

# Acupressure

## Definition

Acupuncture (lat. *acus* needle; *punctum* sting) is an alternative treatment method based on traditional Chinese medicine. It consists of the time-limited application of thin needles to specific points on the surface of the human body.

## History

The age of this treatment method cannot be determined precisely, but it is assumed that it has roots already in the Stone Age. The first discovered acupuncture needles were made of bone and are estimated to be 7000 years old. The method saw its greatest development in the 7th century in China, where it was recognized as an independent healing field.

## Traditional principles

Acupuncture methodology is based on traditional Chinese medicine and philosophy and is based on empiricism.

### Yin & Yang

The principle of Yin - Yang is based on Taoism. This philosophy describes it as two opposite elements constantly competing with each other, but one cannot exist without the other. Their inner struggle forms life energy - *chi*.



### Jin

The female element includes the negative spectrum of energy: darkness, cold, stillness, night, etc. From the point of view of treatment, this includes the so-called "full organs" that carry out resorption, processing and storage of substances: heart and its envelope, lung, liver, kidney, spleen.

Too much Yin energy can cause fatigue, fluid retention, discharges or tingling.

### Yang

The male element is the opposite, i.e., by analogy, positive energy: light, heat, activity, day, etc. It includes the so-called "hollow organs" that receive nutrients and excrete waste: stomach, gut, gallbladder, urinary bladder, vascular system and three heaters.

Too much of this energy can cause high blood pressure, migraine or other acute pain.

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But it is important to realize that, based on its physiological function, each organ has a certain proportion of Yin and Yang, they cross into each other and transform. A healthy organism has these principles in balance and their energy flows through acupuncture pathways, i.e. *meridians*. If this condition is disturbed for a long time, the human body is sick. Acupuncture tries to prevent the emergence of imbalance, or to eliminate its causes.

## 5 basic elements

Elements always affecting two organs, one of which corresponds to the principle of Yin and the other Yang. It thus creates "paired acupuncture paths":

### Water Element

- Pathways: kidneys and bladder,
- colors: blue and black,
- taste: salty,
- season: winter.

It is a storehouse of energy that the body needs when it is in a longer-lasting stress. The Kidney Pathway stores these reserves and allows the body to use them in a moment of emergency. Bladder tract manages body fluids. It also affects bone health, hearing and sexuality.

Behaviorally, it induces fear, which reasonably increases the organism's chance of survival.

Imbalance can be manifested by cold hands and feet, an excessive taste for salty foods, urinary tract infections, hair breakage, phobias, infertility, slow fracture healing or lower back pain.

## Wood Element

- Pathways: liver and gallbladder,
- colors: purple and green (traditional colors of healing and transformation),
- taste: sour,
- period: spring.

This element affects the health of muscles, tendons and ligaments. At the same time, it participates in digestion itself, processing nutrients and purifying the blood. Improves eyesight (both strong eyes and easy accommodation and imaginary inner vision, looking at a situation from multiple sides).

When this element is in balance, it provides energy to achieve the desired goals, thereby enabling aging without regret.

Conversely, its imbalance manifests itself in aggression, overeating, headaches, allergies, indecisiveness, eye and spine problems, or tendonitis and muscle spasms.

## Fire Element

- Pathways: heart and small intestine + pericardium and three heaters (also called triple radiator or three Fires),
- colors: red and pink,
- taste: bitter,
- period: summer.

Fire affects the creativity and health of the heart, regulates the circulation and the entire meridian system in general. It also participates in the processing of food and its separation from residues and waste. The Triple Radiant controls three energy centers, namely the thoracic, abdominal and pelvic cavities. It is the only meridian that is not tied to a certain organ.

The emotional manifestation of this element is joy.

Symptoms indicating an imbalance of this element are heart problems, poor blood circulation, low libido, depression, apathy, non-physiological temperature changes, skin diseases or, for example, recklessness and lack of empathy.

## Earth Element

- Pathways: spleen and stomach,
- colors: yellow, orange and brown,
- taste: sweet,
- period: late summer.

Earth is the basic element affecting physical and mental balance. It also affects sexuality, fertility, proper blood production and digestion. Among other things, it also regulates the menstrual cycle.

The emotion associated with this element is compassion. If it is in balance, it gives a sense of stability. On the other hand, bad deviations of this energy can cause excessive insecurity, unnecessary apologizing or an overly accommodating approach to others at one's own expense.

Diseases associated with the Earth element are skin or stomach ulcers, nausea, vomiting, eating disorders, diabetes and hypoglycemia, irregular ovulation, premenstrual syndrome, infertility or fungal infections.

## Metal Element

- Pathways: colon and lungs,
- colors: white, silver and gray,
- taste: hot,
- period: autumn.

The metal affects the health of our guts, respiratory system and skin. Detoxifies the body in terms of physical and psychological "waste". It strengthens the sense of honor and justice.

