

A photograph of a person lying on their back, with their feet raised and facing the camera. Several acupuncture needles are visible, inserted into the soles of the feet. The background is blurred, showing a clinical or treatment setting.

Acupuncture & Medical Qigong Care A Better Way

Dr. Shannon Freeman, D.Ac, DCEM – Indigenous Decent Practitioner

**UNDERSTANDING A 2,500 YEAR OLD THERAPEUTIC MODALITY
PRESENTED TO LUMMI INDIAN HEALTH CLINIC**

ABOUT ME & CLINIC



Solo practitioner: Dr. Shannon Freeman, Native (Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa – Ojibwe/Cree/Métis)

35+ years in healthcare; integrates Acupuncture + Medical Qigong (retired CNA and MT)

Doctorate in Acupuncture and a

Doctorate in Chinese Energetic Medicine

Clinic: 1118 Finnegan Way, Suite 103, Fairhaven – peaceful bay views

Culturally respectful, whole-person care that complements conventional medicine

OUR APPROACH

We emphasize integrative, non-pharmacological care for pain, stress, addiction support, trauma, and wellness — without adding more medications.



A close-up photograph of a person's hand, wearing a white lab coat, holding a thin acupuncture needle. The background is blurred, showing green foliage and a person's arm in a dark sleeve.

ACUPUNCTURE TREATMENT BASICS

95% painless

Extremely safe (FDA Class II medical tools)

All natural — no drugs or side effects

Most issues improve in 2–6 treatments

NIH & JAMA recognized for pain & nausea

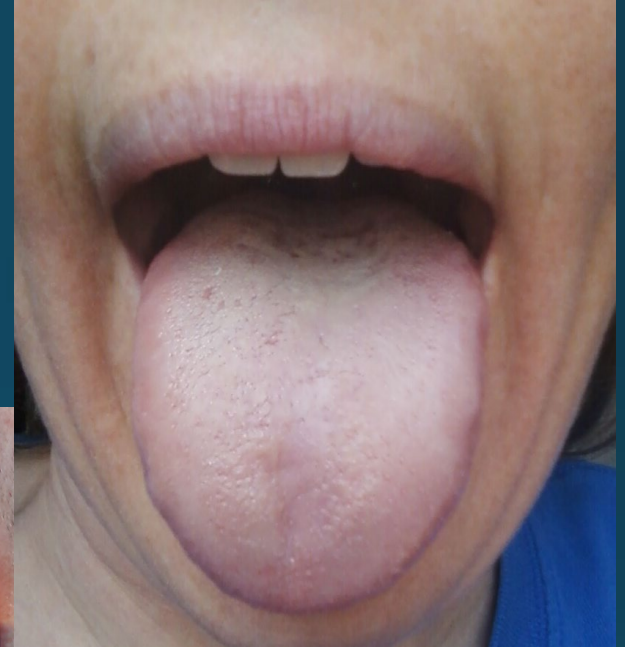
What a First Treatment is Like



- Comprehensive intake + tongue/pulse diagnosis
- Relaxing, personalized session (often start face-up)
- Needle retention 30 minutes + Medical Qigong as needed
- Reports sent to referring provider, upon request



