

Notes From Aculand

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To your physical, mental, and spiritual health!

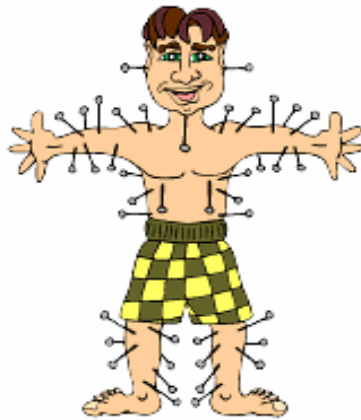
Karen Johnson L.Ac., R.N.

WELCOME to the September Notes From Aculand. As a follow-up to last month's "Mini Notes" and the feedback to the question, "What do you like about acupuncture," I'd like to address a frequently asked question about acupuncture....Does it work?

My experience, of course, points (small pun) to a resounding "Yes." Last month's respondents seem to agree, but you think we are all entirely biased, I am happy to report that according to a survey conducted by the *Washington Consumer's Checkbook Magazine*, which has a very large circulation, acupuncture patients across the board report a 98% satisfaction rate with their practitioners. This is much higher than the rating for many other classes of health care providers.

They go on to quote from a 1997 Consensus Statement on Acupuncture that while acupuncture needs more study, it has shown "promising results" in many areas. They wisely and generously added these comments:

"One of the advantages of acupuncture is that the incidence of adverse effects is substantially lower than that of many drugs or other accepted medical procedures used for the same conditions. As an example, musculoskeletal conditions, such



as fibromyalgia, myofascial pain and tennis elbow, or epicondylitis, are conditions for which acupuncture may be beneficial. These painful conditions are often treated with, among other things, anti-inflammatory medications (aspirin, ibuprofen, etc.) or with steroid injections. Both medical interventions have potential for deleterious side effects but are still widely used and are considered acceptable treatments. *The evidence supporting these*



therapies is no better than that for acupuncture."

That is a very strong statement. Acupuncture cannot do everything, of course, but over the last ten years, I have been amazed and encouraged by the range of conditions that acupuncture can successfully treat, all without adverse side effects. Patients have found relief from physical issues like sprained ankles and sciatica, more systemic problems like chronic congestion or digestive abnormalities, emotional problems stemming from anxiety, depression, or tough life issues, and hard-to-describe states of being that don't have any good western diagnostic translation. Almost unanimously, patients describe not only relief of symptoms, but also a general "sense of well-being" that seems unique to acupuncture treatment. That's a wonderful effect. So does it work? Oh, yes!

The Perils of Overeating

According to acupuncture theory, there are two main sources of life energy:

1) that which you are born with

2) and that which you manufacture each day from your food and drink. Proper digestion is therefore considered key to good health. One of the ways people can impair their digestion is by overeating. We tend to think of the consequences of overeating as just feeling too full or

bloated and maybe gaining some weight, but the Chinese medical perspective provides some additional food for thought.

“If the solid portions of food are jam-packed into the stomach, or their digestion is impaired by cold and chilled foods and liquids, or if too many hard-to-digest foods are eaten, stagnant food may accumulate in the stomach. The stomach tries all the harder to burn these off and becomes like a car stuck in

overdrive. It becomes hotter in an attempt to burn off the accumulation. This often results in the stomach becoming chronically overheated. This, in turn, causes the stomach to register hunger, in Chinese medicine, is a sensation of the stomach’s heat. This hunger then results in eating more and more and a vicious loop is created. Overeating begets stagnant food, which begets stomach heat, which reinforces overeating. Further, persistent stomach heat may eventually waste stomach yin or fluids causing a chronic thirst and preference for cold drinks and

chilled foods.” (*Arisal of the Clear* by Bob Flaws).

Here are some tips to improve digestion

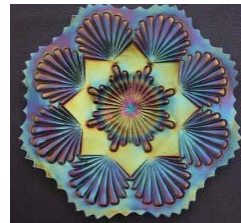
- 1) Drink very little with meals.
- 2) If you have sensitive digestion, minimize intake of very cold food or icy drinks.
- 3) “Chew your liquids and drink your solids,” (go slowly so that food is well broken down in the mouth). This will ensure that your food is easier to digest and slows down the whole eating process, which will hopefully reduce the tendency to overeat.

FALL FENG SHUI

Feng Shui is the art of creating balance or good energy flow in one’s environment. It’s sort of like acupuncture for your home. The desired outcome is to create a harmonious living environment to support a peaceful life.

Today’s topic is...corners! Dark, qi-stagnating corners can be brightened up with color, light, or movement. A vase of brightly colored silk flowers might do the trick, as

might the changing colors of a lava lamp or the gentle splashing of a water fountain. Spiky plants send qi moving with all their multidirectional ends, and uplighters or round tables with lamps on them can brighten an otherwise dull corner.



Quote for the day

Life is an accumulation of choices.

You can do something or nothing

Every action ripples the pond and doing nothing is doing something, too.



GRAMMATICALLY SPEAKING...

A middle school English teacher, carelessly coasting through a neighborhood stop sign, noticed the flashing lights in her rear view mirror. She pulled over and realized, to her chagrin, that the handsome young officer approaching her was a former student. They exchanged greetings and then the officer, with a little grin, proceeded to hand her the citation, saying, “I hate to do this to you, Ms. Jones, but driving is a little bit like English and that thing back there was a period, not a comma.”



CHECK IT OUT!

Please be sure to visit my new and improved Web site: www.karenjohnson.nutrametrix.com. It is now easier to navigate and includes more information on this great line of nutritional products.

