

## ACUPUNCTURE RESEARCH

The scientific community is actively involved in many different research projects about acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine. Many of these research studies are now being published in mainstream medical journals. A few of the articles demonstrating acupuncture's benefits and effectiveness are:

- **Fibromyalgia:** The Mayo Clinic completed a study that provided 6 acupuncture treatments over a 2-3 week period. Researchers found acupuncture to be effective in reducing pain, fatigue, and anxiety.
- **Osteoarthritis of the Knee:** The Maryland School of Medicine provided 23 acupuncture treatments over 26 weeks. Eight weeks were focused treatment, followed by a tapered schedule for maintenance purposes. This study found that those treated with acupuncture had 40% less pain and a nearly 40% improvement in function.
- **Headache:** A study of 401 patients with chronic headache was published in the British Medical Journal.

"Patients in the acupuncture group experienced the equivalent of 22 fewer days of headache per year." They concluded that "acupuncture leads to persisting, clinically relevant benefits for ... patients with chronic headache, particularly migraine."

- **Drug Addiction:** The University of British Columbia found ear acupuncture was an effective adjunct treatment for drug addiction. They noted reduction in severity of withdrawal symptoms (cravings, depression, insomnia, anxiety). I use a similar protocol to treat drug, tobacco and alcohol addiction.
- **Childbirth:** A study published by the Journal of Chinese Medicine found that pre-birth acupuncture was a safe and effective treatment to promote natural labor, reducing the duration of labor and the rate of medical intervention.
- **Low Back Pain:** The Annals of Internal Medicine published an analysis of acupuncture in the treatment of low back pain. They found that acupuncture "is an effective treatment for chronic low back pain," and that acupuncture also improved functioning when compared with no treatment.

## Janet Leach, L.Ac.

Five Cities Medical  
855 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Pismo Beach, CA 93449

(805) 773-3301



Address Correction Requested

**OFFICE HOURS:** 9:30-5:00 Monday-Friday,  
additional hours by appointment.

### RELAXING MASSAGE

Massage can be an extremely effective way of reducing stress. I offer a ½-hour stress-relieving massage that uses Japanese Shiatsu techniques to stimulate acupuncture channels and points. This massage is done fully-clothed, in a quiet, comfortable environment. Finger pressure on acupuncture points, muscle soothing and stretching, and joint movement are techniques used to promote relaxation. Special attention is given to acupuncture points that have calming and relaxing effects. This massage focuses on the acupuncture channels located on your shoulders, neck, face, head, and feet.

### WATER

Do you drink enough water? The most common recommendation is to drink 6-8 glasses of water every day. Dehydration can contribute to headaches, short-term memory problems, daytime fatigue, joint pain, hunger, and a slower metabolism. As you can see, it really is important to drink your water!

### MISPLACED?

I am missing several books from my library that have been loaned to patients. I would be grateful if you would stop by the office and return the books. Thank you.

### Client Appreciation Coupon

1/2 Hour Stress-Relieving  
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**40%  
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## IN THE OFFICE

You may be seeing some new faces the next time you're in the office, allowing me to focus more of my time treating patients, rather than working on paperwork. Grace, with her considerable expertise, will continue to keep me organized 3 afternoons each week. Some of you may have already met Tina, very friendly and capable, the voice you'll hear most often answering the phone. Finally, Lisa is an acupuncture student in her final year of studies, and will be in the office several hours each week as part of her education. Lisa will be completing some of her internship hours with me, and may assist with some treatments.

Please accept my apologies if we did not respond to messages you left on my answering machine. I've just learned that it has not been recording messages the way it should! It should be replaced by the time you receive this newsletter.

I am in the process of changing the format for the receipts you will be receiving for office visits. Almost 50% of private insurance companies now pay for a portion of acupuncture treatment fees. These new forms should make it easier for patients to receive reimbursement. This year's new insurance billing codes for acupuncture have changed the way office visits are billed, and each procedure will be listed individually on a "superbill" form. Most fees will increase slightly, but the new billing may also result in a decrease of fees. I continue to offer a 20% discount for payment at the time of service. Please let me know if you have any questions. Unfortunately, Medicare does not yet cover acupuncture, but that might change if enough people contact their congressional representatives.