OPEN UP AND SAY AAAHHH... TONGUE DIAGNOSIS IN TCM

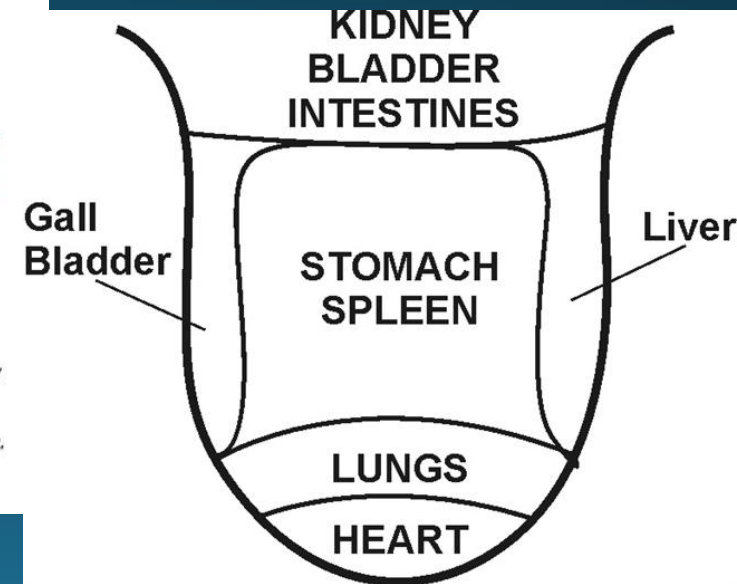
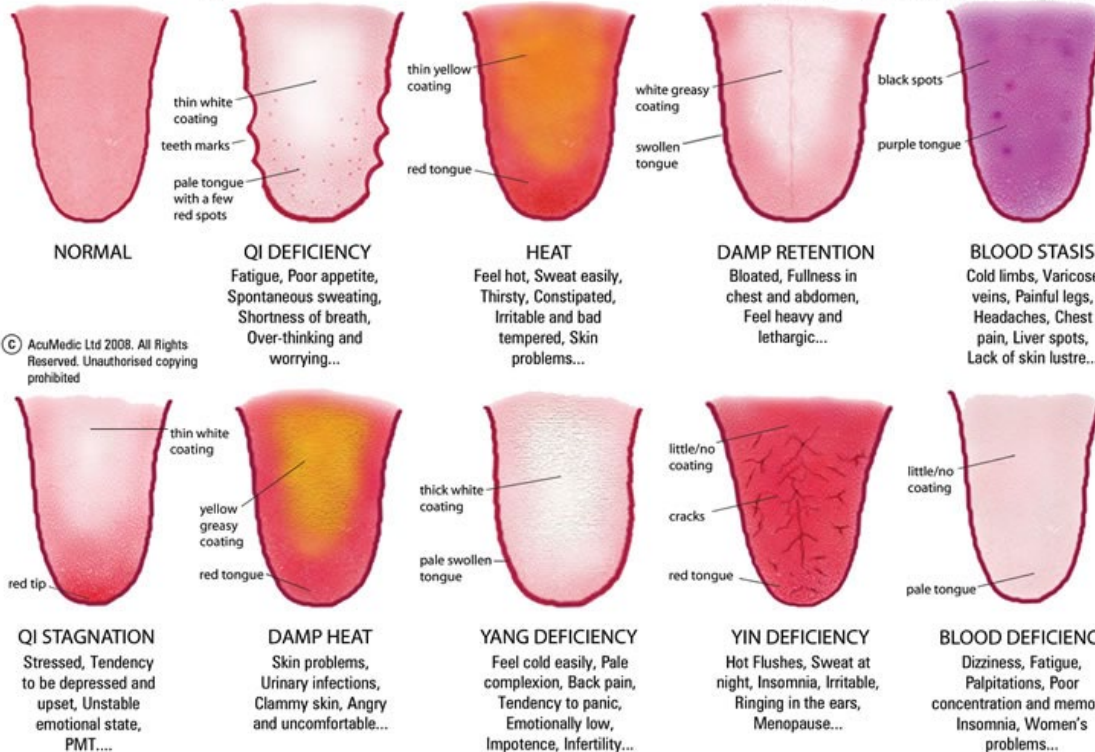


OPEN UP AND SAY AAAHHH...

