

# RELAX! We Insist: Complementary Medicines

Chairperson: Tom Winters, MD, FACOEM, FACPM

Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2026

11:30-12:15pm

# Complementary Medicine

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- **Mindfulness meditation**

- 2000-year history of practicing mindfulness meditation in records where deep meditation was reported.
- 38% of Americans meditate for a few hours per month.
- 45% of people who meditate have had out of body experiences.
- In the meditative state:
  - The brain regions communicate less,
  - Brain energy patterns drop,
  - Brain modes linked to clarity and alertness are active.
  - Some people set goals as meditative endpoints.

# Complementary Medicine

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- **Yoga-Amanda Califano- Whitaker**
- **Therapeutic massage- James Rosenblum**
- **Acupuncture -Jan Gellis, MD**

# Pause. Breathe. Show up.

Tony Maciag, BFA

Manager, Ctr for Mindfulness at UMass Memorial Health

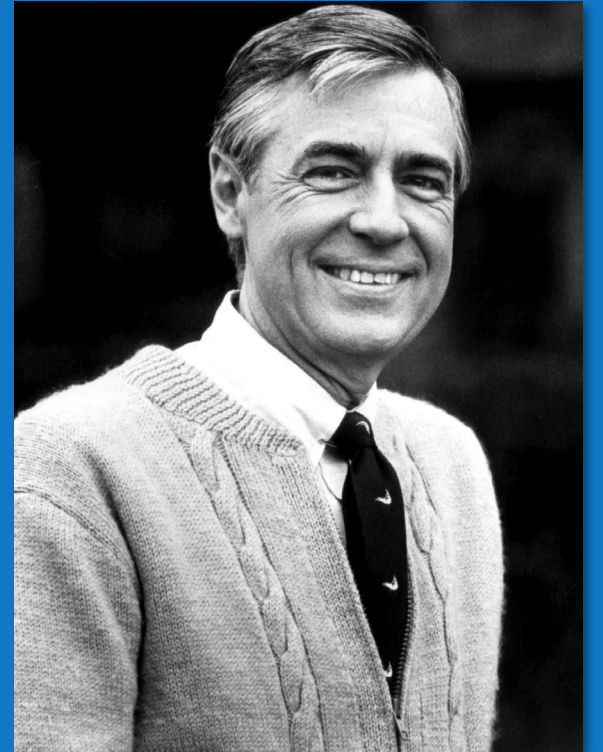
[mindfulness@umassmemorial.org](mailto:mindfulness@umassmemorial.org)

# Disclosures

I have no financial disclosures to disclose.

In times of stress, the best thing we can do for each other is to listen with our ears and our hearts and to be assured that our questions are just as important as our answers.

- Fred Rogers



# What is Mindfulness?

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*“The awareness that arises from paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, without judgment.” – Jon Kabat-Zinn*

*Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)*

*“Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We have only today. Let us begin.” – Mother Teresa*



# Mindfulness Practice

# Why Mindfulness?

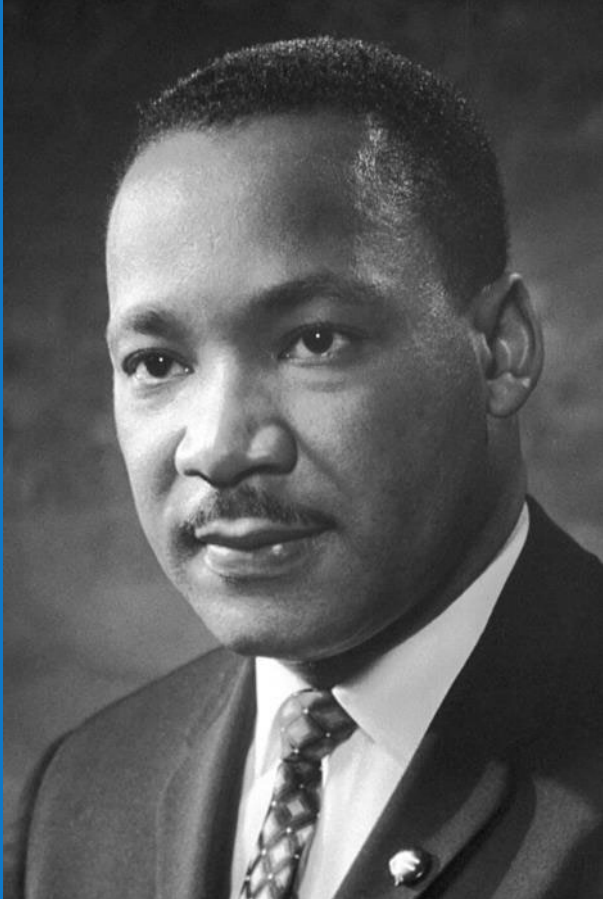
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- Recovery
- Emotional Regulation
- Pain Management
- Reduce Stress and Anxiety
- Reduce Burnout
- Respond vs React
- Increase Empathy and Compassion
- Everyday Mindfulness

# Resources

- Free online meditation sessions
- 4-week and 8-week online programs
- 3-day online retreats
- Our Teaching Team
- Guided audio meditations
- Mindfulness videos & blogs

