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## Cleveland Clinic Health Essentials

<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/2014/04/acupuncture-10-biggest-myths-and-facts-2>

# Acupuncture Myths Versus Facts!

Think acupuncture hurts? Doesn't work? The Cleveland Clinic has separate myths from facts.

Read below to learn the top ten myths busters.

### **Myth 1: Acupuncture hurts — after all, we're talking needles.**

**Fact:** Although needles are used, they are very slender and fine (about the size of a cat whisker). You may or may not feel an initial prick, sometimes described as a mosquito bite. Any discomfort will either fade on its own or ease up as your acupuncturist adjusts the needles. You should experience a Qi (pronounced "chee") sensation, often described as heaviness, throbbing or an electrical sensation. That's your body's healing energy doing its work.

### **Myth 2: Acupuncture is ancient folk medicine; no legitimate healthcare professional would recommend it.**

**Fact:** Acupuncture is a treatment option that many medical institutions recommend. Even the United States military uses acupuncture. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) funds many clinical research trials on acupuncture. Both the NIH and the World Health Organization (WHO) recognize acupuncture as a valid treatment for a wide range of conditions.

### **Myth 3: Most people who use, or practice, acupuncture are into 'New Age' healing.**

**Fact:** On the contrary, you probably have a friend, coworker or neighbor who receives acupuncture treatments. As a Licensed Acupuncturist, certain guidelines and clinical regulations are adhered to, followed and guided by as directed by federal and State authorities and other stakeholders.

### **Myth 4: Acupuncture may conflict with medication, physical therapy and other 'mainstream' conventional medical treatments.**

**Fact:** There is no conflict between acupuncture and conventional medicine; they complement one another. Acupuncture works nicely as an adjunct to your conventional treatment plan.

### **Myth 5: Acupuncture is only useful in treating pain**

**Fact:** It's true that acupuncture helps relieve joint pain, including knee pain; back

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pain; headache; stomach pain and menstrual cramps. However, acupuncture is also used to treat nausea/vomiting, chemotherapy side effects, morning sickness, hypertension (high blood pressure), allergies, depression, infertility and other conditions.

**Myth 6: Acupuncture has a lot of side effects and you'll need time off work.**

**Fact:** Acupuncture has few to no side effects. After your acupuncture session, you can usually carry on with your day without any restrictions.

**Myth 7: Acupuncture's effects are psychological. It doesn't really do anything.**

**Fact:** Acupuncture and its effects are far from psychological. Studies show that during acupuncture, our brains begin to release chemicals such as endorphins (natural painkillers) Acupuncture also has an anti-inflammatory effect and helps people's immune system.

**Myth 8: Once you start acupuncture, you'll always need acupuncture.**

**Fact:** For most conditions, acupuncturists strive to improve your main problem so you do not have to return for more treatment. For chronic conditions, some people stay on a maintenance schedule, however, such as returning once a month, because acupuncture continues to help.

**Myth 9: If you do not see results in one or two treatments, then you're unlikely to benefit from acupuncture.**

**Fact:** The response to acupuncture is always an individual one. Some people respond quickly — within one, two or three treatments. Others need a full course of eight to 10 treatments. Acupuncture's effects are cumulative, building with each treatment, so the acupuncturist will assess its effects after you complete a full series of treatments. Acupuncturists use a variety of styles and techniques, so if you do not see results with one clinician, seek out another acupuncturist.

**Myth 10: You'll need a doctor's referral or a prescription for acupuncture.**

**Fact:** Guidelines vary by state. In the state of Ohio, you do not need a doctor's referral or prescription for acupuncture but a physician should perform a diagnostic exam for the condition you plan to treat. It is important you seek out a qualified and medically licensed acupuncturist before starting any course of treatment.

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