

Acceptance of Acupuncture in the United States

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Acupuncture and Oriental medicine is one of the fastest growing forms of health care in the United States. This explosion is due to the recognition by consumers and regulators of the safety, effectiveness and low cost of this form of health care. Today:

- Forty-two states and the District of Columbia have recognized the practice of acupuncture and Oriental medicine. Legislation has been introduced in an additional four states.
- The FDA estimated in May 1993 that there were 9 to 12 million patient visits each year for acupuncture.
- Acupuncture has been cited by the World Health Organization to treat over forty-three conditions including allergies, asthma, back pain, carpal tunnel, colds and flu, constipation, depression, gynecological disorders, headache, heart problems, infertility, insomnia, pre-menstrual syndrome, sciatica, sports injuries, tendonitis and stress.
- The accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM) is recognized by the United States Department of Education. Acupuncture is a three-year Masters level program. Oriental medicine is a four-year Masters level program. Over forty colleges are accredited or in candidacy status.
- Acupuncture is used in more than 20 states in over 800 drug dependency programs. Patients who go through these programs have lower re-arrest rates on drug-related charges than those not treated with acupuncture.
- The 1997 National Institutes of Health Consensus Conference on Acupuncture stated, "The data in support of acupuncture are as strong as those for many accepted Western medical therapies."
- The 1997 National Institutes of Health Consensus Conference on Acupuncture recognized the effectiveness of acupuncture in the treatment of several diseases and stated that "One of the advantages of acupuncture is that the incidence of adverse effects is substantially lower than that of many drugs or other accepted medical procedures used for the same conditions."
- The *Western Journal of Medicine* in 1998 reported that a 1996 Kaiser study found that 57.2% of primary care physicians in Northern California used or recommended acupuncture in the last 12 months.
- A study in six clinics in five states showed efficacy and cost savings of acupuncture. Of the patients treated with acupuncture, 91.5% reported disappearance or improvement of symptoms; 84% said they see their MDs less, 79% said they use fewer prescription drugs and 70% of those to whom surgery had been recommended said they avoided it.
- The number of licensed acupuncturists in the US has nearly tripled between 1992 and 2000, rising from 5,525 in the fall of 1992 to 14,228 in the fall of 2000.
- Controlled clinical trials in the United States have evaluated the use of acupuncture combined with standard stroke protocol for the treatment of paralysis due to stroke. Effective or markedly effective results were found for over 80 percent of the patients receiving acupuncture with a cost savings of \$26,000 per patient.
- The National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM) offers three independent certification programs: Acupuncture, Chinese Herbology and Oriental Bodywork Therapy. The NCCAOM has certified over 9,000 practitioners in 47 states and 18 foreign countries.
- In Miami-Dade County drug offenders have a choice of acupuncture or jail.
- Clinical studies indicate that acupuncture is effective in treating headache, dysmenorrhea, fibromyalgia, stroke, substance abuse, menopause, depression, female infertility, neck pain, low back pain, osteoarthritis, morning sickness, respiratory disease, urinary dysfunction, tennis elbow and facial pain.
- A study by the New York advocacy group, Patients Have Rights, showed that 90% of the respondents had heard of Chinese medicine and acupuncture and 13% had used acupuncture. 80% of the respondents described their experience as "favorable" and 100% thought it was important to have a choice in the type of medicine they use.

Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine work!

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