TONGUE DIAGNOSIS IN TCM

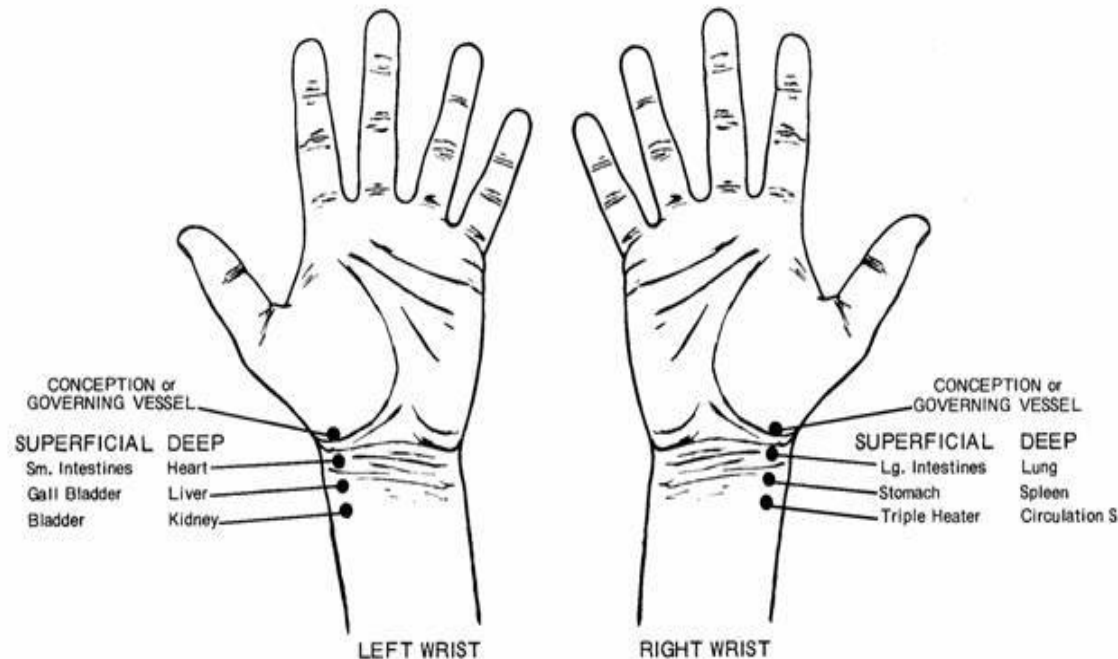
Which Tongue Are You?

Nine Common Syndromes & Possible Symptoms.
find out more at www.chinalifeweb.com



THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PULSE DIAGNOSIS...

The Normal Pulse: reflects good Heart Qi and Blood. It should be calm, smooth, soft, but not too soft, and not slow, rapid, rough or hard. It should be regular. Its quality should not change very often or easily. Deep level and rear position should be felt clearly, indicating that the Kidneys are healthy.



Safe & Effective

Since March 1996, the Food and Drug Administration has designated acupuncture needles with Class 2 status recognizing them as "medical tools".



What is Acupuncture:



"Acupuncture utilizes sterile, fine filament needles that upon insertion communicate with the CNS and tells the brain to speed up the natural healing process. This is done by either releasing certain neuroreceptors or blocking them. So an immediate benefit of acupuncture is pain relief because of the release of endorphins. Locally, acupuncture can break up adhesions, alleviate trigger points, and mechanically force contracted muscles to relax.

Because of these benefits acupuncture can treat a wide variety of issues ranging from pain and injury to addiction support, fertility, stress/trauma, and more.

Frequently treated symptoms & clinical applications relevant to Lummi Indian Health Center

- Headaches/Migraines (Extra-ordinary Meridians)
- Neck, shoulder, back, hip, knee pain (Orthopedic AC)
- Stress, anxiety, insomnia, trauma/PTSD (PVT)
- Addiction & withdrawal support (NADA)
- Women's health & hormonal balance (Menopause and PCOS)
- Digestive issues, chemo side effects (Nausea and IBS)



Studies suggest...

A German study found that acupuncture can create a significant reduction in both systolic and diastolic blood pressure.

At the end of six weeks and 22 acupuncture treatments, the systolic and diastolic blood pressure readings were reduced from their baseline in the patients who received acupuncture.

There was no noticeable changes with the patients who received sham acupuncture. - *Circulation Journal, June 2007.*

Acupuncture for paroxysmal and persistent atrial fibrillation: An effective non-pharmacological tool?

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3312232/>

Efficacy of Acupuncture in Preventing

Atrial Fibrillation

Recurrences After

Electrical Cardioversion-

Dr. Fredirico Lombardi, MD.