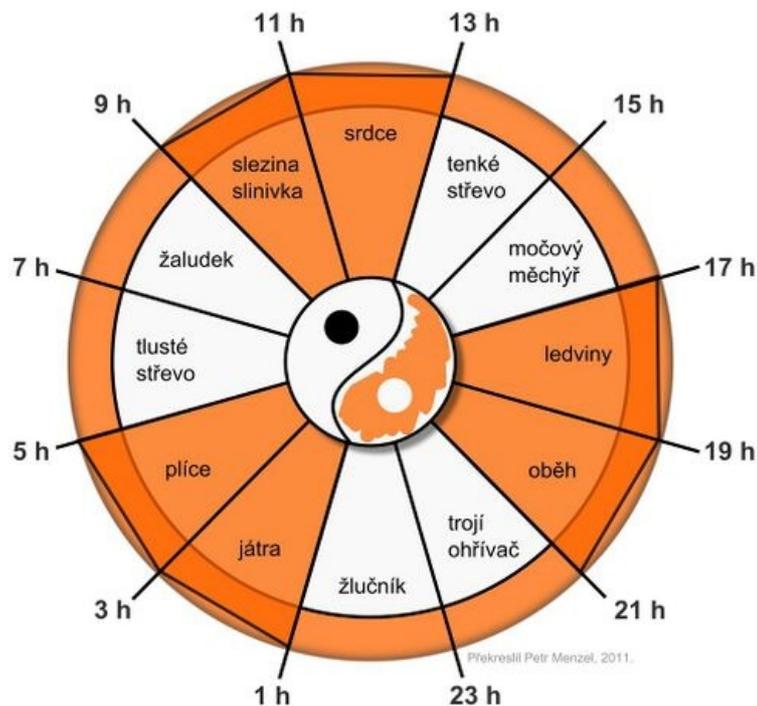
The emotion of this element is sadness. In balance, it helps us get rid of unpleasant experiences and gain new hope. The opposite is long mourning and the inability to overcome the past.

Symptoms of diseases related to imbalance are acne, eczema, cracked skin, [[sinusitis] and bronchi, chronic runny nose, asthma, headaches in the frontal part, constipation or conversely diarrhoea.

## Organ Clock

Energy passes through all the mentioned organs in precisely determined paths and times. It gradually gets to everyone throughout the day. Organ clocks show us the time when the given organ is maximally active, so the most energy is passing through it. In these characteristic moments, the pathological state of the organ can also be best influenced. New medical studies on *biorhythms* correspond in many ways to this very ancient Chinese teaching.

## Maximum Activity Intervals



## Acupuncture points and their pathways

Acupuncture tries to diagnose any bad energy deviations and then balance them. The therapy consists of inserting steel needles into the corresponding "acupuncture points". Traditional Chinese medicine described 365 such points, today there are up to 2000. The vast majority of them lie on some of the 14 paths, the so-called "meridians". Individual meridians are named according to the organ they represent. However, by properly acting on individual pathways, we can also influence a number of other organs<sup>[1]</sup> (see tables below).



- Taken from <sup>[2]</sup>

### Organ pathways and the possibilities of influencing them:

Jin tracks

Meridian	Lung track	Spleen track	Path of the Heart = Master Admin	Kidney track	Cardiovascular pathway	Liver pathway
Path	descending from the chest to the hand	ascending from leg to chest	descending from the chest to the hand	ascending from leg to chest	descending from the chest to the hand	upward from the leg to the chest
Authorities	nose, throat, lungs, chest, upper limbs	lungs, abdomen, intestines, stomach, spleen, liver, urogenital system, lower limbs	heart, chest, CNS, upper limbs	lungs, internal organs, urogenital organs, throat, lower limbs	vascular system, nervous system, heart, chest, stomach, upper limbs	liver, gall bladder, lateral parts of the trunk, pancreas, urogenital organs

Yang Paths

Meridian	Colon track	Stomach Track	Bladder Track	Track of three heaters	Gallbladder track
Path	ascending from hand to head	descending from head to foot	descending from head to foot	ascending from hand to head	descending from head to foot
Authorities	mouth, teeth, head, throat, tongue, cheeks, gullet, upper limbs	head, cheeks, mouth, teeth, throat, stomach, intestines, lower limbs	head, neck, back, CNS, buttock area, skin, internal organs	ears, eyes, sides of chest, elbows, shoulders	ears, eyes, chest, liver, gall bladder, buttocks, knees, lower limbs

Meridian	Anterior median pathway = Vessel of conception = Ren	Posterior midline = Guiding vessel = Du
Path	from the center of the perineum to the middle of the chin	from the coccyx, through the spine and head, to the frenulum of the upper lip
Authorities	bladder, small intestine, stomach, heart, heart envelope, three heaters	stomach, gall bladder, liver, urogenital area

Acupuncture also works with secondary pathways, for which a deeper knowledge of both acupuncture points and their meridians is needed.

