

Headaches and Acupuncture

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One of the most common problems encountered in the clinic is a headache. Most people in their lives have experience a headache at one time or another. Unfortunately there are some that live with this problem on a daily basis. There can be many types of pain in the head, sharp, dull, pounding, slight, pricking, intermittent, persistent and migraines. The location of the headache is also important to know in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). It may be located in the temples vertex (top of the head), back of the head, forehead, on one side, or a combination of the above.



Many factors can affect the body including constitution inherited by the parents. These include parents' health in general, their health at time of conception and the conditions of the mother's pregnancy. This is not to say that this is the only cause of headaches, but a starting point in the diagnosis of the cause. Factors that may contribute to headaches are emotions, overwork, excessive sexual activity, diet, accidents, childbirth and external pathogenic factors.

Information is gathered in the diagnosis phase on the examination that could reveal the underlying cause of the problem. In minor cases the root is treated initially. In this way the cause of the headache is eliminated, thus eliminating the headache itself. With severe headaches, the pain of the headache is treated alone or in conjunction with the root of the problem. This method helps the patient overcome the anguish of the headache without unnecessary delay in pain management. Once the headache is relieved then the acupuncturist will focus on the cause of the problem, and resolve any underlying imbalances.

Stress plays a very important role in the formation of a headache. Although it may not be obvious, underlying stressful situation sat home or work can result in a severe headache. These headaches may include the shoulders and upper back with pain traveling up the back of he neck into the head. Anger is another cause of frontal headaches. This type of headache can be brought about when one's anger level peaks and has no release. In this case, the Liver Yang energy rises up into the head. Symptoms include red eyes or burning eyes, red face uncontrollable anger or easily angered. Menopausal headaches are common, and are easily treated with acupuncture. Unfortunately man women suffer PMS symptoms, which can easily be treated, and thus avoid the discomfort of menstruation induced headaches.

The benefit of acupuncture is that there are no drugs involved. Now many may think how can tiny needles treat and cure headaches, without the use of strong painkillers, especially when that is what only helps me? The answer is that acupuncturists control the flow of energy in the body by inserting the needles at specific points according to the pattern the patient presents with, without using strong pain killers. Many of my patients tell me they

can actually feel the energy flow through their bodies once the needles are in place, and find this sensation very soothing and comforting.