<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1540-8167.2010.01878.x/abstract>



Acupuncture Theories

- **Gate control theory**

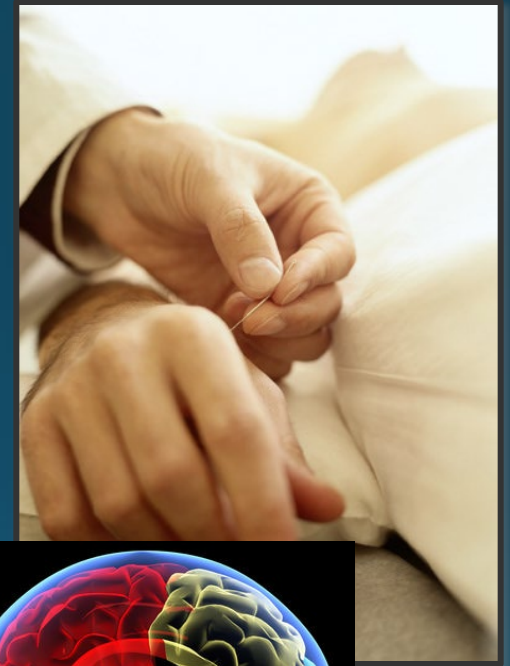
- Acupuncture activates non-nociceptive receptors that inhibit the transmission of nociceptive signals in the dorsal horn, “gating out” painful stimuli.
- → Mayo Clinic Proceedings – Gate Control Theory of Pain in Acupuncture

- **Neurotransmitter theory**

- Acupuncture affects higher brain areas, stimulating the secretion of beta-endorphins and enkephalins in the brain and spinal cord. The release of these specific neurotransmitters influence the immune system and the antinociceptive system.
- → Acupuncture and Endorphins (JS Han, 2004 – highly cited)

- **Blood chemistry theory**

- Acupuncture affects the blood concentrations of triglycerides, cholesterol, and phospholipids, suggesting that acupuncture can both raise and diminish peripheral blood components, thereby regulating the body toward homeostasis.
- Acupuncture's Neuroanatomic Basis



