

## Acupuncture for Weight Loss

Acupuncture is an ADJUNCT therapy. It is not panacea or a wonder cure in the treatment of weight control. But Acupuncture is effective in making it easier to lose and maintain that loss if the patient is willing to change their lifestyle. The exact mechanism by which Acupuncture works is unknown. However we know that Acupuncture needles inserted into specific points on the body and in the ear, release endorphins which have a calming and relaxing effect that makes it easier to deal with stress, frustration and anxiety, that can trigger overeating and bingeing on fattening foods. Also endorphins affect the digestive and hormonal systems so acupuncture can help rebalance the organ systems that are running too fast-or in this case too slow-i.e., the metabolism and the willpower.

### The Acupuncture Treatment

In order for the Acupuncturist to choose the correct points for you, the Acupuncturist would devise a treatment protocol using a combination of ear and body points. The acupuncturist may use electro stimulation on some of these points to increase the endorphin release and stimulate the metabolism. The needles would be kept in a place for around thirty-forty minutes depending on how much support was needed for the patient. After the needles are removed, ear tacks with adhesive on them are often placed in the same spots on the ear to continue stimulation between treatments. The way it works is: when the patient feels an urge to eat, she/he applies mild pressure to the point or rubs it back and forth for about 20 seconds. This type

of acupressure stimulates the point, causes a mild endorphin release, relaxes the patient and helps them to regain their willpower or resolve about resisting the temptation to eat. The patient removes the tacks at home after three days and throws them away or takes them out sooner if there is any discomfort.

#### **The Treatment Plan**

The number of acupuncture treatments necessary depends on the patient's goals for losing weight and acupuncturist treatment strategy. A good weight loss includes nutritional counseling and exercise as well as a commitment to make permanent lifestyle changes. The acupuncturist can help with nutritional counseling and can discuss a diet regimen that the patient can live with and maintain for a long term. A diet that is high in fiber and low in fat, with moderate amounts of low-density carbohydrates and low-fat protein is usually the best choice to adopt. With this type of diet program, the patient can avoid the pit-falls of yo-yo dieting or the tendency to lose weight and then regain it. Other important tools that can aid in weight loss are, stress reduction techniques and a moderate exercise regimen. The acupuncturist can suggest various stress reduction methods that may include breathing exercises, Tai Chi, Yoga and meditation. And since the goal of a weight program is not only weight loss but also the maintenance of that loss, and exercise program that the patient likes is the best one to choose. The patient could try starting program that includes brisk walking three times a week for forty minutes. After a few weeks when stamina is increased, they could try walking five times a week.

#### **Herbal Medicine and Supplements**

Next a good individualized nutritional supplement program is important because everyone has a different metabolism and different needs for nutrients. It will include vitamins, minerals, herbs and antioxidants. These will support the diet program and balance the blood sugar to help give the body the strength, energy and defense it needs to maintain the healthy lifestyle that she/he has begun.

#### **Breathing and Abdominal Exercise**

While the patient is undergoing the behavior modification program and is successfully losing weight, it is a good idea to incorporate a set of deep breathing abdominal exercises. These exercises utilize the acupuncture meridians or energy lines on the body to stimulate relaxation and digestion. If we practice deep abdominal breathing while lying down for a few minutes in the morning before we arise, we will not only take in more oxygen but will stimulate the stomach, spleen, kidney, and reproductive energy lines that are all located on the center of the torso. Digestion will be improved and all those organs will function more effectively. We will also start the day with more energy and clarity. Another method of stimulating these same organs in the stomach region is the abdominal finger pressure massage that follows the direction of the large intestines. This massage may also be performed in bed in morning and evening and will gently stimulate all the points on the central torso and will not only encourage proper digestion but will foster homeostasis or the harmonious balance of the hormone and endocrine systems of the body.

#### **Pressure Points**

Last but not least, three pressure points on the body may be stimulated daily for two minutes each that will promote the general health as well as aid digestion, elimination and relaxation. These points are Large Intestines 4 (HEGU); Pericardium 6 (Neiguan); and Stomach 36 (Zusanli). The points should be pressed with strong continuous pressure for approximately two minutes each and may be said to comprise a self-healing treatment.

While no guarantee may be given for acupuncture treatments for wight loss, the self-motivated patient who will take to practice most of the things outlined here will most likely be pleased with the results that she/he finds within a reasonable amount of time.

