

Stress & Acupuncture by David McCartney

One of the many benefits people feel from their very first acupuncture treatment is a feeling of relaxation and a heightened sense of well-being. In my experience there is no doubt that Acupuncture is a wonderful stress reducer and thus a wonderful form of preventative medicine.

Stress, in and of itself, is not counter-productive to our health. Assuming we have the health to handle physical or emotional stress the saying 'that which doesn't kill you makes you stronger' describes well the importance of stress in our lives to help us grow and achieve.

photo credit: [Stephen Poff](#)

When stress is short-lived we generally recover quickly. That said however, we can have acute episodes of great stress which have the potential to overwhelm us, or suffer from a state of chronic stress which wears us down gradually, leading to poor health and illness.

Our (sympathetic) nervous system is what helps us deal with stress. Our nervous system is involved in the 'fight or flight' response to acute emotional or physical stress. At times of stress, the nervous system secretes a protein, neuropeptide (NPY), which results in constriction of blood flow to all parts of the body except to the heart, lungs and brain. In cases of chronic stress this can cause physical symptoms such as:

- Headaches
- Upset stomach and changes in appetite
- Tense muscles
- Chest pains
- Shortness of breath
- Frequent colds and infections
- Insomnia
- Teeth grinding

There are many emotional and behavioral symptoms associated with stress also:

- Being easily agitated, irritable or moody
- Constant worrying
- Finding it impossible to relax
- Low self-esteem
- Forgetfulness
- Increased use of alcohol and smoking
- Avoidance of others and social situations
- Chronic stress symptoms can lead to elevated blood pressure and cardiac disease.

Studies have found that acupuncture treatment reduces the levels of the NPY protein that is linked to stress. This falls very much in line with my experience of dealing with the various symptoms of stress I see in my clinic. If you're feeling stressed and are exhibiting any or all of the symptoms listed, please don't hesitate to call and get yourself back on track to a less stressful and healthier life.

Share with your friends!

tel: +353 1 516 6193 - email: info@wisdomforhealth.ie - www.wisdomforhealth.ie

© Wisdom For Health Acupuncture & Massage 2004-2014. All rights reserved.