

# Ten Great Reasons to Try *ACUPUNCTURE*



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# Invest In Your Health!

You more than likely clicked on that link and are reading this because there is some aspect of your health that you are struggling with.

You might be fed up of feeling **tired, stressed or anxious**; you might have menstrual pain/irregularity, **fertility** issues or **menopausal** symptoms; you might be struggling with **pain** (sciatica, frozen shoulder back pain) or with **digestive** issues. And so on and so on

You might be **resigned** to living with the condition or to reluctantly taking painkillers and anti-inflammatory meds to manage it. Let's face it, we are often conditioned to putting everyone and everything else first!

You might not realize that **acupuncture** can help with these symptoms and this little booklet is essentially a whistlestop tour of some of the conditions We treat regularly and achieve great outcomes.



# 1. MIGRAINES & TENSION HEADACHES

Headaches are one of the most common complaints in clinical practice, affecting about 80% of the US adult population.

The NICE guidelines (NHS) say that acupuncture is at least as effective as prophylactic drug treatment, without any contraindications or unpleasant side effects. NICE also concludes that acupuncture is the only proven method to prevent tension headaches.

As well as prevention, it may also be used to alleviate the symptoms of acute attacks.

Source: Linde K, Allais G, Brinkhaus B, et al. *Acupuncture for the prevention of episodic migraine*. *Cochrane Database Syst Rev*. 2016;2016(6):CD001218. Published 2016 Jun 28. doi:10.1002/14651858.CD001218.pub3  
Linde K, Allais G, Brinkhaus B, Manheimer E, Vickers A, White AR. *Acupuncture for migraine prophylaxis*. *Cochrane Database Syst Rev*. 2009;(1):CD001218. Published 2009 Jan 21. doi:10.1002/14651858.CD001218.pub2

# 2. SCIATICA

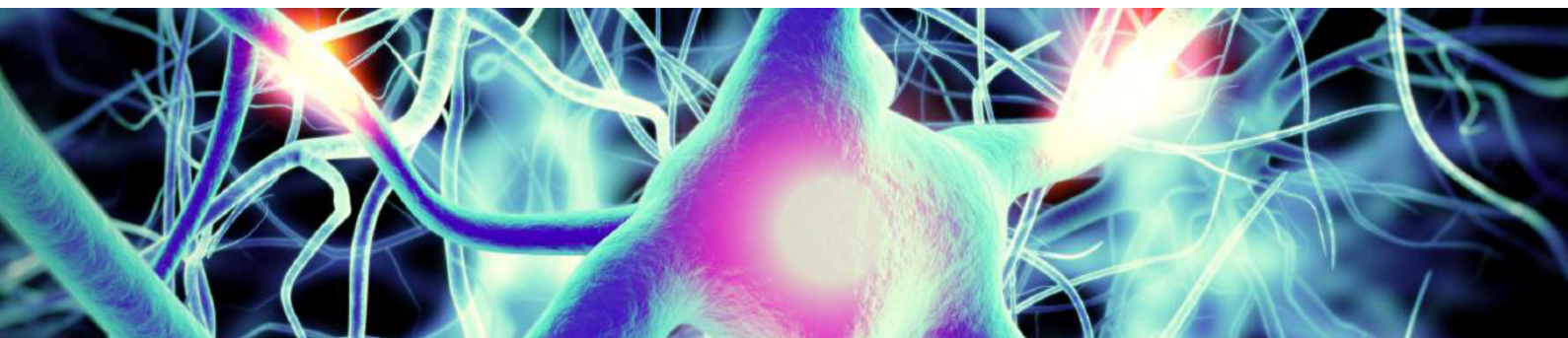
This is a syndrome involving impingement or inflammation of the **sciatic nerve** to such a degree that neurological symptoms appear.

Commonly these symptoms include pain radiating down the back or sides of the leg, sometimes below the knee and into the foot. The location of the pain depends upon where the sciatic impingement originates.

Sciatica is usually one-sided and is often preceded by lower back pain. Commonly sciatic symptoms can occur due to a tight piriformis muscle. This muscle is found beneath the gluteus maximus (ie deep in the buttock.)

The Acupuncture Evidence Project of 2010 found sciatica responded positively to acupuncture. This is certainly what we have found in our experience.

