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Acupuncture/Acupressure

Acupuncture (from Lat. *acus*, "needle", and *pungere*, "prick") or in Standard Mandarin, zhe-n bia-n (a related word, zhe-n jiu, refers to acupuncture together with moxibustion) is a technique of inserting and manipulating fine filiform needles, or in the case of Acupressure, fingertip pressure into specific points on the body with the aim of relieving pain and for therapeutic purposes. According to acupuncture theory, these acupuncture points lie along meridians along which qi, a kind of vital energy, is said to flow. There is no generally-accepted anatomical or histological basis for these concepts, and modern acupuncturists tend to view them in functional rather than structural terms, (as a useful metaphor in guiding evaluation and care of patients). Acupuncture is thought to have originated in China and is most commonly associated with Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). Different types of acupuncture (Classical Chinese, Japanese acupuncture) are practiced and taught throughout the world.

Bowen Technique

The **Bowen Technique** is one version of a group of technical interpretations of the work of Australian osteopath Tom Bowen (1916–1982) known as Bowen Therapy, which is a holistic system of healing. The Bowen Technique was limited to Australia until 1986, when it was named, and introduced to other countries by Oswald Rentsch, who observed Bowen at work one morning a week for two years. The three other surviving students of Tom Bowen — Keith Davis, Kevin Ryan and Romney Smeeton — have methodologies that vary significantly from the way Oswald Rentsch teaches the technique. Dr Kevin Ryan teaches his interpretation of the Bowen Technique to osteopathic students at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. The Bowen Technique involves a gentle, rolling motion, with very light touches. The rolls are supposed to either tighten or loosen off muscles depending on the way the move is done. The practitioner will stimulate sets of points, often with two minute pauses, supposedly to allow the body to use the move and integrate it into the body's system. The Bowen Technique is not a form of massage, though it does claim to release areas of built-up stress in the muscles, and clients describe experiences of profound relaxation after a session, often falling asleep after the first few moves.

Chiropractic

Chiropractic (from Greek chiro- χειρο- "hand-" + praktikós "concerned with action") is a complementary and alternative medicine health care profession that focuses on diagnosis, treatment and prevention of mechanical disorders of the musculoskeletal system and the effects of these disorders on the functions of the nervous system and general health. It emphasizes manual therapy including spinal adjustment and other joint and soft-tissue manipulation. Traditionally, it is based on the premise that a vertebral subluxation or spinal joint dysfunction can interfere with the nervous system and result in many different conditions of diminished health. Today, this alternative form of therapy examines the relationship between structure and function and its impact on neurological mechanisms in both health and disease. Chiropractors usually obtain one of the following equivalent first professional degrees in chiropractic medicine: D.C., D.C.M., B.Chiro or M.Chiro.



Craniosacral Therapy

Craniosacral therapy (also called CST, cranial osteopathy, also spelled CranioSacral bodywork or therapy) is a method of Complementary and alternative medicine used by physical therapists, massage therapists, naturopaths, chiropractors and osteopaths. A craniosacral therapy session involves the therapist placing their hands on the patient, which allows them to tune into the craniosacral system. By gently working with the spine, the skull and its cranial sutures, diaphragms, and fascia, the restrictions of nerve passages are eased, the movement of CSF through the spinal cord can be optimized, and misaligned bones are restored to their proper position.

Joint mobilization

Joint mobilization is a type of passive movement of a skeletal joint. It is usually aimed at a 'target' synovial joint with the aim of achieving a therapeutic effect. When applied to the spine, it is known as spinal mobilization. Mobilization is a manual therapy intervention and is classified by five 'grades' of motion, each of which describes the range of motion of the target joint during the procedure.

Roman numerals are generally used in labeling the grades of motion (i.e. Grades I to V). Grade V is the same as manipulation. The different grades of mobilization are believed to produce selective activation of different mechanoreceptors in the joint.

