



Prairie Heart Institute  
at St. John's Hospital  
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# Acupuncture

*The ancient Chinese believed there is a universal life energy called Chi or Qi (pronounced chee) present in every living creature. This energy is said to circulate throughout the body along specific pathways called meridians. As long as this energy flows freely throughout the meridians, health is maintained, but once the flow of energy is blocked, the system is disrupted and pain and illness occur.*

*Acupuncture works to “re-program” and restore normal function by inserting fine needles to stimulate certain points on the meridians to free up the Chi energy.*

## Is acupuncture safe?

Yes. The Center for Living at the Prairie Heart Institute at St. John's Hospital uses only sterile, disposable needles.

## Does acupuncture hurt?

In most cases, acupuncture is painless. Acupuncture needles are very fine and flexible — about the diameter of a thick hair. Many people report a sense of relaxation and well-being during and after treatments.

## What happens during an acupuncture session?

In the first session you will complete a patient history and discuss your health concerns with the acupuncturist. He also may check your tongue and pulse to gain further insight into your health. This information will help him develop an individualized treatment plan. Treatments generally last approximately 40 minutes.

## What can acupuncture treat?

The World Health Organization recognizes acupuncture's ability to treat over 200 clinical disorders. They include:

- **Disorders of muscles, joints, bones and nervous system** such as arthritis, neuralgia, migraine headaches, insomnia, dizziness, sciatica and back, neck and shoulder pain.
- **Gastrointestinal disorders** such as food allergies, peptic ulcer, constipation, chronic diarrhea, indigestion, anorexia, gastritis and irritable bowel syndrome.
- **Urogenital disorders** such as irregular, heavy or painful menstruation, infertility and premenstrual syndrome (PMS).
- **Respiratory disorders** such as emphysema, sinusitis, asthma, allergies and bronchitis.
- **Circulatory disorders** such as hypertension, angina and arteriosclerosis.
- **Psychological disorders** such as depression and anxiety.
- **Addictions** to alcohol, nicotine and drugs.
- **Eye, ear, nose and throat disorders.**
- **Chronic pain disorders.**
- **Stress-related disorders** such as overeating, nervous tension and pain-related problems exacerbated by stress.

## Course of treatment

Many health conditions can be alleviated after one to four treatments. However, conditions that have been present for a number of years require slow, steady progress. These more challenging situations may require five to 10 treatments.



*Jim Sullivan, M.Ac, L.Ac, holds a master's degree in acupuncture from Northwest Institute of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NIAOM). He is a licensed and nationally certified acupuncturist. He also completed a certification program in Qi Gong from NIAOM, is a licensed massage therapist and has had extensive training in craniosacral techniques.*

*He currently practices acupuncture full time at the Center for Living at the Prairie Heart Institute at St. John's Hospital. He is president of the Illinois Acupuncture Society, is an adjunct instructor for Southern Illinois University School of Medicine and teaches craniosacral therapy for the Upledger Institute.*

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