



# **Fibromyalgia and Acupuncture**

People diagnosed with Fibromyalgia experience a wide range of symptoms, including fatigue, pain, stiffness, aches, muscle tenderness, along with sleep disorders, intestinal and bowel troubles. The diagnosis of Fibromyalgia can be confirmed when 11 out of 18 specific points on the body are tender to pressure.

According to the theories of Acupuncture and Chinese medicine, an imbalance to the flow of Qi and blood can create symptoms and signs of Fibromyalgia.

When Qi is abundant and freely circulating throughout the body, there is health and pain-free living. When Qi becomes “blocked”, or the supply is inadequate, pain, stiffness, and other symptoms related to Fibromyalgia can appear.

An Acupuncturist will take a complete health history in order to find out where Qi has become blocked, and why the amount of Qi within the body has changed. They will then develop a treatment plan tailored to address the meridian pathways that are out of balance. The goal will be to eliminate visible symptoms, while addressing the root cause(s) and underlying imbalances.

The body constantly strives to maintain a healthy balance of Qi traveling through the meridian pathways. When the flow of Qi has been disrupted or the supply of Qi has changed, the body becomes unbalanced and the meridians cannot properly nourish the body. This is when signs and symptoms appear.

Most cases of Fibromyalgia fit into the Chinese diagnosis of a Liver, Spleen, or Heart disharmony. This doesn't mean that these organs have a problem, it means that the functions of these meridians are out of balance.

According to Chinese Medicine, Liver is to control the smooth flow of blood, Qi, emotions, and to nourish the tendons. When the Liver meridian becomes blocked, the tendons and muscles will not be properly nourished, leading to stiffness and pain. Other symptoms are depression, anger, anxiety, and insomnia. A liver imbalance can occur from improper diet, stress, deep-unexpressed anger, drugs, and alcohol.

Spleen is to transfer the food that we ingest into Qi and blood. The health of the Spleen is affected by diet, over-concentration and worry. An unbalanced Spleen can result in fatigue, digestive troubles, cloudy mind and heaviness of the body.

When there is an insufficient amount of Qi and blood produced by the Spleen, the Heart organ will be affected. If the Spleen cannot generate enough blood to nourish the Heart, symptoms can include anxiety, palpitations, insomnia, and emotional unrest.

Acupuncture and Chinese medicine can provide a safe alternative in the treatment of Fibromyalgia. Along with acupuncture, natural herbal formulas, dietary recommendations, and calming exercises can help promote balance and health.