- Grade I - Activates Type I mechanoreceptors with a low threshold and which respond to very small increments of tension.
Activates cutaneous mechanoreceptors.
Oscillatory motion will selectively activate the dynamic, rapidly adapting receptors, ie. Meissner's and Pacinian Corpuscles . The former respond to the rate of skin indentation and the latter respond to the acceleration and retraction of that indentation.
- Grade II - Similar effect as Grade I.
By virtue of the large amplitude movement it will affect Type II mechanoreceptors to a greater extent.
- Grade III - Similar to Grade II.
Selectively activates more of the muscle and joint mechanoreceptors as it goes into resistance, and less of the cutaneous ones as the slack of the subcutaneous tissues is taken up.
- Grade IV - Similar to Grade III.
With its more sustained movement at the end of range will activate the static, slow adapting, Type I mechanoreceptors, whose resting discharge rises in proportion to the degree of change in joint capsule tension.
- Grade V - This is the same as joint manipulation. Use of the term 'Grade V' is only valid if the joint is positioned near to its end range of motion during joint manipulation. Evans and Breen recently contested this assumption, in fact arguing that an individual synovial joint should be positioned near to its resting, neutral position.



Lomilomi Massage

Lomilomi, (Hawaiian: masseur, masseuse) is the word used today to describe Hawaiian massage, traditionally called lomi (Hawaiian: To rub, press, squeeze, massage; to work in and out, as the claws of a contented cat).

Lomilomi practitioners use the palms, forearm, fingers, knuckles, elbows, knees, feet, even sticks and stones. Lomilomi practices varied by family, ahupua'a (region) and island.

Traditionally, lomilomi was practiced in four contexts:

1. As a healing practice of native healers -- kahuna lā'au lapa'au (healers) and kahuna hāhā (diagnosticians)
2. As a luxury and an aid to digestion, especially by the ruling chiefs (ali'i)
3. As restorative massage within the family
4. By 'ōlohe lua (masters of the Hawaiian martial arts)

Manual Therapy

Manual Therapy encompasses the treatment of health ailments of various etiologies through 'hands-on', physical intervention.

Physical treatments includes massage, soft tissue mobilization, various connective tissue techniques, myofascial release, craniosacral techniques, mobilization of joints, joint manipulation, mobilization of neural tissue, visceral mobilization, and strain and counterstrain. A consensus study of US chiropractors defined manual therapy as "Procedures by which the hands directly contact the body to treat the articulations and/or soft tissues."

Massage

Massage is the treatment and practice of manipulation of the soft body tissues with physical, functional, i.e. mechanical, medical/therapeutic, and in some cases psychological purposes and goals. The word comes from the French massage "friction of kneading," possibly from Arabic massa "to touch, feel, handle" or from Latin massa "mass, dough". (In distinction the ancient Greek word for massage itself was anatrispsis, and the Latin was frictio.)

Massage involves acting on and manipulating the body with pressure (structured, unstructured, stationary, and/or moving), tension, motion, or vibration done manually or with mechanical aids. Target tissues may include muscles, tendons, ligaments, skin, joints, or other connective tissue, as well as lymphatic vessels, and/or organs of the gastrointestinal system. Massage can be applied with the hands, fingers, elbows, forearm, and feet. There are over eighty different massage modalities.



Myofascial Release

Myofascial Release is a very effective hands-on technique that provides sustained pressure into myofascial restrictions to eliminate pain and restore motion. The theory of Myofascial Release requires an understanding of the fascial system (or connective tissue).

The fascia is a specialized system of the body that has an appearance similar to a spider's web or a sweater. Fascia is very densely woven, covering and interpenetrating every muscle, bone, nerve, artery and vein as well as all of our internal organs including the heart, lungs, brain and spinal cord. Trauma, such as a fall, whiplash, surgery or just habitual poor posture over time and repetitive stress injuries has a cumulative effect. The changes they cause in the fascial system influence comfort and the functioning of our body. The fascia can exert excessive pressure producing pain or restriction of motion.