[UMMHEALTH.ORG/CFM](https://www.umms.org/ummc/ummc/cfm)



*“You don’t have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step.”*

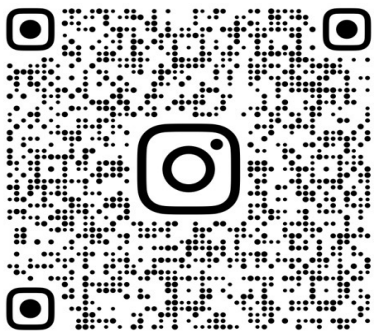
- Martin Luther King

# Yoga

Amanda Califano-Whittaker



7 day yoga plan  
for beginners ↓



@ELEVATEDBYAMANDA

[hello@elevatedbyamanda.com](mailto:hello@elevatedbyamanda.com)

# Elevated

by Amanda

Happy, Healthy, Fit Lifestyle Habits

# Massage Therapy

James Rosenblum

# Acupuncture

JANICE E. GELLIS, MD

ANESTHESIOLOGIST AND CHRONIC PAIN SPECIALIST  
DEPARTMENT OF ANESTHESIOLOGY  
WHITE RIVER JUNCTION VA MEDICAL CENTER  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ANESTHESIOLOGY  
GEISEL MEDICAL SCHOOL AT DARTMOUTH  
JANICE.GELLIS@VA.GOV

# Disclosures

I have nothing to disclose.

# What is acupuncture?

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# Acupuncture

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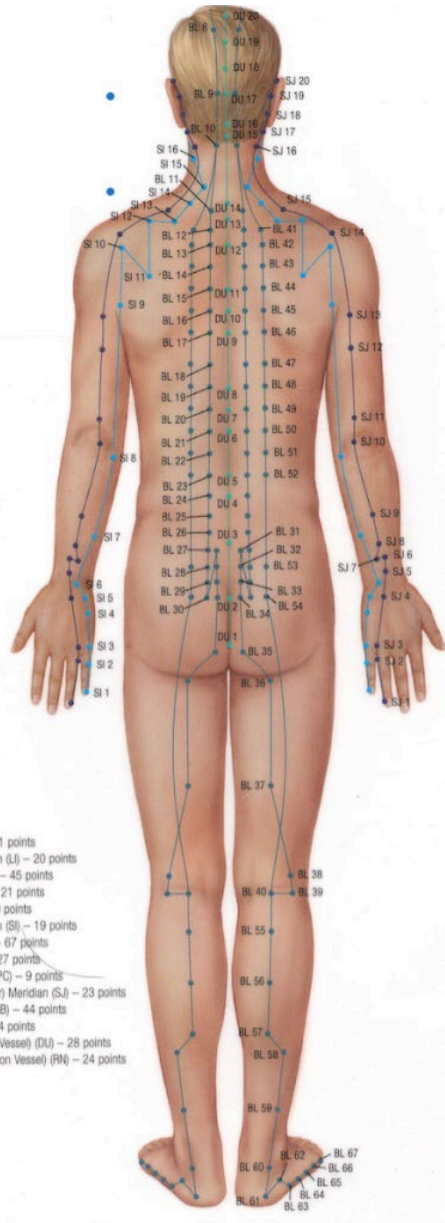
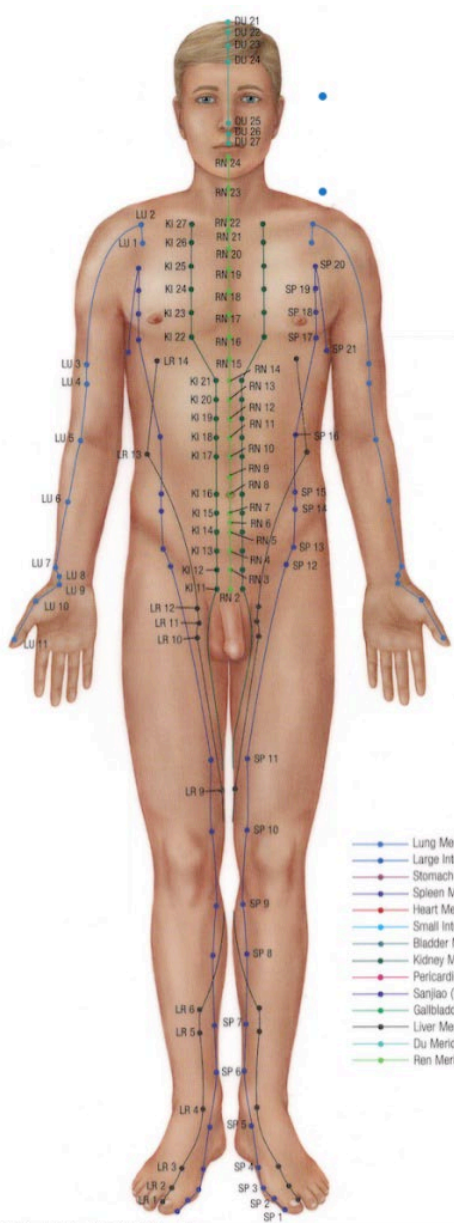
Originated in China