Source: Ji M, Wang X, Chen M, Shen Y, Zhang X, Yang J. *The Efficacy of Acupuncture for the Treatment of Sciatica: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis*. *Evid Based Complement Alternat Med*. 2015;2015:192808. doi:10.1155/2015/192808





### 3. FROZEN SHOULDER

Frozen shoulder symptoms respond really well to acupuncture.

Also termed adhesive capsulitis, frozen shoulder is characterised by shoulder pain and loss of range of motion in the rotator cuff group. You may have difficulty pulling clothes over your head, pegging out the washing, fastening a bra strap, lateral raises at the gym

A recent study in July 2017 concluded that acupuncture "is an effective treatment modality", it thaws a frozen shoulder!

Source: Nahin, R. L., Boineau, R., Khalsa, P. S., Stussman, B. J., & Weber, W. J. (2016). Evidence-Based Evaluation of Complementary Health Approaches for Pain Management in the United States. *Mayo Clinic proceedings*, 91(9), 1292-1306. doi:10.1016/j.mayocp.2016.06.007

### 4. OTHER PAIN CONDITIONS

Many people think that acupuncture is just for pain. While this is far from the case, pain is nevertheless one of the things many people struggle with on a daily basis.

**Musculoskeletal** conditions that an acupuncturist might treat include neck stiffness/pain, back pain, jaw pain, arthritic pain, tennis/golfers elbow, tendinopathy, plantar fasciitis, acute sports injury.

Acupuncture not only relieves the pain but controls inflammation and accelerates repair of muscles, tendons and ligaments.

It is thought to stimulate nerves located in muscles/tissues which leads to the release of endorphins and other neurohumeral factors that affect the processing of pain in the brain.

Source: Nahin, R. L., Boineau, R., Khalsa, P. S., Stussman, B. J., & Weber, W. J. (2016). Evidence-Based Evaluation of Complementary Health Approaches for Pain Management in the United States. *Mayo Clinic proceedings*, 91(9), 1292-1306. doi:10.1016/j.mayocp.2016.06.007





# 5.

## STRESS & ANXIETY

Anxiety affects 1 in 6 of all adults in the US. It is one of the most common things that people seek treatment for or, if it is not their main complaint, it crops up as an issue in the initial consultation.

Treatment is often done on an **emotional level**, bearing in mind that the internal organs are attributed to an emotion in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM.) Also there is often much to be gained by looking at diet, exercise, lifestyle.

Stimulation of specific acupuncture points has been shown to affect areas of the brain that promote relaxation and to "deactivate" the analytical brain that can lead to overthinking and worry.

Acupuncture can also help with exam nerves!

Source: Grant S, Colaiaco B, Motala A, Shanman R, Sorbero M, Hempel S. *Acupuncture for the Treatment of Adults with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis.* J Trauma Dissociation. 2018 Jan-Feb; 19(1):39-58. doi: 10.1080/15299732.2017.1289493. Epub 2017 Mar 9. PMID: 28151093.



# 6.

## INSOMNIA

The problems with insomnia can go beyond tiredness, exhaustion, irritability: muscle stiffness, impaired thinking, fibromyalgia or poor work performance often follow.

Sleeping pills and antidepressants are often prescribed but they can become addictive and it can become impossible to sleep without them.

