

# Acu News

"Natural forces within us are the true healers of disease." - Hippocrates

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## Headaches - How Acupuncture Helps

If you suffer from headaches, you are not alone. Over 50 million of us experience some form of a severe headache at some point in our lives. Whether you experience minor head pain or severe migraines, headaches can take valuable time out of your day and your life, and leave you searching for relief.

Many seek relief by reaching for drugs and other medications. This may work temporarily and can help you get out of pain fast. Unfortunately, common headache medications do not address the root cause(s), and when used over long periods of time can cause unwanted side effects.

Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) offer a safe and effective approach to relieving headache pain without causing harmful side effects. These healing modalities provide a comprehensive diagnostic protocol that can help your acupuncturist understand and address the root cause(s) of your headaches.

**Causes of Headaches:** There are many factors in TCM theory that may play a key role in the root

cause(s) of a headache. These include body constitution, emotional health, excessive work, social activities and exercise, improper diet, physical trauma and hormones. Headaches can also be diagnosed according to specific symptoms, times of occurrence, location, type of pain, and triggers.

**A natural path to relief:** Acupuncture and TCM take a holistic, or whole-body approach to health. Your practitioner will take a detailed health history, and perform a physical exam to determine how and why your body's vital energy, or Qi (pronounced chee), is out of balance and identify what type of headache you are experiencing. To determine the most effective care, he/she will focus on illuminating the root cause(s) of the problem.

It is important to remember that acupuncture is not a quick fix. Changes may occur quickly or over a longer period of time, depending upon your overall constitution and health. Whether it is one visit to address an acute problem, or several visits to address a chronic problem, it is suggested to closely follow care recommendations of your acupuncturist to maximize your healing potential.

Below are a few ways that you can make simple lifestyle changes that may help alleviate or even prevent headaches:

**Track your triggers** - Try to keep track of when your headaches start. Migraine sufferers may find it especially helpful to keep a diary of symptoms. Certain types of foods and hormonal changes can be possible causes.

**Stress relief** - Stress can contribute to many types of health concerns, including headaches. Talk to your practitioner about healthy ways to handle stress.

**Exercise** - Physical activity is an important part of any healthy lifestyle and is a great antidote for stress.

**Healthy habits** - Do your best to eat healthy, organic foods, stay hydrated and get enough sleep every night.

**Acupuncture care** - is extremely effective in reducing the frequency and severity of many types of painful conditions, including headaches and migraines, naturally. By working with your acupuncturist and adopting some simple lifestyle changes, you will be on your way toward a healthier, happier, pain-free life.

## Skin Brushing

There are many daily practices we can incorporate into our lives to help us improve our health. Helping our bodies to detoxify is an important part of any wellness regime. Caring for our skin is one way we can stimulate the body's natural mechanisms to detoxify.



- 1** Starting from the feet, brush the soles as well as the upper side using a long-handled natural brush. Using long, sweeping strokes, brush up the legs, covering all of the skin's surface area, concentrating on the thighs and buttocks.
- 2** Put one arm up in the air, allowing gravity to help drain the lymph to the armpit, and sweep down the arm with gentle strokes, drawing towards the armpit.
- 3** Brush the torso by brushing towards the heart, and when doing the lower abdomen, brush up the right-hand side, just on the inside of the hip bone, across the transverse colon beneath the ribs and down the left-hand side, then gently across the pelvic area to complete the circle. Repeat.
- 4** When working near the breast area, brush over the top of the breast, always aiming for the armpit - and remember, be gentle over sensitive areas.

Skin brushing should be performed once a day, preferably first thing in the morning or before a bath or shower and on a dry and naked body.

After brushing your body, rinse off in the shower while alternating temperatures from hot and cold. Alternating temperatures will bring more blood to the outer layers of the skin and stimulate blood circulation, further invigorating the skin.



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