

Colds & Flu

How Acupuncture Helps



Each year, more than 100,000 people are hospitalized due to complications from influenza, or “the flu” virus. Unfortunately, most of us get the flu at least once in our lifetime. The associated signs and symptoms are all-too-common: fever, sore throat, congestion, fatigue, muscle and body aches, runny nose, dry cough, sneezing and watery eyes.

Colds are much less severe than the flu and cause less severe symptoms such as nasal congestion, sneezing, coughing, sore throat, and headaches. Though it may make you feel lousy, getting a cold is not always a bad thing. Instead, it’s a sign that the body’s resources are strong and vital, working to return you to a state of good health. However, if your immune system is

Tips for Staying Healthy:

- Consume 8-10 glasses of filtered water daily
- Exercise regularly to support the immune system
- Eat a healthy, organic diet, including foods with beta carotene (carrots, broccoli, sweet potatoes, garlic and tomatoes)
- Limit sugar intake. Sugar taxes the immune system, especially when feeling under the weather
- Talk to your acupuncturist about herbs that can support your immune system
- Get plenty of rest
- Enjoy fun and relaxing activities
- Stimulate specific acupuncture points that support Wei Qi
- Schedule regular acupuncture treatments to support the body’s self-regulating, self-balancing and healing systems

already compromised, a cold could further weaken your body, leaving you open to a more serious illness.

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) studies have suggested that using acupuncture as a preventative approach to colds and flu can reduce the incidence of upper respiratory tract infection and shorten the duration of the illness. Acupuncture and Chinese medicine work by rebalancing the body’s systems, regulating the body’s healing energies and enhancing the immune system.

Even though germs, bacteria, and viruses are everywhere—in

the food we eat, the air we breathe, and the water we drink—according to

Chinese medical theory, they do not cause disease. Illness occurs when certain organ systems are weak and out of balance. When our bodies are in a weakened and unbalanced state, a hospitable environment is created for germs, bacteria and viruses to thrive, leading to a cold or the flu.

What in the world is Wei Qi? One of the main theories supporting acupuncture and its treatment of colds and the flu is the concept of Wei Qi. The concept of Wei Qi is similar to the Western concept of the immune system. It functions as a barrier protecting and defending the body against foreign substances, which can cause illness and disease. When it is strong and abundant, we remain healthy. When the supply of Wei Qi becomes inadequate, health is compromised and we become vulnerable to outside invaders.

Throughout our lives, a variety of factors affect our health and well-being. Although most of the time we recover quickly and regain our health, when these factors are numerous, our internal mechanisms become compromised and weakened. Our Wei Qi becomes depleted, and we get sick. By the time we notice the symptoms of our illness, the body's self-regulating, self-balancing and healing systems have already been affected.

Acupuncture and TCM support and strengthen the systems of the body that are involved in the production of Wei Qi, and can help rebalance and support the immune system and stimulate Wei Qi energy. By building up the supply of Wei Qi, and facilitating the smooth and free flow of it throughout the body, the body's organs and meridian systems become strong, enhancing their ability to effectively fight off illness and disease.

Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine are safe, natural and effective ways to support the body's self-regulating, self-balancing and healing systems. If illness does occur, acupuncture can help you get back on your feet again, helping to stave off prolonged illness without the use of medication and over-the-counter drugs.

References:

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