Over 2500 years old

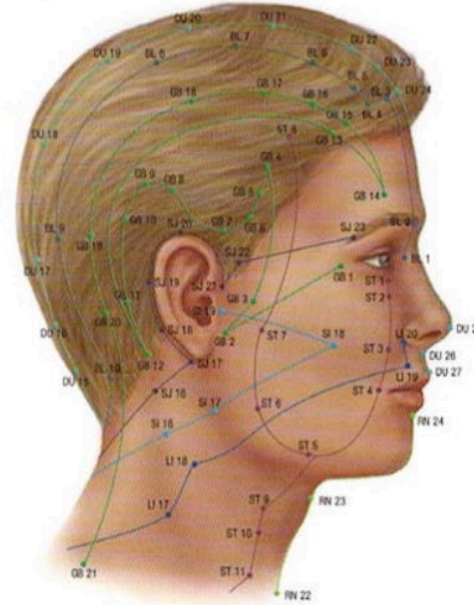
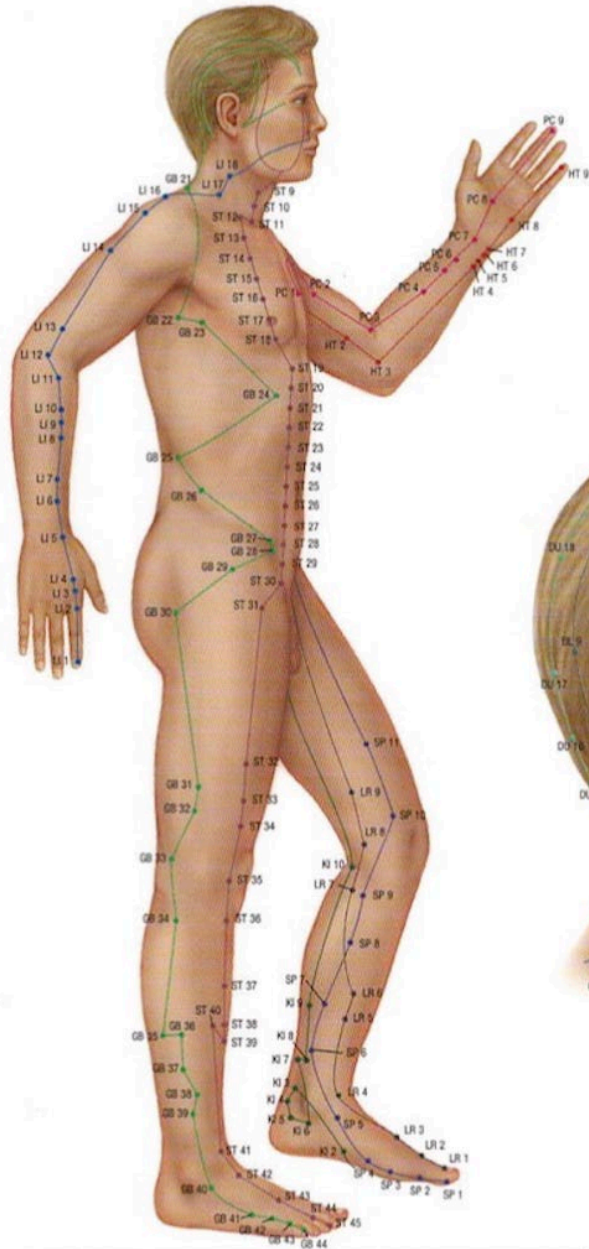
Many types of acupuncture

- Chinese Medicine
- Japanese acupuncture
- Korean hand acupuncture
- Auricular acupuncture