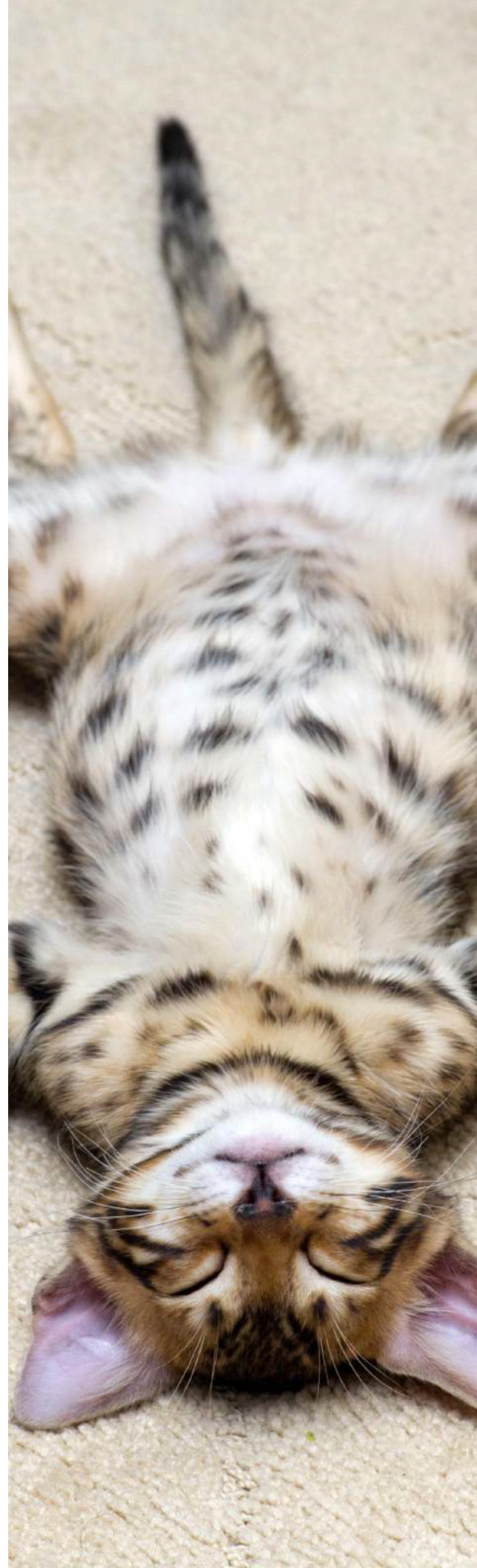
Recent research confirms acupuncture helps.

TCM recognises that insomnia can stem from a fundamental imbalance of **Qi/energy**. It is believed that each organ houses an aspect of our spirit - in the West we associate the heart with love but that is all.

For those with insomnia, the Heart and Liver (in the TCM sense) are often out of balance and our spirit wanders or drifts instead of resting.

Acupuncture is believed to stimulate the nervous system and cause the release of **neurochemical** messenger molecules. This resulting biochemical change influences the body's homeostatic mechanism and promotes well being

Source: Yin X, Gou M, Xu J, Dong B, Yin P, Masquelin F, Wu J, Lao L, Xu S. Efficacy and safety of acupuncture treatment on primary insomnia: a randomized controlled trial. *Sleep Med.* 2017 Sep;37:193-200. doi: 10.1016/j.sleep.2017.02.012. Epub 2017 Mar 8. PMID: 28899535.





# 7.

## MENSTRUAL ISSUES

Menstruation should be painless and be accompanied by minimal pre and postmenstrual signs and symptoms.

The menstruate/bleed should be of sufficient volume, be a vibrant red, be free from clots and flow freely with little spotting or stop/start problems.

Research in March 2019 confirms that acupuncture beats hormone and drug treatment for menstrual pain and irregularity.

With acupuncture treatment, many clients report that their periods have become more regular, less painful and the bleed changes from a darker red to a brighter colour with fewer clots and a more balanced flow.

Source: Yin X, Gou M, Xu J, Dong B, Yin P, Masquelin F, Wu J, Lao L, Xu S. Efficacy and safety of acupuncture treatment on primary insomnia: a randomized controlled trial. *Sleep Med.* 2017 Sep;37:193-200. doi: 10.1016/j.sleep.2017.02.012. Epub 2017 Mar 8. PMID: 28899535.

