

Traditional, versatile, high-quality acupuncture services - An Introduction to the acupuncture service of Tsao Foundation Hua Mei Acupuncture and TCM Centre

Acupuncture refers to a treatment method based on traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) theory, with the use of acupuncture needles, moxibustion, cupping and other methods to stimulate the meridians and acupoints on the human body, in order to achieve better health.

How acupuncture is done

A. Acupuncture with needles

Acupuncture with needles involves inserting fine needles into acupoints along the body's meridians and creating a certain stimulus to alleviate symptoms.

Acupuncture for chronic pain has achieved good results. Research has shown that acupuncture treatment on low back pain has significantly better effects than those given sham acupuncture group. Berman was able to show that, for 570 patients with knee arthritis, acupuncture significantly improved joint function of patients and reduce joint pain compared with sham acupuncture.

Moreover, acupuncture can also help with a variety of neurological conditions, such as stroke, facial paralysis, pseudobulbar palsy, peripheral neuritis, and insomnia.

B. Moxibustion

Moxibustion refers to the burning of Chinese mugwort (*Artemisia argyi*) leaves to stimulate the acupoints for the treatment and prevention of illnesses. In the *Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon*, it was said, "Where needles are ineffective, moxibustion is appropriate." The ancient Chinese believe that moxibustion can achieve effects not attainable through acupuncture needles. The warming effect of moxibustion stimulates receptors in the skin, which in turns activates the nervous system. The near-infrared radiation produced through moxibustion has short wavelength, high energy, and strong penetrating power that can penetrate the epidermis, connective tissues, blood vessels, nervous system, and is absorbed by the tissues to bring about its therapeutic effects.

Moxibustion treatment helps with back pain, knee pain, birth contraction pain, and other conditions like pediatric acute diarrhea, and ulcerative colitis. It has also been shown to modulate the immune system, alter blood circulation and has anti-aging and anti-cancer effects.

C. Cupping

Cupping uses a special cup/canister as a tool, and creating a vacuum within it, allows it to be adsorbed on the skin. This causes the local skin to be flushed with blood for the prevention and/or treatment of diseases.

It was found that cupping can modulate hormonal immune dysfunction in patients. For example, cupping along the Bladder Meridian improves the immune function of normal red blood cells. Studies have shown that cupping can increase pain threshold to bring about pain relief.

Using multiple acupuncture treatment modalities improves efficacy

Acupuncture is a non-drug therapy. To increase the efficacy of acupuncture, Hua Mei Acupuncture and TCM centre uses all three methods—needling, moxibustion, and cupping—in combination.

Our physicians put in extra time and effort to complement the usual needling with moxibustion. We offer moxibustion treatment to as many as 80% of our patients. The clinic uses a powerful exhaust system that expels the smoke generated from moxibustion. In order to ensure a clean and safe environment, disposable sterile single acupuncture needles are used for needling, and our cups (used in cupping therapy) are sterilised with alcohol after every use.

Hua Mei Acupuncture and TCM centre has persisted in the combined use of acupuncture, moxibustion, and cupping for the last 20 years, and we observed effective results for treatment of cervical spondylosis, frozen shoulder, tennis elbow, back pain, and knee arthritis, and is well received by our patients.

About the author

Gu Fa Long, is the Medical Director of Hua Mei Acupuncture and TCM Centre. He graduated from Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese Medicine (SHUTCM) in 1980. Since then, Mr Gu has held various positions, which include Associate Professor of SHUTCM, Deputy Head of Shanghai Institute of Clinical Acupuncture / Meridians Society, Assistant Secretary of Shanghai Institute of Acupuncture, Assistant Secretary of The World Federation of Acupuncture-Moxibustion Society. A registered TCM physician with the Singapore Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners Board, Mr Gu also specializes in the use of acupuncture for the treatment of chronic pain caused by orthopedic conditions and to aid rehabilitative efforts following a stroke.