

# Physical Medicine Intervention for Pain Management

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## *Acupuncture*

Acupuncture treats the human body as a whole. Disease is understood as a loss of balance between the yin and yang energies, which bears some resemblance to homeostasis among the several systems of function, and treatment of disease is attempted by modifying the activity of one or more systems of function through the activity of needles, pressure, heat, etc. on sensitive parts of the body of small volume traditionally called "acupuncture points" in English, or "xue" (穴, cavities) in Chinese.

Treatment of acupuncture points may be performed along several layers of pathways, most commonly the twelve primary pathways meridians, located throughout the body. Other pathways include the Eight Extraordinary Pathways Qi Jing Ba Mai, the Luo Vessels, the Divergents and the Sinew Channels. Unaffiliated, or tender points, called "ah shi" (signifying "that's it", "ouch", or "oh yes") are generally used for treatment of local pain.

Chinese medical theory holds that acupuncture works by normalizing the free flow of qi (a difficult-to-translate concept that pervades Chinese philosophy and is commonly translated as "vital energy"), blood and body fluids (jin ye) throughout the body. Pain or illnesses are treated by attempting to remedy local or systemic accumulations or deficiencies. Pain is considered to indicate blockage or stagnation of the flow of qi, blood and/or fluids, and an axiom of the medical literature of acupuncture is "no pain, no blockage; no blockage, no pain". The delicate balance between qi and blood is of primary concern in Chinese medical theory, hence the axiom blood is the mother of qi, and qi is the commander of blood. Both qi and blood work together to move (qi) and to nourish (blood) the body fluids.

# Acupuncture Recommendations

## World Health Organization

Abdominal distention/flatulence  
Acute and chronic pain control  
Allergic sinusitis  
Anesthesia for high-risk patients or patients with previous adverse responses to anesthetics  
Anorexia  
Anxiety, fright, panic  
Arthritis/arthrosis  
Atypical chest pain (negative workup)  
Bursitis, tendinitis, carpal tunnel syndrome  
Certain functional gastrointestinal disorders (nausea and vomiting, esophageal spasm, hyperacidity, irritable bowel) \*  
Cervical and lumbar spine syndromes  
Constipation, diarrhea

Cough with contraindications for narcotics  
Drug detoxification  
Dysmenorrhea, pelvic pain  
Frozen shoulder  
Headache (migraine and tension-type), vertigo (Meniere disease), tinnitus  
Idiopathic palpitations, sinus tachycardia  
In fractures, assisting in pain control, edema, and enhancing healing process  
Muscle spasms, tremors, tics, contractures  
Neuralgias (trigeminal, herpes zoster, postherpetic pain, other)  
Paresthesias  
Persistent hiccups  
Phantom pain

Plantar fasciitis  
Post-traumatic and post-operative ileus  
Selected dermatoses (urticaria, pruritus, eczema, psoriasis)  
Sequelae of stroke syndrome (aphasia, hemiplegia)  
Seventh nerve palsy  
Severe hyperthermia  
Sprains and contusions  
Temporo-mandibular joint derangement, bruxism  
Urinary incontinence, retention (neurogenic, spastic, adverse drug effect)  
Weight Loss