

Acupuncture-Relieve Arthritis Pain

Arthritis affects more than 25 million people in the United States. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that arthritis causes disability for 8 million people. It leads to 750,000 hospitalizations and 9,500 deaths annually. It costs the U.S economy \$51 billion in medical costs and \$86 billion in total costs each year. It is clearly an important problem, both medically and financially.

The most common forms of arthritis are osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis. Osteoarthritis (OA) is a degenerative joint condition that results in pain, inflammation, swelling, stiffness, redness, and immobility. This degenerative type of arthritis is by far the most prevalent, accounting for about 80 percent of all cases. Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is an autoimmune condition of an extremely inflammatory nature. Initial symptoms of RA include inflammation, pain, swelling, warmth, and stiffness in the joints (especially in the morning), and mild restriction of motion. In the late stage, severe

joint deformity and permanent disability may occur. *The good news is that early stages of both OA and RA are often reversible or slow down the progression with timely intervention.*

The effects of arthritis on quality of life include reduced ability to get around, missed work, and the inability to perform daily chores as well as participate in favorite recreational activities. Arthritis affects the mind as well as the body. Arthritis causes much more than loss of mobility. The pain can be unrelenting, which in turn can lead to anxiety, depression, fatigue, and loss of sleep. These symptoms can be just as debilitating as the joint pain.

Early treatment is the best solution to prevent the progression and to alleviate the suffering from this horrible disease. If you are diagnosed with OA or RA in the early stage, you need to find out about effective therapies that can help reverse and slow down the progression of the condition. Current research shows that receiving regular acupuncture therapy, moderate exercise, and eating a healthy diet can help patients relieve the pain, swelling, and inflammation quite significantly.

Acupuncture stimulates sensory nerve endings that send impulses up through the spinal cord to different areas of the brain, causing both local and central-acting effects. By stimulating specific acupoints, acupuncturists seek to restore normal energy flow, reduce inflammation, and stimulate the body's ability to heal. The technique produces neurological and chemical changes in the body. As a result, blood vessels dilate, endorphins are released, nerve supply improves, swelling decreases, pain is relieved, and joint mobility improves. In a study published in the April 2001 issue of *Arthritis and Rheumatism*, researchers found that acupuncture gave excellent pain relief to those with osteoarthritis in the knee. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) also recommends acupuncture therapy for arthritic pain and other chronic pain conditions because of its effectiveness and safety compared to many drugs and other medical procedures.

Exercise is also an important factor to help relieve and reverse arthritis conditions. The right exercise program not only gives your body the best possible chance of halting the progress of arthritis but also is a powerful

tool for natural healing and well-being. Exercise helps relieve pain, improve mobility, increase range of motion, lose weight, strengthen muscles and joints, promote healing, and enhance your quality of life.

Eating a healthy and sensible diet also plays an important role in fighting arthritis. Certain foods may exacerbate arthritis pain and swelling, while others are helpful to reduce symptoms and prevent flare-ups. Scientists have discovered that particular foods can reduce inflammation in the body, resulting in multiple health benefits. Americans need to pay special attention to what they eat to maximize benefits to their health condition.

If you or someone you know is diagnosed with osteoarthritis or rheumatoid arthritis and would like to treat it in a natural way, please consider our holistic approach. For severe arthritis, our holistic therapies can be combined with conventional medical procedures and medication to enhance effectiveness. We strongly believe that integrated care is the best solution to promote inner healing, enhance general health and improve your quality of life.



L. Phan, OMD, A.P.

“Experience is priceless...”

- Graduate from the University of Hawaii as a B.Sc in Bio-Chemistry
- Completed 4 years post-graduate training in the Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine at American College of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine in Houston, TX
- Licensed Massage Therapist
- Certified Neuromuscular Therapist
- Certified Craniosacral Therapist
- N.A.E.T (allergy) Therapist
- Certified Laser Therapist
- Herbalist (NCCAOM)
- National Acupuncture Assoc. Member
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