Myofascial Trigger Points

Trigger points are described as hyperirritable spots in skeletal muscle that are associated with palpable nodules in taut bands of muscle fibers. The palpable nodules are said to be small contraction knots and a common cause of pain. Compression of a trigger point may elicit local tenderness, referred pain, or local twitch response.

The trigger point model states that most unexplained pain radiates from these points of local tenderness, suggesting that therapy should be addressed to the relevant trigger points. The term "trigger point" was coined in 1942 by Dr. Janet Travell to describe a clinical finding with the following characteristics:

Pain related to a discrete, irritable point in skeletal muscle or fascia, not caused by acute local trauma, inflammation, degeneration, neoplasm or infection.

The painful point can be felt as a tumor or band in the muscle, and a twitch response can be elicited on stimulation of the trigger point.

Palpation of the trigger point reproduces the patient's complaint of pain, and the pain radiates in a distribution typical of the specific muscle harboring the trigger point.

The pain cannot be explained by findings on neurological examination.

Neuromuscular Therapy

Neuromuscular therapy (NMT) is a form of massage. It is distinguished from other types of massage in that a quasi-static pressure is applied to the skin with the aim of stimulating specific areas of skeletal muscle. Often these areas of muscle are myofascial trigger points.

The application of NMT is dependent on several key factors:

- The location of myofascial trigger points
- Force has to be applied perpendicular to the skin surface if muscle is to be stimulated.

During the last several decades, neuromuscular therapy (NMT) has emerged as a significant methodology for assessing, treating and preventing soft tissue injuries and chronic pain. NMT, a series of manual treatment protocols based on the practitioner's skill, anatomy knowledge and precise palpatory application, has found its home, not only in the treatment rooms of massage therapy, but also in occupational and physical therapy, nursing, chiropractic, osteopathic and physical medicine clinics worldwide, as well as in many forward-looking Primary Care practices.



Physiotherapy

Physiotherapy (or physical therapy) is a healthcare profession concerned with prevention, treatment and management of movement disorders arising from conditions and diseases. Physiotherapy is performed by either a physiotherapist (PT) or an assistant (PTA) acting under their direction. However, various other health professionals (e.g., chiropractors, Doctors of Osteopathy) use some physical therapeutic methods. A program of physical therapy will typically involve caregivers.

PTs utilize an individual's history and physical examination in diagnosis and treatment, and if necessary, will incorporate the results of laboratory and imaging studies. Electrodiagnostic testing (e.g. electromyograms and nerve conduction velocity testing) may also be of assistance. PTs practice in many settings, such as outpatient clinics or offices, inpatient rehabilitation facilities, extended care facilities, homes, education or research centers, schools, hospices, industrial workplaces or other occupational environments, fitness centers and sports training facilities.

Shiatsu

Shiatsu (Japanese from shi, meaning finger, and atsu, meaning pressure) is a traditional Japanese hands-on therapy based on anatomical and physiological theory and is regulated as a licensed medical therapy with the Ministry of Health and Welfare in Japan. Shiatsu is an evolving form. Various styles (called Derivative Shiatsu) incorporate aspects of Japanese massage traditions, Chinese Medicine practice, and "Western" anatomy and physiology. The characteristic of shiatsu is to practice using only the fingers, palms and especially the thumbs, but the essence of shiatsu is "Diagnosis and Therapy combined."

"Diagnosis and Therapy combined" is the ability of the practitioner to use his sensory organs (palms, fingers, and thumbs) to detect irregularities, such as stiffness of the surface of the body, and to promptly correct or heal these problems. To acquire this skill takes considerable experience. The defining difference between shiatsu therapy and modern and Kampo medicine (also known as Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), such as acupuncture and moxibustion) is this "Diagnosis and Therapy combined"; the fact that shiatsu does not always require previous diagnosis before commencing treatment.

Sportsmassage

Sportsmassage – a kind of massage therapy that focuses on muscle systems relevant to a particular sport. It involves different massage approaches while an athlete is in training, during sports activity and after a sport event. Sportsmassage provides practical techniques for the treatment of and the prevention of many injuries and discomforts connected with sports of all kinds. It is useful for less stressful and at the same time more powerful physical activity. The many specific manipulations were developed and popularized by Jack Meagher.