# 8.

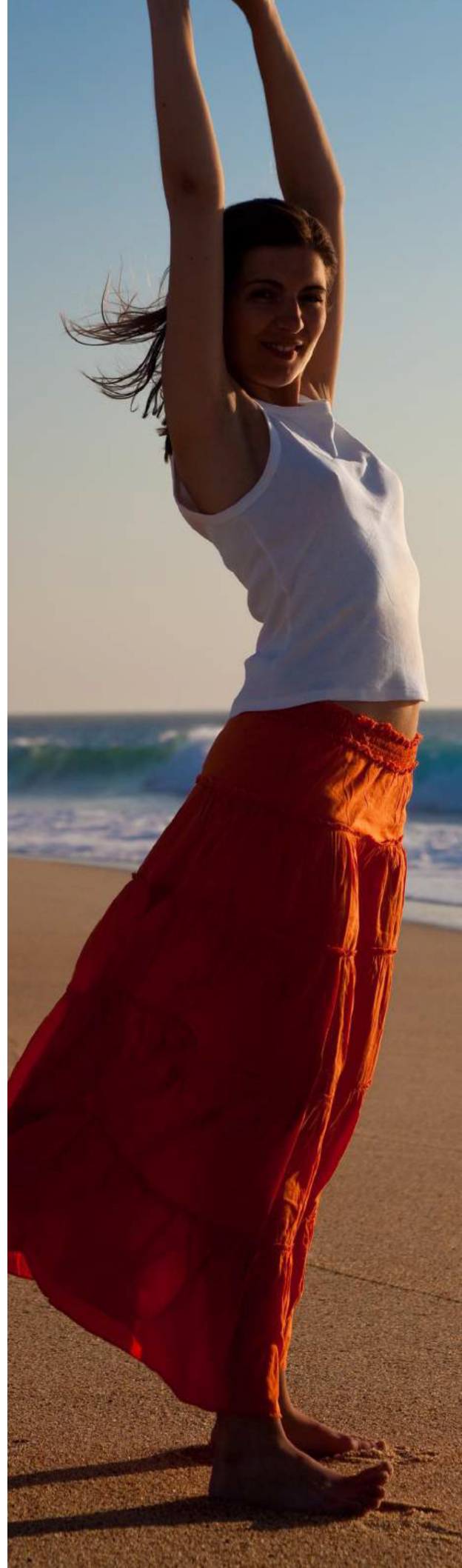
## FERTILITY JOURNEYS

The providers at Integrative Acupuncture have been privileged to work with hundreds of people on their fertility journeys.

Fertility issues generate a plethora of struggles, both physical and emotional. Trying unsuccessfully to conceive can become an emotional rollercoaster of guilt, blame, feeling isolated, feeling helpless/hopeless; it can affect sex lives and relationships too.

Thankfully now, more awareness exists around how acupuncture can increase the chances of success. Indeed many fertility clinics offer acupuncture as part of their treatment protocol.

Source: Paulus WE, Zhang M, Strehler E, et al. "Influence of acupuncture on the pregnancy rate in patients who undergo assisted reproduction therapy." *Fertility and Sterility* 2002; 77:721-724.





# 9.

## MENOPAUSAL SYMPTOMS

Acupuncture is a gentle, natural, non-invasive and effective way to deal with the symptoms of menopause and perimenopause.

Acupuncture balances menopausal symptoms by reducing hot flashes and night sweats which, in turn, result in a better quality of sleep.

Symptoms such as irritability, anxiety and mental foginess can also be reduced with acupuncture.

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) views the menopause as a natural occurrence brought about by a deficiency of Yin. It is not, however, viewed negatively and is often referred to as a **Second Spring**.

Throughout our life we expend Yin by work, stress, childbirth, grief, looking after others.

Yin is cooling, calming and moistening so a deficiency of Yin can leave us with the symptoms we have described – hot flashes, night sweats (& day sweats!) poor sleep, anxiety, feeling out of balance.

We include a lot of **nutritional therapy** alongside acupuncture for treating menopausal symptoms

Source: Befus D, Coeytaux RR, Goldstein KM, McDuffie JR, Shepherd-Banigan M, Goode AP, Kosinski A, Van Noord MG, Adam SS, Masilamani V, Nagi A, Williams JW Jr. Management of Menopause Symptoms with Acupuncture: An Umbrella Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *J Altern Complement Med.* 2018 Apr;24(4):314-323. doi: 10.1089/acm.2016.0408. Epub 2018 Jan 3. PMID: 29298078.



# 10.

## DIGESTIVE ISSUES

Irritable bowel, bloating, diarrhoea, constipation (or an alternation between the two,) acid reflux, gas the list goes on.

One of the most common things we see in practice is a problem with digestion. This is often isn't the reason that someone comes for acupuncture, but it crops up during the initial consultation.

There are several roots to digestive issues, frequently what we call Spleen Qi Deficiency (underperforming digestion) or Liver Qi Stagnation (stress.)

Acupuncture and some lifestyle and dietary changes can work really well together. It is not always what we eat but how and when we eat it that can contribute to digestive problems.

We live in a culture that promotes digestive issues - too much wheat and sugar, too much sitting, eating on the hop...this is all frowned upon in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM)

Another big no-no in TCM is the overconsumption of cold and raw foods. These are hard to digest and can cause our digestion to struggle.

Source: Li H, He T, Xu Q, Li Z, Liu Y, Li F, Yang BF, Liu CZ. *Acupuncture and regulation of gastrointestinal function.* World J Gastroenterol. 2015 Jul 21;21(27):8304-13. doi: 10.3748/wjg.v21.i27.8304. PMID: 26217082; PMCID: PMC4507100.

