

ACUPUNCTURE TREATMENT PLANS

- New pain may be relieved immediately.
- Chronic conditions may require several acupuncture sessions.
- 4-6 sessions may be needed to give your body time to adjust to acupuncture and experience benefit.

PREPARING FOR ACUPUNCTURE

Discuss the risks and benefits of acupuncture with either your primary care or an acupuncture clinician.



For those who may be uncomfortable with needles, acupuncture may also be done with complimentary therapies such as:

- Suction (cupping)
- Pressure (acupressure)
- Heat
- Friction

Mild electrical stimulation of the needles can cause problems for people with pacemakers or other electrical devices.

People with bleeding disorders or who take blood thinners may have increased risk of bleeding.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

va.gov/WHOLEHEALTH/docs/AcupunctureFactSheet_508.pdf

nvf.org/no-cost-acupuncture-treatments-military/

americanmigrainefoundation.org/resource-library/understanding-migraineacupuncture-and-migraine-finding-a-combination-that-sticks/



Additional information on complementary headache management can be found at:

mirecc.va.gov/VISN16/complementary-and-alternative-approaches-to-treating-headaches.asp

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SC MIRECC Website: mirecc.va.gov/visn16/

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ACUPUNCTURE FOR TREATING HEADACHES



Veteran Brochure



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HEADACHES

Many Veterans experience headaches. The two most common types of primary headaches are:



Migraine

- Neurological condition
- Moderate-to-severe pain level
- Pulsating/throbbing pain quality
- Nausea and vomiting
- Sensitivity to both light and sound

Tension-Type Headache

- Most common headache condition
- Mild-to-moderate pain level
- Tightening/pressing pain quality

IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO SHARE WITH YOUR CLINICIAN:

Think of answers to these questions so that your clinician may better understand your personal experience with headaches.



- In your culture, do headaches have another name?
- Why do you believe you have headaches?
- How do headaches affect the rest of your body?
- Do you think that the headaches will get better soon?
- What worries you most about your headaches?
- What problems have your headaches caused?
- What matters to you most for the treatment of your headaches?

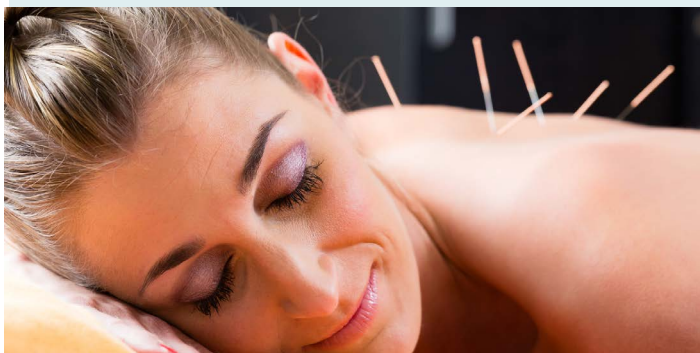
ACUPUNCTURE



- Acupuncture is an ancient Chinese medical practice.
- It was initially used as a way to reopen a bodily energy path, called Qi (pronounced 'chee').
- This is done by placing very small needles into particular "acupoints" just below the surface of the skin.
- Most of these small needles are about the width of a human hair.
- Acupuncturists target acupoints to treat various conditions including headaches and other head and face pain conditions.

WESTERN MEDICINE SUPPORTS THE BENEFITS OF ACUPUNCTURE

- The US military uses Battlefield Acupuncture on parts of the ear to help active-duty service members with muscle and back pain and headaches.



INTERPROFESSIONAL TEAM APPROACHES INCREASE BENEFITS

Acupuncture reduces the number of headache days for individuals with migraine and tension-type headache.

Acupuncture works in different ways:

- Directly affects the nerve and muscle where the needles are placed
- Affects how pain is experienced in the brain

When the needles are placed, chemicals that increase the body's healing response are released into the muscles, spinal cord, and brain.

VETERAN DESCRIPTIONS OF ACUPUNCTURE



Relaxing



Energizing



Tingling



Heavy