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Acupuncture – Its clinical practices

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The word "acupuncture" is derived from the Latin words "acus" (needle) and "punctura" (penetration). It's a procedure that consists of stimulating specific locations on or under the skin, called "acupoints" by needle puncturing. The major indication of acupuncture is pain in general, and particularly back pain (radiating or non-radiating), neck pain, headache (migraine and tension headache), knee pain, fibromyalgia and many other pain syndromes (inflammatory and mechanical). Acupuncture is also superior to conventional drugs in the treatment of post-operative and chemotherapy-induced nausea/vomiting. Acupuncture is also very effective in some cases of depression and anxiety. Acupuncture originated in China in the Neolithic age, when Chinese doctors observed that soldiers wounded in battles by arrows in specific locations were cured from specific afflictions. It was then developed by Chinese doctors and became the main pillar of traditional Chinese medicine. Acupuncture reports were first brought to the West by Portuguese missionaries in the 16th century. Western doctors noticed its great therapeutic effects, so they started conducting experiments on their own populations and found amazing results. They developed their own theory (based on lot of research), which is very different from the Chinese acupuncture theory. Today, the acupuncture practiced by western doctors is known as western medical acupuncture (WMA). It is an adaptation of Chinese acupuncture using the current knowledge of anatomy, physiology and pathology, and the principles of evidence-based medicine. Acupuncture is classified today as an integrative medicine modality. It's the leading and most evidence-based integrative medicine modality nowadays. The traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) theory says that acupuncture works on restoring a smooth flow of energy (Qi) along the meridians of energy in the body. TCM postulates that in order for the body to be healthy, the vital energy should flow smoothly along the 12 main meridians of the body (meridian are tracks or ways in the body along which the energy flows). And when someone gets sick, it means that the energy is blocked somewhere and the flow of energy disrupted. Acupuncture, according to TCM, works on restoring a healthy energy flow in the body.

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