## Education in Acupuncture

### Prerequisites

The doctor must have attestation in the clinical field (or prove at least three years of experience in the clinical field) and participate in basic training in acupuncture, which includes 200 hours of theoretical and practical instruction. The training takes place in two blocks, which are separated by a break, and ends with an exam, after which the doctor is issued a diploma. If a doctor wants to perform acupuncture in the Czech Republic, this diploma must be issued by an accredited Czech institution. If it is not such a company, the diploma must be certified by meeting both the deadlines and the content of the teaching, practice and content of the exam.

With this basic education (*so-called authorization - first degree credit*) the doctor is authorized to perform acupuncture *in his field* (but not outside his field).

### Basic Training

(cited according to <sup>[3]</sup>)

#### ▪ Topics of the first block of lectures:

- Legislation, Theory and mechanisms of action of acupuncture (AP) from the point of view of contemporary medicine
- Morphological and physiological bases of AP
- A comprehensive view of a person in health and illness, a systemic approach in medicine
- History and current position of AP in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) and in the world. Philosophical Foundations of AP. Basic classical theory and rules
- Overview of diagnostics in TCM, pulse and language diagnostics
- General and special indications and contraindications of AP
- Characteristics of active points (AB) - morphological, physiological, clinical. AB search methods
- Systematics of 12 main organ and 2 intermediate pathways, their basic AB. Off-track points and new points
- Overview of microsystems. Basics of auriculotherapy
- Complications of AP, their prevention and therapy
- Needle AP technique
- Different forms of AP according to the method of AB stimulation (acupressure, needle AP, sono-, electro-, magneto-, photo-, laser-puncture)
- Basics of modern AP diagnostics (measurement of electrical parameters, thermal tolerance)
- Principles of selection of AP, technical and AB forms
- Selection of AB in specific indications of various fields
- Preventive AP procedures, First aid with acupuncture
- Practical exercises

#### ▪ Topics of the second block of lectures:

- Neurophysiology of pain, possibilities, methods and mechanisms of analgesic effect of AP
- Clinical application of classical theories
- Supplements to major organ pathways and their ABs
- Secondary pathways, their courses, indications and symptomatology, traditional Chinese massage
- Extraordinary pathways, their course, symptomatology, indications
- EAV - introduction to methodology
- Basic control system (Pischinger) and AP options
- Auriculotherapy (higher level - auriculomedicine)
- Other microsystems and AP mods
- Acupuncture analgesia - theory, indications, implementation
- Acupuncture therapy in various fields and indications
- Practical exercises
- News in modern AP

### Higher type education

If a doctor wants to perform acupuncture even outside of his clinical field (*license-credit level II*) he must meet the following conditions:

1. document authorization - first degree credit,
2. after completing the basic training, have at least seven years of experience in acupuncture, with at least 500 treated patients (not monothematic),
3. document other courses (with a total length of at least 200 hours),
4. pass a professional exam or achieve 1800 points (points are earned for participation in a course/training/lectures; for publication of a professional publication/magazine; for research activities, etc.).

## Links

### External links

- Acupuncture (Czech Wikipedia)
- Acupuncture (English Wikipedia)
- <http://lekarske.slovniky.cz/lexikon-pojem/akupunktura>
- <https://www.google.com/a/aztip.cz/ServiceLogin?service=jotspot&passive=1209600&continue=https://sites.google.com/a/aztip.cz/terapie/alternativni-terapie/dotekove-terapie /akupunktura/historie-a-principy-akupunktury&followup=https://sites.google.com/a/aztip.cz/terapie/alternativni-terapie/dotekove-terapie/akupunktura/historie-a-principy-akupunktury&ul=1>
- Acupuncture and associated techniques (<http://www.akupunktura.cz/index.php?page=akupunktura>)
- <http://www.wikina.cz/a/Acupuncture>
- Chinese names of acupuncture points ([http://www.wikina.cz/a/%C4%8C%C3%ADnsk%C3%A9\\_n%C3%A1zvy\\_akupunkturu%C3%ADch\\_bod%C5%AF](http://www.wikina.cz/a/%C4%8C%C3%ADnsk%C3%A9_n%C3%A1zvy_akupunkturu%C3%ADch_bod%C5%AF))

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- EMMEROVÁ, Jarmila. *Family Encyclopedia of Alternative Medicine*. 1. edition. Prague : Reader's Digest Selection, 1997. 399 pp. ISBN 80-902069-3-X.
- BAUER, Cathryn. *Acupressure for women*. 1. edition. Prague – Hodkovičky : Pragma, 2006. 94 pp. ISBN 80-7349-012-9.

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2. NUGA BEST, For The Best Beauty & Health. *Acupuncture* [online]. [cit. 2011-01-15]. <[www.nugabest.dk/en/principles/75-akupunktur.html](http://www.nugabest.dk/en/principles/75-akupunktur.html)>.
3. Czech Medical Acupuncture Society of the Czech Medical Society of Jan Evangelista Purkyně. *Education of doctors in acupuncture in the Czech Republic* [online]. ©2009. [cit. 2011-01-15]. <<http://www.akupunktura.cz/akupunktura.htm>>.