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## EXERCISE

Exercise has many health benefits and is often an important component in any pain reduction program. There are many exercise opportunities in our area:

- Exercise at home with videos or home gym equipment
- Join a gym with a variety of classes and equipment
- Investigate Adult School or Recreation Department activities
- Find moments to exercise throughout your day (walk the dog, take the stairs, garden...)
- Take a class (Tai Chi, Pilates, Yoga, Dance)
- Join a team sport (soccer, softball, basketball)
- Get together with a friend(s) and hike a local mountain or walk on the beach

***Stop by the office and pick up a brochure that provides additional information on many of our local fitness resources. Several of the fitness centers have also provided free passes so you can try their facilities, let us know if you would like a pass.***

## HERBAL NEWS

Chinese herbs are rarely used singly, but are most often used in formulas combining 6-20 individual herbs. I use herbs in granular form, which are reconstituted in hot water (similar to instant coffee). The herbal formulas are based on traditional Chinese formulas, and then customized for each individual's condition(s). This way, I can adjust the dosage of each herb, and add or eliminate herbs to provide a formula that works best for you. We are now able to put your herbal formulas into capsules, a good option for those patients who dislike the taste of their "tea", or who find it inconvenient to prepare tea. I prefer that the initial formula be taken in tea form to make it easier to adjust the herbs, if necessary.

One of my favorite herbs is fresh ginger (sheng jiang) which is often used by itself. Fresh ginger root is readily available in the produce section of most grocery stores. Ginger is also available in candied form in Oriental markets. This herb is well known for its effectiveness in easing gastrointestinal disturbances, especially nausea and vomiting associated with the flu virus, motion sickness, or pregnancy. Ginger soothes the stomach and intestines, and is also used to treat seafood poisoning, one reason it is so often served with sushi. To ease nausea and vomiting, you can drink ginger tea, or simply hold the tea in your mouth for a little while before spitting it out. The active ingredients can then be absorbed through the mouth's mucous membranes. Ginger is also used in several herbal formulas to alleviate the symptoms of a cold or flu virus in its early stages.

*To prepare fresh ginger tea:* wash the root, it is not necessary to remove the skin. Cut 3-6 slices (depending on your taste) about 1/4" thick, place in 3 cups of water and gently simmer for 15-20 minutes. This tea may be consumed hot or cold, made into ginger ale by adding honey and "bubbly" water, or blended with juice or another tea (delicious with green tea!).

## NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS

A nursing director at a convalescent facility recently asked me what supplements I would recommend for many of her elderly patients. Keeping in mind that most are already taking several medications, I suggested 3 that I thought would be most beneficial:

- *Milk Thistle (Silymarin)* is an herb that helps cleanse and strengthen the liver. Many medications are metabolized in the liver and milk thistle can help maintain optimal liver function. (Available in pharmacies & health food stores.)
- *TPP Digest* is an excellent digestive aid, helping the body digest protein, carbohydrate, fat and fiber. This product will help patients get the maximum nutritional value from their food and alleviate digestive discomfort for those with food sensitivities such as lactose intolerance. (Available in my office.)
- *TPP Probiotic* contains a variety of healthy bacteria (including acidophilus) that are found in well-functioning intestinal tracts. These bacteria can be destroyed by antibiotics, and probiotics are helpful for restoring and maintaining healthy digestive tract function. (Available in my office.)

## HERBAL FORMULAS

*Boost Immunity* — it does just that! Help your immune system function at optimal levels before cold and flu season arrive. Available in granular form (50g and 100g) or in capsules (50g in 100 capsules).

*Dispel Cold II* is used at the earliest stage of a cold and can dramatically shorten the duration and severity of the cold. Available in granular form (50g and 100g) or in capsules (50g in 100 capsules).

*(Both formulas are available in my office.)*

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