#### **10 Simple Ways to Keep in Your Mind to Control Your Weight**

Many Americans will try to lose weight this year and several will fail. This failure frequently occurs because of the difficulties of changing ones lifestyle. Lifestyle changes can be a great boost to ones self-esteem and it can be a simple process as long as the change is incremental. Changing your diet should also be a simple process as long as the dieting process is not so strict that you will have difficulties following through. Unless one is severely obese, strict diet and implementing dramatic changes tend to have little lasting success. One should focus on the concept of being fit, instead of being thin. Being fit means eating right with moderation. For example, not eating excessive amounts of sweets or carbohydrates, exercising or engaging in physical activities on a regular basis and having a happy and

exuberant mental attitude. Over the years, we have been asked by thousands of patients how to properly lose weight. What we have realized is that each patient requires a different approach to weight loss. The following ten steps offer a simple approach to weight loss. Remember, your whole goal is not to look like the models on TV. Most of them are in the weight zone that is anorexic and downright unhealthy.

### (1) [Do not try to be perfect!](#)

Better weight begins in our mind. We need to strive to feel good as opposed to calculating inches. Feeling good means being able to have the vitality to accomplish things and perform activities without feeling over exhausted.

### (2) [Eat more vegetables!](#)

All right, for those vegetables haters out there. You already know that vegetables are very good for you. They contain fiber, are low-calorie and have enzymes that can help you digest that T-Bone steak from last night. What you may not know is that many vegetables actually contain ingredients that regulate hormone functions and have anti-aging and anti-cancer effects.

### (3) [Watch that bread and pasta!](#)

Most meals in this country have bread and pasta. These are made from wheat. The U.S. the number one producer of wheat and has helped to feed the world. However, most of us in this country eat too many wheat products. You know there are more

to grains than wheat. Try rice, barely, couscous or beans. While grains are very nutritious and an important part of our diet, cutting down to a small amount eating them moderately can be helpful. Eating more grains during the day and less at night can also be helpful in how we digest them.

#### (4) [Smart eating out!](#)

You know the standard dinner at a typical restaurant. It begins with an appetizer, then salad, and entrée, dessert, and coffee. We garble all these food down with wine or cocktails. It is amazing that we don't get heartburn more often. Order only what you are going to consume. Do not leave food on the table that you do not intend to eat. We tend to be food addicts and eat everything in sight. Learn to say no.

#### (5) [Eat on time on a regular basis and do not skip meals!](#)

If you eat on time and regularly, you won't be famished and therefore you will have less desire to overeat. Do not skip breakfast and lunch. If you do, this a sure recipe for a whale size dinner. Eat dinner between 6-8 pm and no later. Our energy declines rapidly at night. At this time our digestive system is not as strong and won't digest the foods as well.

#### (6) [No time for exercise? Think again!](#)

A formalized exercise program is ideal but not necessary. Instead of thinking exercise we should be thinking about physical activity? Some of us have high levels of physical

activity in our occupation in which counts toward exercise. The problem comes when we have a sedentary job and sit for long hours during the day. We need to utilize our break time, lunch time, before and after work to invigorate ourselves. This might be to intentionally park far away from work and walk to and from the office, or take the stairs, or bike to work. Try to engage in more physical work during the weekends such as gardening, walking, hiking, running, etc. Better yet, set a regular time a few times during the week to go to the gym, take a class or hire a trainer. Just make sure to mark them down in your organizer. An exercise buddy is also motivating.

### (7) Reduce or modify dairy product intake!

Some of the most nutritious foods are dairy products. In our younger years, dairy products are a good source of calcium used for our growth. As we grow older, we need to more conscious of how we consume dairy products. Most products are high in saturated fat, which is not very healthy for cardiovascular system when consumed in larger amounts. One has to choose the lower fat dairy products such as low-fat or non-fat milks, cheeses, and yogurt. Be very judicious with butter. It exists in many of our foods such as popcorn, restaurant entrees, fried and baked foods. Try to have more steamed foods instead of fried and baked foods.

### (8) Sugar! Sugar! Sugar!

When I picked up a granola bar at the health food store, the label says it does not contain sugar, but it is sweetened by fruit juice

only. When I took a bite I realized it was sweeter than the ones with sugar. Upon, further examination of the label, I was right. It is sweetened by concentrated fruit juice and has more calories than the sugar kind. Do not fool yourself into thinking that one kind of sugar is better than the other. We simply have to be more conscious of what sweets we eat and keep them to a minimal. Sugar is a simple carbohydrate and it is an essential part of our food group. More complex carbohydrates and it is an essential part of our group. More complex carbohydrates such as grain are healthier as opposed to simple carbohydrates such as sugar.

#### (9) Use the right oil!

In many parts of the world, lard (animal fats) and butter are the de facto standard oil for cooking. No wonder heart diseases are consistently the number one killers in the world. Fats are a good source for weight gain and plaque creation in our delicate plumbing system. Better oil for cooking are canola and olive oil. But regardless of what oil you decide to use in your cooking, always remember to use it moderately.

#### (10) Don't compare!

You are individual and your proportions should be fitting to your own size. Don't expect yourself to become someone you will never become. It is a sure thing to invite failure and put yourself in a victimized mode. In this case, you would have an ample excuse to eat more and abuse yourself more for a great setup for failure.