Acupuncture Theories

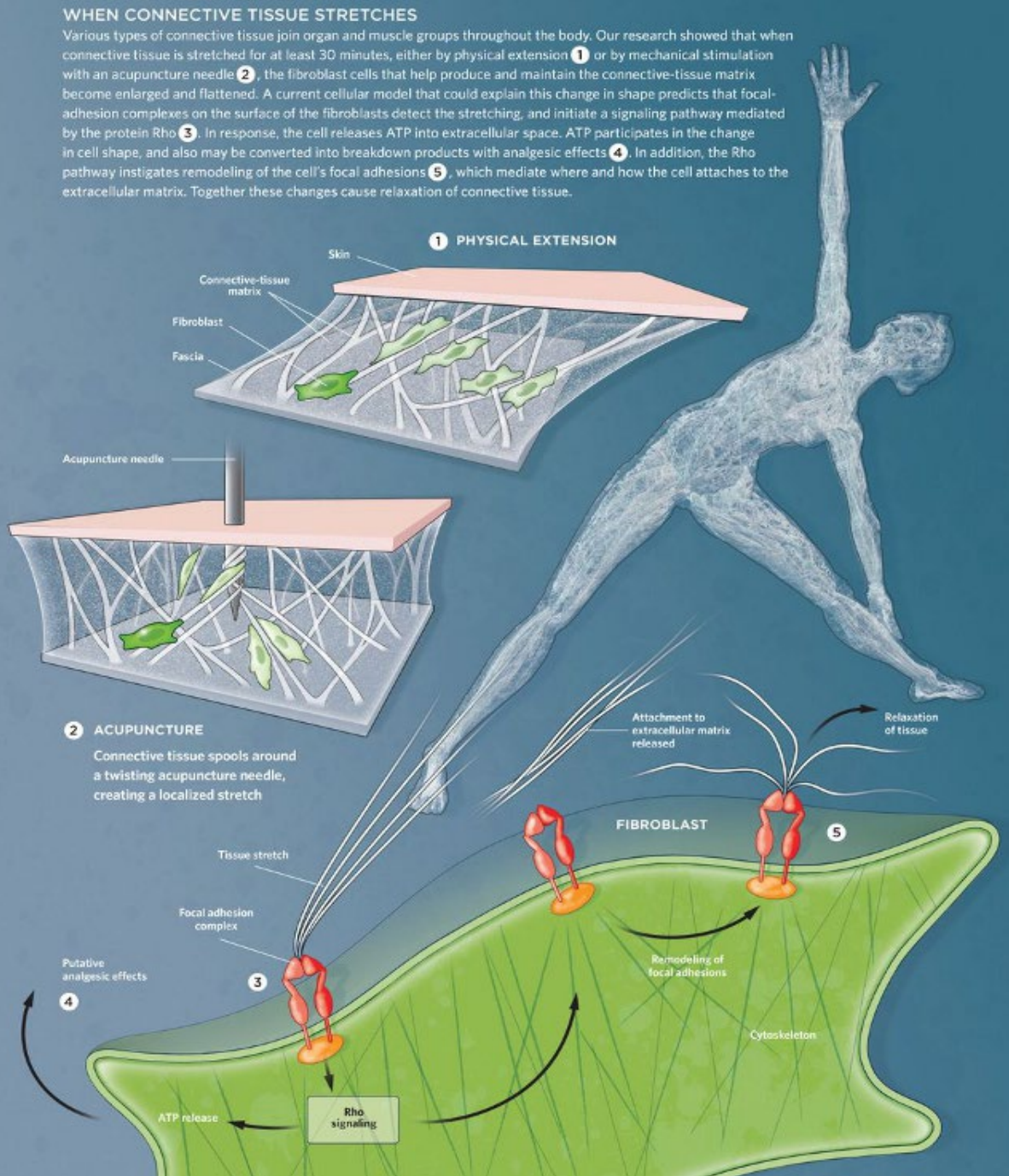
Connective Tissue Theory

(Helene Langevin, MD – University of Vermont)

When an acupuncture needle is gently rotated or manipulated, it grasps and winds the surrounding loose connective tissue (fascia). This creates a mechanical signal that:

- Stretches the connective tissue matrix
- Activates fibroblasts through mechanotransduction (turning mechanical force into cellular signals)
- Triggers local and distant effects on pain, inflammation, and tissue remodeling

Key Finding: Acupuncture points align closely with connective tissue planes — suggesting meridians follow the body's natural fascial network.



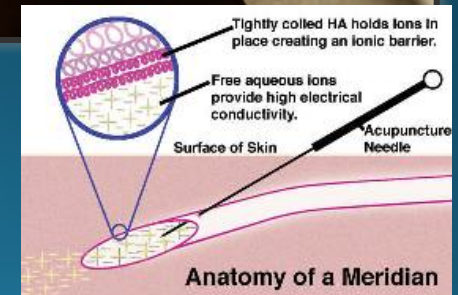
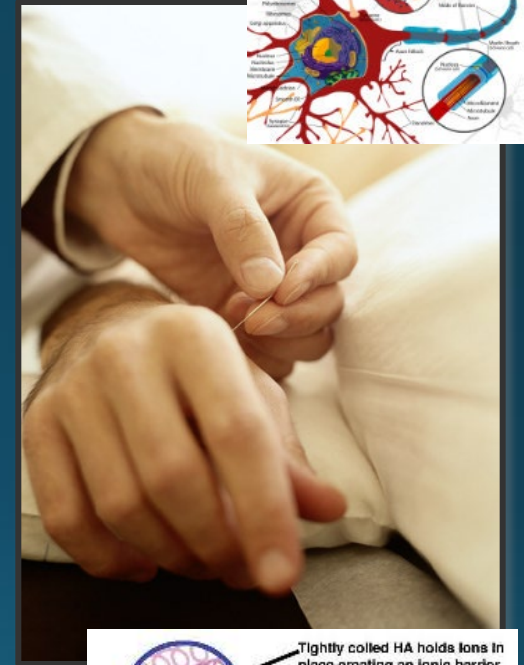
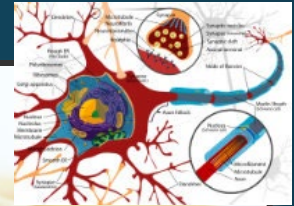
Acupuncture Theories