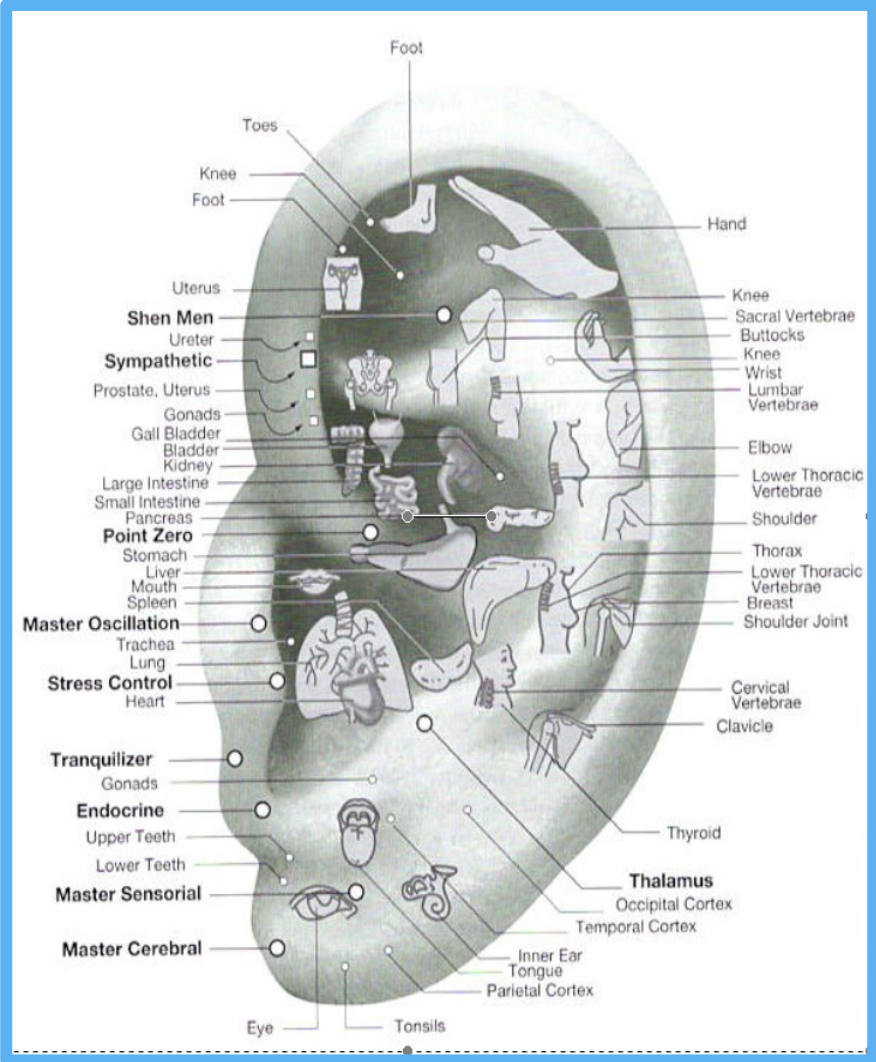
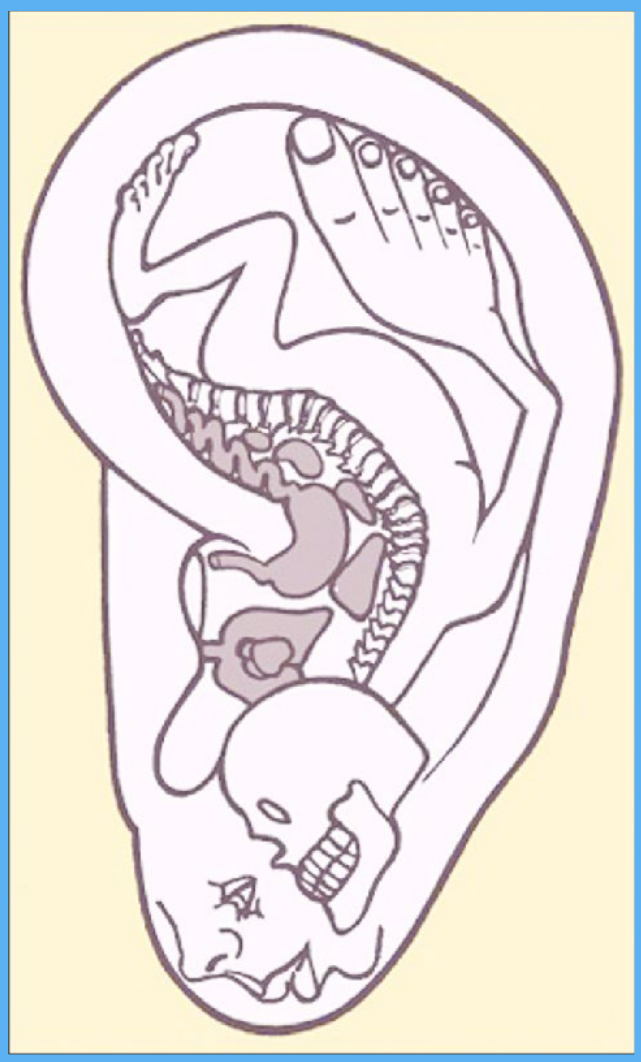




- Lung Meridian (LU) – 11 points
- Large Intestine Meridian (LI) – 20 points
- Stomach Meridian (ST) – 45 points
- Spleen Meridian (SP) – 21 points
- Heart Meridian (HT) – 9 points
- Small Intestine Meridian (SI) – 19 points
- Bladder Meridian (BL) – 67 points
- Kidney Meridian (KI) – 27 points
- Pericardium Meridian (PC) – 9 points
- Sanjiao (Triple Energizer) Meridian (SJ) – 23 points
- Gallbladder Meridian (GB) – 44 points
- Liver Meridian (LR) – 14 points
- Du Meridian (Governor Vessel) (DU) – 28 points
- Ren Meridian (Conception Vessel) (RN) – 24 points



# Chinese medicine construct



# Chinese medicine construct

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If the flow of qi is blocked or imbalanced: disease, illness or pain can ensue

Acupuncturists access acupuncture points on the meridians to affect the flow of Qi

- Insertion of fine needles
- Moxibustion
- Electro-acupuncture
- Placement of seeds or pellets

