

## How Acupuncture Works 8-19-2010

Most want to know how inserting a tiny needle into the skin can help reduce pain and correct malfunction. To understand this you have to understand the term *stagnation*. Very simply this is a condition where something is stuck and not flowing or moving. From a TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine) and Acupuncture perspective, the Qi and or Blood are not moving. This can also be applied to the mental and emotion aspects of being as well. Let us look at an analogy. Assume for a moment that your body is a garden or beautiful meadow and a stream or river is flowing through it. All is vibrant, alive and well. A beaver comes along and puts in a dam. Now you have flooding up stream and drought downstream. Instead of flowers, butterflies and trout you have stagnate pools and mosquitoes. It may sound simplistic but your bodies are very similar. Qi (pronounced Chee) is the active principle in the body and does the work like moving the blood. The blood, including all of the other fluids, nurtures the Qi and all the tissues. When the Qi flows unimpeded throughout the various pathways, called meridians, it moves the blood and all is well. If these flows get out of balance either, flooding or depleted, you will have pain and or malfunction.

Now back to the needles. When I insert a tiny needle into the skin it causes a microscopic amount of tissue damage. Your immune system (defense) interprets that as an injury or an attack and so triggers an entire cascade of bio-chemical and bio-electrical (bio means living) to occur. And to an acupuncturist that means FLOW!

So, acupuncture simply removes the beaver dam, the meadow is once again nurtured and returns to its original condition of health