- **Autonomic nervous system theory**

- Acupuncture stimulates the release of norepinephrine, acetylcholine and several types of opioids, affecting changes in their turnover rate, normalizing the autonomic nervous system, and reducing pain.
- → Acupuncture Effect and Central Autonomic Regulation (PMC Review)
- → The Autonomic Nervous System in Acupuncture (2025 Review)

- **Vascular-interstitial theory**

- Acupuncture manipulates the electrical system of the body by creating or enhancing closed-circuit transport in tissues. This facilitates healing by allowing the transfer of material and electrical energy between normal and injured tissues.
- → Acupoint-originated Interstitial Fluid Network (PMC)



NADA Protocol for Addiction & Behavioral Health

National Acupuncture Detoxification Association (5 Ear Points)

5 Points: Sympathetic | Shen Men | Kidney | Liver | Lung

- ▶ Group or individual sessions (30–45 minutes)
- ▶ Reduces cravings, anxiety, and withdrawal symptoms
- ▶ Improves sleep quality and treatment retention
- ▶ Proven adjunct in Native communities, VA, prisons, and recovery programs
- ▶ The technique is variously referred to in existing literature as acupuncture detoxification, acu detox, NADA acupuncture, the three-point protocol, the five-point protocol, five-needle protocol, 5NP, the SMART protocol, and Auricular Acupuncture (abbreviated AA).

Research: NADA Evidence Summary



NADA 5-Point Ear Protocol

Hypothalamus / HPA Axis Regulation

Acupuncture modulates the Hypothalamus-Pituitary-Adrenal (HPA) Axis — the body's master stress & regulatory system.

- ▶ Helps balance cortisol, hormones, and the autonomic nervous system
- ▶ Supports trauma recovery, anxiety, insomnia, chronic stress, and adrenal fatigue
- ▶ **Key Points:** ST36, BL23, auricular concha, etc.

Research: Recent reviews show acupuncture regulates HPA dysfunction and improves HRV.



HPA Axis Feedback Loop



Medical Qigong

- What is Qigong?

Medical Qigong is a hands-on energetic healing practice where a trained practitioner uses focused intention, breath, visualization, and sometimes gentle movements or touch to diagnose and treat imbalances in the body's vital energy (Qi).

Watch this 2-minute summary of one of our graduating class presenting at the **May 2026 Harvard Medical School** conference on

"The Science of Tai Chi and Qi Gong"

The Science of Acupuncture – Documentary



Professor Kathy Sykes explores acupuncture's effects with demonstrations in China, UK/US brain imaging, and real patient stories. An excellent overview of how this 2,500-year-old practice works through modern science.

Highlights:

- ▶ Live acupuncture demonstrations in Chinese hospitals
- ▶ fMRI brain imaging showing real-time neural responses
- ▶ Patient stories bridging 2,500 years of practice with modern science

Collaboration with Lummi Indian Health Services

- ▶ Warm referrals for pain, addiction recovery, trauma, stress, and women's health
- ▶ Group NADA sessions possible (clinic or on-site)
- ▶ Culturally attuned care respecting Native traditions
- ▶ Medical Qigong (in-person or distance)



Building bridges through integrative, culturally respectful healing

Safe & Effective: NIH

Acupuncture performed by a licensed practitioner is one of the safest medical procedures available.

- **Extremely low risk** of serious adverse events → Serious events occur in approximately **0.04 – 0.08 per 10,000 treatments** (about 1 in 125,000+ treatments)
- Most common minor effects are mild and temporary: slight bleeding/bruising at the needle site, minor soreness, or brief dizziness
- **FDA regulated:** Acupuncture needles are Class II medical devices — sterile, single-use only
- When performed by properly trained, licensed acupuncturists, complications are rare and far lower than many common pharmaceutical or procedural alternatives

Recent large reviews confirm: Acupuncture has a consistently excellent safety profile, especially when used as part of integrative care.

Studies suggest...

NCCIH – Acupuncture: Effectiveness and Safety (NIH)

Acupuncture: A Review of the Safety and Adverse Events (Huang et al., 2024) – New Gold Standard Review

Evidence-Based Acupuncture – Safety Overview



A Better Way Acupuncture & Medical Qigong

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