

Albany Acupuncture Health_and Wellness Newsletter

Acupuncture and Nutrition Supplements in Treating Arthritis

***Number 2
February 2013***

If you live with arthritis or joint pain you know what a challenge it can be to find relief from joint pain, inflammation and other symptoms. Osteoarthritis afflicts more than 21 million Americans. Western medicine focuses on relieving pain and preventing further joint damage using anti-inflammatory drugs and other medication. Acupuncture offers a safe, natural way to control joint pain and other symptoms and maintain overall bone and joint health. A 2004 study showed that patients with arthritis of the knee experienced a 40% reduction in pain and 40% increase in function after receiving a series of acupuncture treatments.

Acupuncture and Pain Relief

Pain is the primary complaint of arthritis sufferers, and acupuncture is a very effective form of pain control. I recommend a series of acupuncture treatments to relieve pain and nutrition supplements and dietary changes to control the swelling and inflammation. Acupuncture relieves pain in four ways:

It causes the body to produce chemicals called endorphins, which inhibit the perception of pain.

Acupuncture works by blocking the transmission of pain signals to the brain.

It deactivates trigger points. Trigger points are tender and extremely reactive areas that develop in the muscles and fascia sheaths of the body. They are often responsible for chronic pain and are frequently found around arthritic joints.

Acupuncture also has a relaxing effect on the mind and body. Since much illness is the result of stress, this relaxation helps to promote the healing process.

The most common form of arthritis is osteoarthritis. It involves the gradual disintegration of cartilage in joints along with the deposition of calcium, which limits mobility of the joint. Acupuncture stimulates the parathyroid glands to produce the hormone that draws calcium out of bones, only in this case, the hormone works on the arthritic deposits. When the joint reaches a certain level of deterioration, acupuncture will not restore it to a normal state. It is, however, extremely effective at controlling the pain that often accompanies this deterioration. Treatment Schedule

Some people will respond to acupuncture more quickly than others. Most patients should experience some symptomatic relief after 4-6 treatments. Six to ten treatments within a three to five week period is a normal course of treatment, and then the case is re-evaluated. For cases in which joint mobility is restricted or inflammation reoccurs, periodic maintenance treatments are often recommended. The frequency depends upon your response to acupuncture.

Herbal Medicine and Nutrition Supplements

To strengthen the acupuncture treatment, I combine herbal medicine and nutrition supplements to get the best possible results. Herbal medicine strengthens the body and enhances the functioning of the immune system. Nutrition supplements help to strengthen the bones and reduce swelling and inflammation. I can also provide nutritional counseling. For my patients who are concerned about bone health and arthritis, I would prescribe a combination of one or more of following nutrition supplements:

- Multiple Vitamin Formula
- Fish Oil Supplement and EPA-DHA
- Glucosamine Supplement
- Arthritis Formula (Chinese herbs)
- Calcium/Magnesium Formula
- Vitamin D and Vitamin K2

Diagnostic Testing

I am a proponent of testing for specific nutritional imbalances to determine deficiencies that may be contributing to your underlying condition. Ask your doctor to have your vitamin D levels tested or I can order the test for you. The name of the test is 25-hydroxy vitamin D.

Schedule a Treatment

If you are experiencing chronic arthritic or joint pain or wish to prevent a possible occurrence, contact me to schedule an acupuncture treatment and nutrition counseling session. I will develop a custom treatment program based upon your medical history, state of health and dietary habits.

Featured Book of the Month

I recommend Dr. Miriam Nelson's comprehensive book: Strong Women and Men Beat Arthritis. Based on the latest scientific information, including practical advice on the best nutrition, exercise, and diet plans.

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