

# Acupuncture – (Maybe Not) When All Else Fails

Disappointment was written all over my face as I walked out of my oncologist's office. After a month of using a sleep medication to get more than 4 hours of sleep per night, we learned that it was causing my white blood cell count to fall. My doctor told me I had to stop taking it, and there wasn't anything else I could take. The last thing he said before releasing me was "Try Acupuncture".

Growing up in rural Montana, I did not have a lot of exposure to Eastern Medicine. In my ignorance, I wondered how being poked by tiny needles could have any significant impact on my health.



Boy was I wrong.

Today, I am happy to say that acupuncture has been the most effective treatment for me in dealing with the traumatizing effects of cancer therapy. Some studies suggest that more than 3 million Americans are finding help with this ancient approach to medicine

## Why Acupuncture?

Typically in America, you make an appointment to see your primary physician when something is wrong with your health.

When you go in to see your doctor, you tell them all about the problem. They pick the medicine or treatment that would best remedy the problem. Then they send you home, most often with a prescription.

My problem was the prescriptions. The medications I am taking to prevent the recurrence of cancer have developed severe side effects that drastically altered my way of life.

An acupuncturist handles their patients in a very different way. They do want to know what health issues are troubling you, but they also ask about your diet, your sleep, how often you eat, what you eat, when you exercise, how you exercise, etc. They are more sensitive to the state of your entire body.

They also look at the connections and rhythm of the different areas of the body to decide how to best treat their patients.



When I go in to see my acupuncturist, he will check the color of my tongue and different pulses in my wrist. He will use various methods to care for my present condition – essential oils, smaller needles that are stickers, [moxibustion](#), Chinese herbs, and massage. He is very careful and great at listening to me. While I am being 'needled', we talk about food choices or the affect that the seasons have on my mood or sleep. He works to make me feel comfortable and follows up to see what is working and what needs to be adjusted.

Also, what some people don't realize is that acupuncture takes some adjustment. What may work well one week could produce milder results the next. It has a lot to do with where you are at when you come in (tired, stressed, anxious, exhausted) and how well you respond to the treatment.

What I like most about acupuncture is the time to escape into

a relaxing and healing environment. The points where the needle are inserted cause a soothing ripple to flow through my body that lasts for days. The treatment never causes much pain, and I come out feeling more grounded and more whole.

## What Can Acupuncture Treat?

Some of the most common treatments are for osteoarthritis, back pain, migraines, digestive issues, nausea, vomiting, heartburn, insomnia, dizziness, fatigue, depression, weakened immune system, bone loss, hormone fluctuation, hot flashes, stress, and anxiety.

Most major insurance carriers cover acupuncture. Also, many acupuncturists offer treatment at a discounted rate if you do overlapping appointments.



If you'd like to learn more about the benefits of acupuncture or have any questions, check out the links below.

Feel free to share a comment of your experience or thoughts about the topic.

[UCSanDiego Article on Advantages of Acupuncture](#)

I recommend **Tim McGee** at Acacia Natural Health in Everett, WA.  
[www.acacianaturalhealth.com](http://www.acacianaturalhealth.com)