

What Can I Expect From My Acupuncture Treatments?

- an empowerment primer

1. Acupuncture is commonly prescribed as a course of treatments - Very rarely will your complaint be resolved in one treatment. Acute conditions will resolve more quickly, but you may be asked to come in up to 3 times during the first week. Chronic conditions will take longer to treat. You may be asked to come in 1-2 times a week at the beginning, and then progressively less often as your symptoms improve.
2. For most pain symptoms, allow at least 3-6 treatments in order to evaluate the effectiveness of acupuncture - It is common to feel some relief after even the first treatment. This may last only half a day or up to 5 days. You should feel some relief from acute pain after 3 treatments, or relief from chronic pain after 6 treatments.
3. Different people have different sensitivities to acupuncture - Many people experience some sleepiness during a treatment, followed by some degree of symptomatic relief. This is the optimal response. Some people experience an exacerbation of their symptoms usually lasting 24-48 hours, followed by an improvement. Do not be alarmed, as this means the treatment strategy is correct, but that you received too much needle stimulation during your treatment. If it lasts more than 48 hours, please call me. Some people will feel very fatigued, which lasts for a couple days. This means that your general energy level is depleted, and that care must be taken to provide you with proper treatment to replenish rather than drain your energy reserves. Finally, some people will feel no change either way after their first treatment. Please allow the recommended initial course of therapy (3-6 treatments) before deciding that acupuncture does not work for you.
4. Herbal therapy usually takes longer to begin taking effect - For acute conditions, allow up to 3-5 days to feel relief. The more chronic the condition, the longer it will take for the herbs to be effective. For symptoms that have persisted for several years, it may take 1-2 months to begin feeling the effects of the herbal formula, with the entire herbal treatment course lasting up to 6 months or even a year. In general, herbal formulas will be prescribed for internal medicine complaints, and in cases where your body shows symptoms of systemic energy depletion.
5. Oriental Medicine focuses on the patient rather than the symptom - Sometimes an injury or complaint does not get better despite the best efforts of your physician. *It is important to understand that doctors do not have the power to cure you.* We are only facilitators of your capacity to heal yourself. Your body needs energy to regenerate tissue and heal injury. If you suffer from a systemic energy depletion, Oriental medicine will help you replenish your energy reserves so that you can heal yourself more efficiently. This treatment plan focuses on you as a whole rather than your specific complaint. If it is determined that you do suffer an energy depletion, therapy will likely take a longer period of time to yield results, but the benefits will also be longer-lasting. Please be patient with the process. You will reap greater rewards in the end.
6. Healing is ultimately in your hands - I am not a mechanic, and you are not a machine. The more you actively participate in your own healing, the better your chances for a speedy recovery: you have to take the herbs in order for them to work; if you follow my advice for self-treatment, dietary or lifestyle changes, you will feel better more quickly. When you begin Oriental medicine treatment with me, we are entering a partnership to improve your health. I will utilize all my experience and expertise to facilitate your healing, but I can do nothing without your participation.



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