



# Acupuncture

Western medical acupuncture, while based on ancient Chinese acupuncture, uses current knowledge of anatomy, physiology, and pathology, and the principles of evidence based medicine. It acts mainly by inserting fine needles in predetermined points to stimulate the



nervous system. Western medical acupuncture is principally used by conventional healthcare practitioners, most commonly in primary care. It is mainly used to treat musculoskeletal pain and trigger point pain. It is also effective for postoperative pain and nausea.

Acupuncture can also be an effective treatment for pain, insomnia, stress, anxiety, traumatic brain injury (TBI), sleeplessness, headaches and post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Acupuncture is considered part of a holistic approach and members can actively participate in their treatments. It is conducted with needles that are metallic, solid, and hair thin.

Approximately 3.1 million American adults utilized acupuncture each year. People reported feeling energized and relaxed after treatment. Acupuncture can be used in addition to traditional medicine in many cases where patients requested additional treatment for pain management.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is responsible for the regulation of acupuncture. It requires practitioners to be licensed. Needles have to be manufactured and labeled according to specific standards. According to FDA regulations needles should be sterile, labeled for single usage and must be non toxic. Acupuncture is available at many Naval Medical Centers, hospitals, clinics and via the Department of Veterans Health Care System. This is an alternative treatment that sailors and marines can utilize with their traditional medicine.



## Resources

Department of Veterans Affairs

<http://www.warrelatedillness.va.gov/WARRELATEDILLNESS/dc/Clinical/acupuncture.asp>

Veteran Health Administration, Office of Patient Care Services, Technology Assessment Program

<http://www.va.gov/VATAP/docs/Acupuncture2007tagm.pdf>

Journal of Rehabilitation Research and Development

<http://www.rehab.research.va.gov/jour/08/45/4/liu.html>

Department of Veterans Affairs Health Services Research and Development

[http://www.hsrd.research.va.gov/research/abstracts.cfm?Project\\_ID=2141700199](http://www.hsrd.research.va.gov/research/abstracts.cfm?Project_ID=2141700199)

Naval Medical Center San Diego California

[http://www.navy.mil/search/display.asp?story\\_id=51179](http://www.navy.mil/search/display.asp?story_id=51179)[tp://www.hsrd.research.va.gov/research/abstracts.cfm?Project\\_ID=2141699560](http://www.hsrd.research.va.gov/research/abstracts.cfm?Project_ID=2141699560)

Military Sealift Command Hospital Ship USNS Comfort (T-AH-20)

[http://www.navy.mil/view\\_single.asp?id=70987](http://www.navy.mil/view_single.asp?id=70987)

National Center for Complimentary and Alternative Medicine

<http://nccam.nih.gov/health/acupuncture/introduction.htm>

National Center for Complimentary and Alternative Medicine (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder)

<http://nccam.nih.gov/research/results/spotlight/092107.htm>