

## What Do Acupuncturists Do

The acupuncturist is the specialist who conducts acupuncture. He or she may use needles or some other instruments depending on the type that will be used to create harmony and balance in the body.

Before this person does anything, you will first have to answer a few questions. You will then be given a physical exam to check your pulse and observe the shape, color and coating of your tongue. Other things that are checked will be the color and texture of the skin and your posture as this will give clues to your health.

Only then will you be told to lie down on a padded examining table and the needles are inserted to the skin. The difference with this kind of needle is that they twirl and jiggle each time they are pushed further into the body.

You may not feel them at all and if you do, it will only be a twitch that soon goes away. Once they are in place, this will be left there for 15 to 60 minutes that may make you feel very relaxed and sleepy that you may even doze off. Once the session is complete, the needles are removed and you will be on your way.

In some cases, acupuncture is more effective when the needles are first heated. This technique is known as "moxibustion." Here, the acupuncturist lights a small bunch of the dried herb called moxa or mugwort and holds it above the needles. The herb, which burns slowly and gives off a little smoke and a pleasant, incense-like smell, will never directly touch your body.

Another variation is electrical acupuncture. Here, electrical wires are hooked up to the needles and a weak current runs through it which may cause no or little sensation at all.

It is also possible that herbal medications will also be prescribed by the acupuncturist for your treatment to be successful.

When looking for an acupuncturist, make sure that person is licensed. Before he or she can obtain one, they have to complete 4 years of training at an approved college of oriental medicine. In the state of California, one governing body that gives the person the title is the California Acupuncture Committee.

If they get this from another organization, a copy of their license must always be clearly displayed in the practitioner's office. One example is the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine.

When choosing an acupuncturist, there are a few things you should ask aside from

their credentials. You should know what styles of acupuncture is used as there are some techniques that do not use needles to treat a patient.

Although there are no studies which prove that one technique is better than the other, some patients are more comfortable with one type over the other.

Another question you should ask and discuss further is the length of the treatment. Patients who are suffering from a chronic illness will have to be treated over a period of months before any improvements can be seen. This will help you plan your schedule since you need to go to the clinic 2 to 3 times weekly.

The acupuncturist just like a medical doctor is there to help you get better. If you don't see any progress with this person, perhaps you should seek the help of another specialist.