May also incorporate Chinese herbal formulations to affect Qi

# Acupuncture needles

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Matchstick  
4.2mm



Medical Syringe  
2.9mm



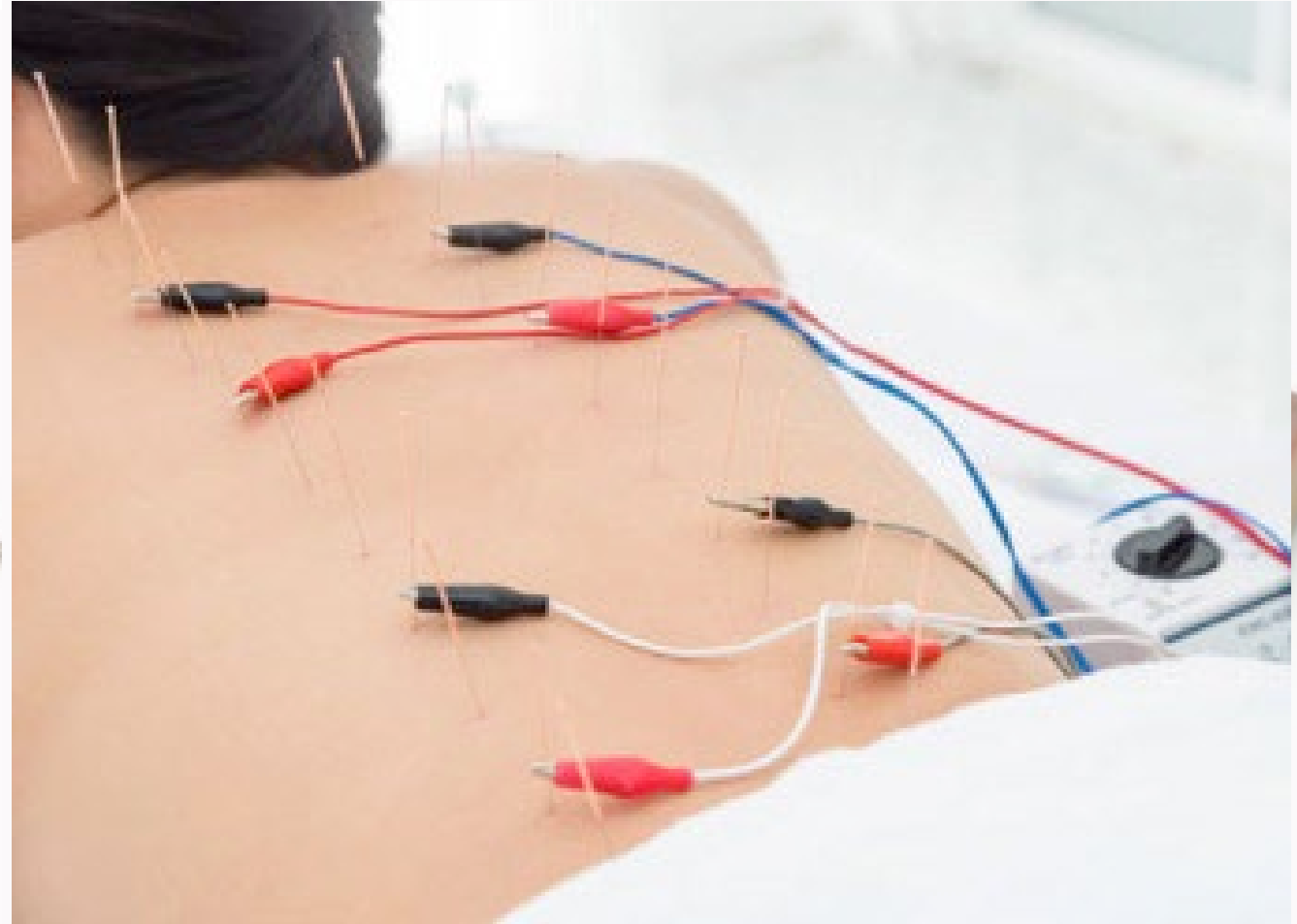
Sewing Needle  
1mm



Acupuncture Needle  
.25mm

# Electro-acupuncture

# Moxa



# Ear Seeds

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# Ear Tacks



# How does acupuncture work?

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# How does acupuncture work?

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## Meridians and acupuncture points

Acupuncture meridians tend to be located along fascial planes between muscles, or between a muscle and bone or tendon.

Acupuncture points have been studied and have been found to have morphologic characteristics.

### Needle manipulation in acupuncture points

- Has specific effects on the tissue
- Causes bioelectrical or biochemical effects
- These effects travel along a loose CT tissue network that correlates with acupuncture meridians.

