

A DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO ACUPUNCTURE

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SAVE TO MY FAVOURITES



The once alternative treatment of acupuncture is on the rise amongst women, and if you've always been curious, but never tried it yourself, we're here to explain everything from the benefits to how it works. Offering a way to deal with the pressures of modern life, needles are inserted just under the skin to rebalance and redirect energy around the body, relieving stress and treating ailments including insomnia and anxiety. SheerLuxe contributor Camilla Clarkson caught up with one of London's top acupuncturists, Ross Barr, for a better understanding of what exactly lies behind this Eastern medicine...

Tell us more about the practice of acupuncture...

Acupuncture is the manipulation of chi, the motive force around the body, and the subsequent stimulation of organs. Stainless steel needles are inserted into acupuncture points and a current of energy is sent between these points. The best way to visualise what happens internally is to use an analogy of a stream; imagine a vortex of water being sent around a bend, flushing out any blockages. In the same way, acupuncture helps any chi that gets stuck around the body, enabling it to flow freely.

What are the most common symptoms acupuncture treats?

Acupuncture can be beneficial for a number of reasons: adrenal fatigue, fertility, anxiety, insomnia...simply when they don't feel like themselves. In Western medicine the onus is put on banishing symptoms whereas acupuncture focuses on the root of the problem. There are people who treat the procedure like an MOT - maintenance for modern life.

How many sessions does it usually take to feel the effects?

That very much depends on the person but, on average, you should opt for a short, intense burst, once a week for 1-6 weeks, then you can have the treatment monthly, each season or whenever you're feeling run down.

ON A SIMILAR NOTE



Do people tend to have acupuncture at certain times of the year?

Change of season certainly affects people in different ways, some often feel discombobulated and unprepared for the shift, and acupuncture can help with this. Without being too hocus pocus about it, humans aren't as tuned to seasonal change as we once were and so often it's about realigning our state to the season that we're in. Every season has something beautiful to offer, this is emphasised in Eastern medicine.

Any advice to help women cope with the pressures of modern life?

In the past five years there has been a massive health and wellness movement, so there's now a lot of pressure on women to lead an active, healthy lifestyle day-to-day: to go to that exercise class, to catch-up with friends, to maintain a balanced diet, all the while staying on top of a demanding job and a relationship.

It's amazing the number of things people do to be as healthy as possible, sometimes it can become counter intuitive and cause stress and anxiety. The key is to feel at peace with your body and give it a rest. Be healthy 80% of the time and, if you fall off the wagon, do it without any guilt.

Finally, how should you begin acupuncture?

Acupuncture should start with a consultation, in which the client tells the acupuncturist everything about themselves - nothing is too small or insignificant, small symptoms or details help the specialist to piece everything together. It's also important to understand what the client would most like to change about their health, so answer any questions openly and honestly.

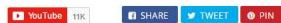
From the acupuncturist's point of view, they'll likely pay particular attention to pulses; they're like a window into what's going on internally. For instance, if someone feels stuck or stagnant, they have a very clear, level pulse. Looking at the colour and odour of a client's tongue, the sound of their voice, where they breathe from, and the emotions that they show (or don't show) is all useful feedback that helps with the diagnosis and treatment.

For more information visit RossBarr.com

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