to be an effective treatment included: Adverse reactions to radiotherapy and/or chemotherapy; Allergic rhinitis (including hay fever); Biliary colic; Depression (including depressive neurosis and depression following stroke); Dysentery, acute bacillary; Dysmenorrhoea, primary; Epigastralgia, acute (in peptic ulcer, acute and chronic gastritis, and gastrospasm); Facial pain (including craniomandibular disorders); Headache; Hypertension, essential; Hypotension, primary; Induction of labour; Knee pain; Leukopenia; Low back pain; Malposition of fetus, correction of; Morning sickness; Nausea and vomiting; Neck pain; Pain in dentistry (including dental pain and temporomandibular dysfunction); Periarthritis of shoulder; Postoperative pain; Renal colic; Rheumatoid arthritis; Sciatica; Sprain; Stroke; Tennis elbow.

WHO ADMINISTERS ACUPUNCTURE?

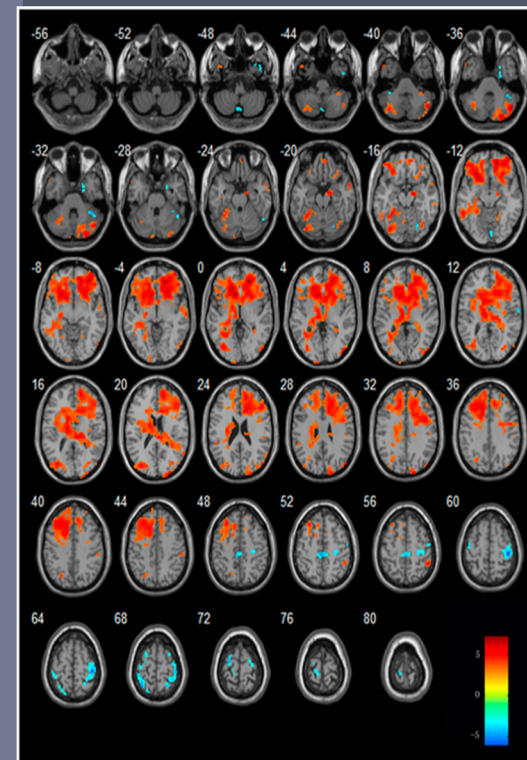
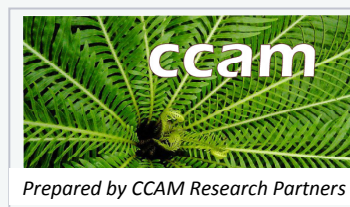
Healthcare providers whose graduate education is in Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (AOM) leading to licensure as an Acupuncturist receive approximately 80% of their education exclusively in this field. Licensed Acupuncturists will have undergone extensive training averaging 3.5 years and will have received at least 1500 hours of classroom training including 660 hours of clinic internship. A Licensed Acupuncturist is a specialist in their field and has the highest level of training available in the United States. Other healthcare practitioners may have no training, some training, or for American Academy of Medical Acupuncture Board Certified Medical Doctors, 300 hours of training.

As in the case of any medical specialty, it is best and safest to receive treatment from the most qualified healthcare practitioner performing that specialty. Determining who is the greatest qualified is often indicated by those practitioners with the maximum in-depth training in their field.

Acupuncture is best performed by a Licensed Acupuncturist.

IS ACUPUNCTURE SAFE?

The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine reports: “Relatively few complications have been reported from the use of acupuncture. However, acupuncture can cause potentially serious side effects if not delivered by a qualified practitioner.”



Human brain regions in patients experiencing Mild Cognitive Impairment showing increased activity in those brain regions after acupuncture treatment.

Acupuncture is a prescriptive device, during which the insertion of fine gauge needles stimulates the release of stress-induced analgesia (SIA) and the activation of diffuse noxious inhibitory control (DNIC), thereby encouraging the body to begin healing itself.

Wang Z, Nie B, Li D, Zhao Z, et al. (2012) Effect of Acupuncture in Mild Cognitive Impairment and Alzheimer Disease: A Functional MRI Study. PLoS ONE 7(8): e42730. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0042730
<http://www.plosone.org/article/info:doi/10.1371/>