# How does acupuncture work?

## Neuroscience

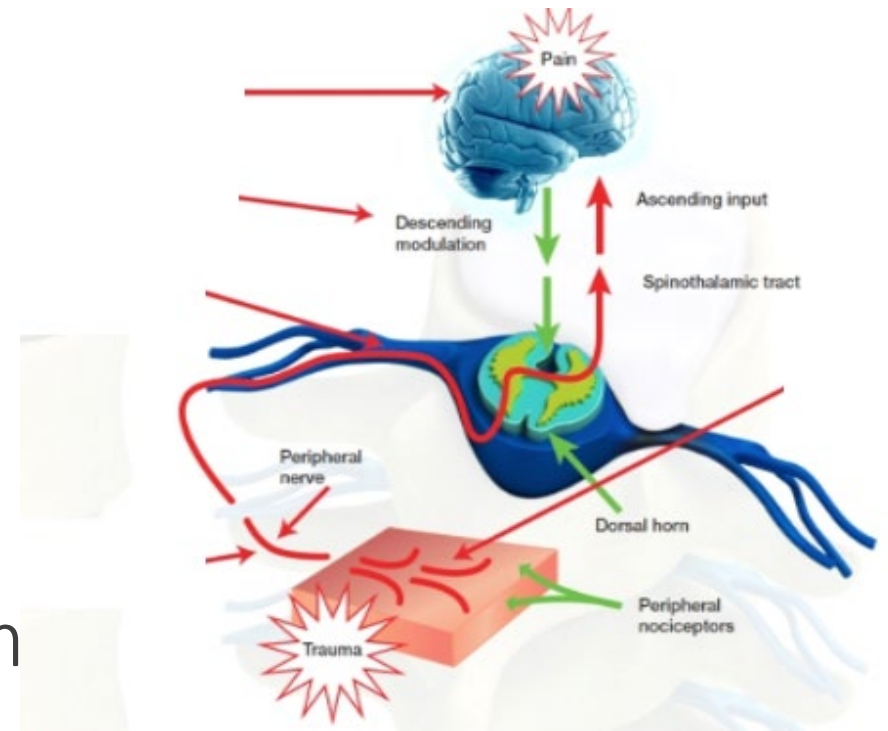
Can modulate neurotransmitters involved in nociception

- serotonin
- norepinephrine
- beta-endorphin
- enkephalin
- substance P

Effects Nitric oxide (NO) and ATP

Enhances descending inhibitory system

Form of neuromodulation



# How does acupuncture work?

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## Neuroscience

Studies using functional MRI show that acupuncture can cause changes in the brain.

Can affect areas that affect pain perception, mood, well being.

Can affect brain connectivity.

# What does acupuncture treat?

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# What does acupuncture treat?

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Several large randomized controlled trials and meta-analyses demonstrating acupuncture to be a more effective treatment for several types of chronic pain than standard care (drugs, surgery, physical therapy).  
Effective for a wide range of complex conditions.

## **Acupuncture for chronic pain**

**Andrew J. Vickers, D.Phil** and

Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, New York, New York, USA

**Klaus Linde, MD**

Technical University, Munich, Germany

Meta-analysis of acupuncture for chronic pain, restricted to high quality trials, with data available for 17,922 participants from 29 of 31 eligible trials

**Acupuncture was associated with greater reductions in pain than control in all comparisons.**

# What does acupuncture treat?

## World Health Organization

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Abdominal pain (in acute gastroenteritis or due to gastrointestinal spasm)

Labour pain

Lactation, deficiency

Male sexual dysfunction, non-organic

Ménière disease

Neuralgia, post-herpetic Neurodermatitis

Obesity

Opium, cocaine and heroin dependence Osteoarthritis

Pain due to endoscopic examination

Pain in thromboangiitis obliterans

Polycystic ovary syndrome (Stein–Leventhal syndrome) Postextubation in children

Postoperative convalescence

Premenstrual syndrome

Prostatitis, chronic

Pruritus

Radicular and pseudoradicular pain syndrome Raynaud syndrome, primary

Recurrent lower urinary-tract infection

Reflex sympathetic dystrophy

Retention of urine, traumatic

Schizophrenia

Sialism, drug-induced

Sjögren syndrome

Sore throat (including tonsillitis)

Spine pain, acute

Stiff neck

Temporomandibular joint dysfunction

Tietze syndrome

Tobacco dependence

Tourette syndrome

Ulcerative colitis, chronic

Urolithiasis

Vascular dementia

Whooping cough (pertussis)

Female urethral syndrome

Fibromyalgia and fasciitis

Gastrokinetic disturbance

Gouty arthritis

Hepatitis B virus carrier status

Herpes zoster (human (alpha) herpesvirus 3) Hyperlipaemia

Hypo-ovarianism

Insomnia

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

Acne vulgaris

Alcohol dependence and detoxification

Bell's palsy

Bronchial asthma

Cancer pain

Cardiac neurosis

Cholecystitis, chronic, with acute exacerbation

Cholelithiasis

Competition stress syndrome

Cranio-cerebral injury, closed

Diabetes mellitus, non-insulin-dependent

Earache

Epidemic haemorrhagic fever

Epistaxis, simple (without generalized or local disease) Eye pain due to subconjunctival injection

Female infertility

Facial spasm

# Diseases, symptoms or conditions for which acupuncture has been proved— through controlled trials—to be an effective treatment:

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Depression (including depressive neurosis/depression following stroke)

Facial pain (including craniomandibular disorders)

Headache

Knee pain

Low back pain

Nausea and vomiting

Neck pain

Pain in dentistry (including dental pain and temporomandibular dysfunction)

Periarthritis of shoulder

Postoperative pain

Sciatica

Sprain

Stroke

Tennis elbow

Diseases, symptoms or conditions for which the therapeutic effect of acupuncture has been shown but for which further proof is needed: \_\_\_\_\_

Abdominal pain (in acute gastroenteritis or due to gastrointestinal spasm)

Bell's palsy

Cancer pain

Cardiac neurosis

Earache

Eye pain due to subconjunctival injection

Facial spasm

Fibromyalgia and fasciitis

Insomnia

# Disease and disorders that can be treated with acupuncture

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Neuralgia, post-herpetic

Neurodermatitis

Obesity

Opium, cocaine and heroin dependence

Osteoarthritis

Pain in thromboangiitis obliterans

Postoperative convalescence

Pruritus

Radicular and pseudoradicular pain syndrome

Raynaud syndrome, primary

Reflex sympathetic dystrophy

Spine pain, acute

Stiff neck

Tobacco dependence

# Complications and side effects

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Infection

Pneumothorax

Syncope or vagal reaction

Organ puncture

Bruising

Temporary exacerbation of symptoms

Retained needles

Contact dermatitis

Anxiety

Lightheadedness

Agitation

Heightened emotions

# Precautions

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Caution with electrical stimulation in patients with pacemakers.

Caution in pregnancy: certain points can stimulate uterine contractions.

Moxibustion can cause burns, skin color changes, associate with basal cell carcinoma.

# Acupuncture treatment

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History

Exam

Formulation of an  
acupuncture diagnosis

Formulation of treatment  
plan

How this is formulated can  
vary with different types of  
acupuncture

- Chinese traditional medicine,
- Traditional Chinese Medicine
- Five Element Acupuncture

Thank you



The heart asks pleasure first  
And then, excuse from pain-

Emily Dickinson  
Complete Poems 1924

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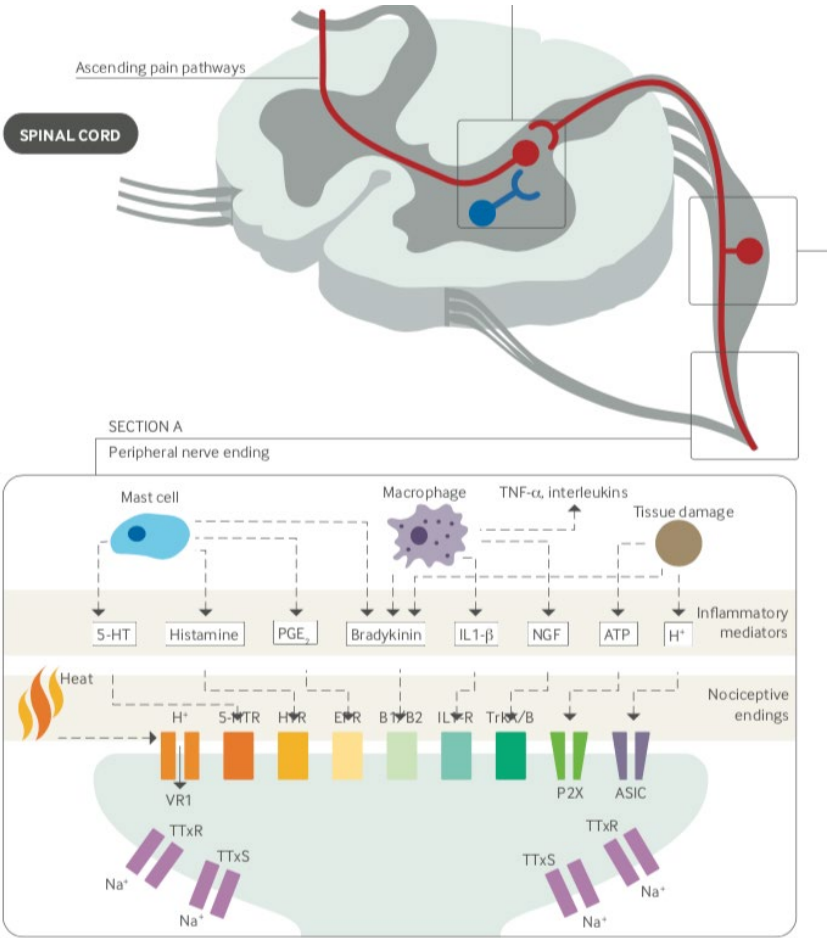
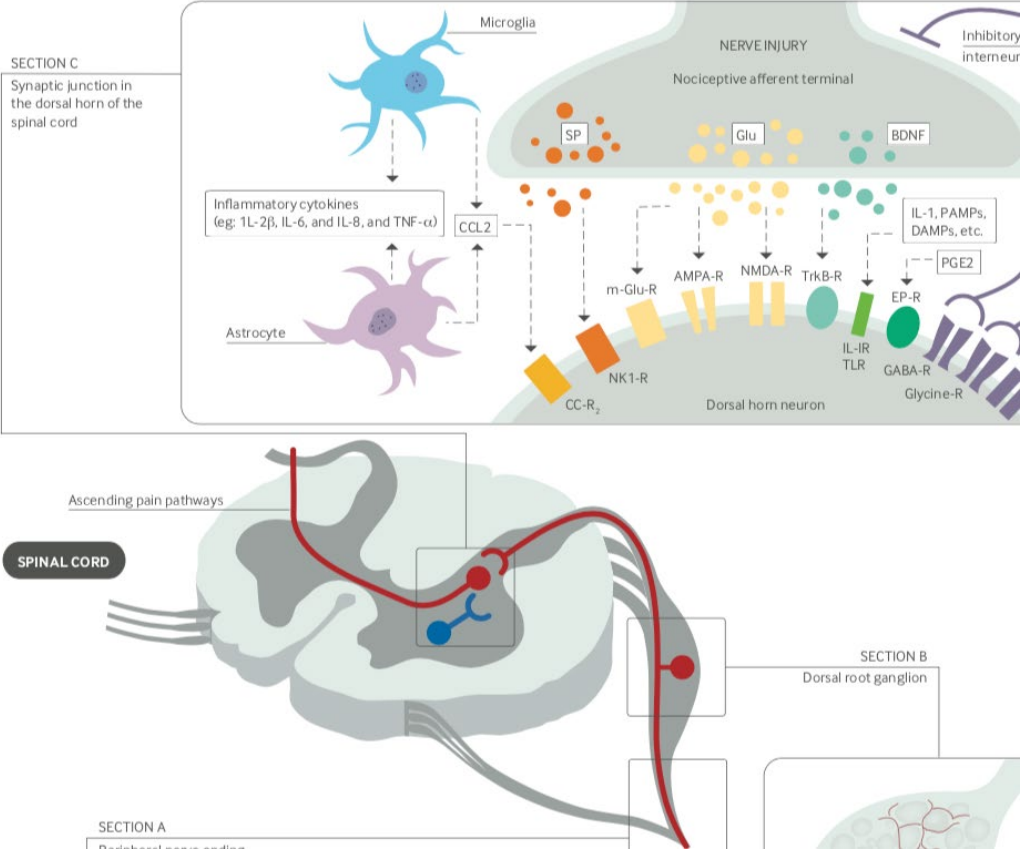
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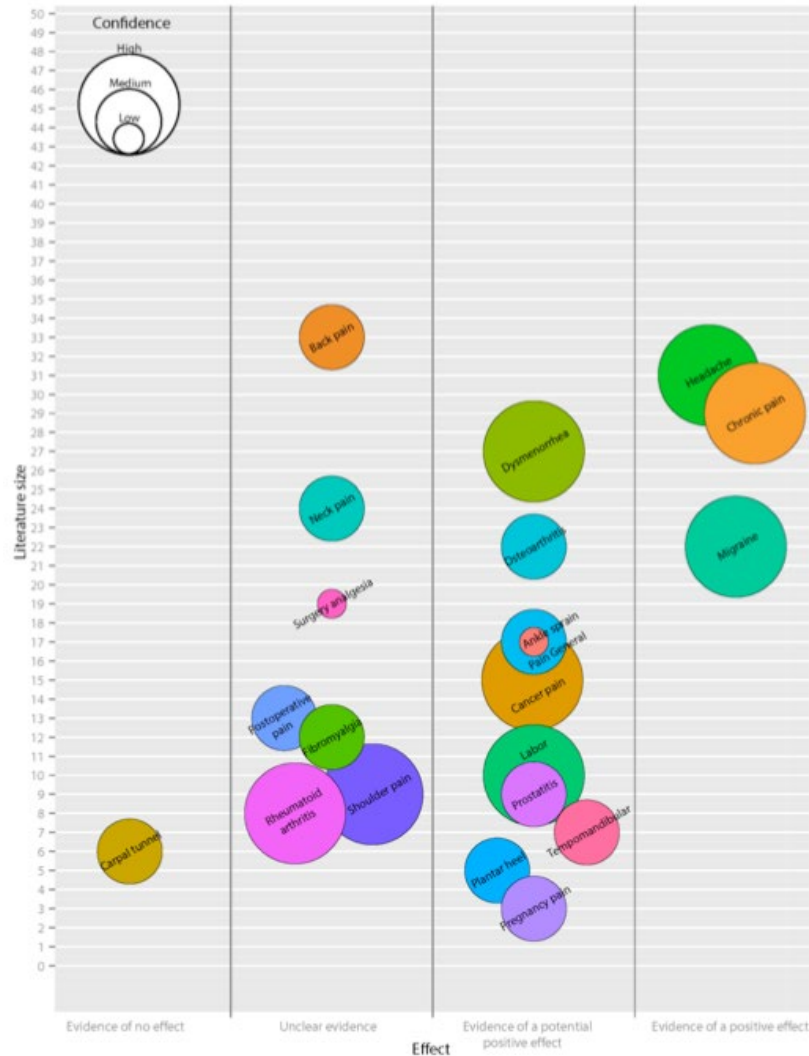
# Additional slides (not part of talk)

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# How does acupuncture work?



# EVIDENCE MAP OF ACUPUNCTURE FOR PAIN



The bubble plot shows an estimate of the evidence base for pain-related indications judging from systematic reviews and recent large RCTs.

59 systematic reviews for 21 distinct indications relevant to the outcome pain

X-axis: estimated effect

Y-axis: number of RCTs included in largest review

Bubble size is the confidence in the estimate

Injury-induced nerve changes in the periphery, dorsal root ganglia and spinal cord contribute to neuropathic pain syndromes