Stone Massage

A **stone massage** uses stones, either heated or cold, to massage the body. The hardness of the stones allows the therapist to address specific problem areas with more detailed work or deeper pressure. Basalt stones of various sizes, shapes and weights are used heated in water and usually stones made of marble for cold work.

The stones are used in two ways during the massage. One is to impart heat or cold onto the body by laying stones under the client with a layer of fabric between the client and stone (a sheet or towel) and/or on top of the client, again upon a towel. Stone layout typically will be along both sides of the spine, or along the chakra centers on top and baseball sized stones would be placed in the hands. While these layout stones are delivering concentrated centers of heat, the therapist is simultaneously massaging the client with oiled, stones held in the palm of the hand with firm strokes along the muscles of the legs, arms, and torso areas.

An authentic hot stone massage is not simply the "gliding" of heated stones lightly upon the surface of the skin, but rather the stones are used as tools to deliver effective tissue and muscle massage at a pressure level comfortable to the client. The client can request light, medium or deep pressure, which is the beauty of the hot stone massage technique. It can be customized in an instant to the request of the client. The hardness of the stones makes for a fantastic deep tissue massage and is easy on the joints of the therapist's hands.

Structural Integration or Rolfing

Structural Integration or Rolfing is a system of soft tissue manipulation, with the objective of realigning the body structurally and harmonizing its fundamental movement patterns in relation to gravity. The system was founded by Ida Pauline Rolf. Practitioners of Rolfing believe it to enhance vitality and well-being, and after sessions, many clients stand up straighter, gain in height, and that soft-tissue bodily asymmetries tend to disappear. Rolfing is in some ways similar to deep tissue massage (see especially Myofascial Release), however, Rolfing's attention to the balance of the body in gravity sets the practice apart.

Rolf developed a method in the early to mid 1950s with the goal of organizing the human structure in relation to gravity. This method was originally called Postural Release, and later, Structural Integration of the Human Body. Early consumers of Structural Integration coined the term "Rolfing". In 1971, Rolf founded The Rolf Institute of Structural Integration.

Swedish Massage

Swedish Massage uses five styles of long, flowing strokes to massage. The five basic strokes are effleurage (light touch), petrissage (kneading), tapotement (rhythmic tapping), compression, and vibration. Swedish massage has shown to be helpful in reducing pain, joint stiffness, and improving function in patients with osteoarthritis of the knee over a period of eight weeks. The development of Swedish massage is credited to Per Henrik Ling though the Dutch practitioner Johan Georg Mezger adopted the French names to denote the basic strokes.



Thai Massage

Thai Massage is a type of massage in Thai style that involves stretching and deep massage. It is known in Thailand as "nuat phaen boran", literally, the ancient-manner massage.

There are as many as 7 to 10 regional variations of Thai massage. The receiver is put into yoga-like positions during the course of the massage. In the northern style there are a lot of stretching movements whereas the southern style emphasis is given to acupressure. It was believed that the massage art was brought over to Thailand by Jivaka Kumar Baccha, known in Thailand as Dr Shivago, a contemporary of Buddha some 2500 years ago.

A full course of Thai massage typically lasts two hours or more, and includes pulling fingers, toes, ears etc., cracking the knuckles, walking on the recipient's back, arching the recipient's back in a rolling action etc. There is a standard procedure and rhythm to the massage.

Sometimes in a large group massage, the practitioners do the procedures in unison.

Trager Approach

The Trager Approach is a mind-body approach to movement education. It is a system of gentle, rhythmic movement and touch aimed at facilitating deep relaxation, increased physical mobility, and promoting the body's optimal performance. There are two aspects of the approach - one in which the client passively receives the movement work on a padded table from a Trager practitioner; and in the other aspect, in which the client is taught to actively explore comfortable, free movement for themselves, is called Mentastics.

The Trager Approach was the creation of a single individual, Milton Trager, M.D. He first encountered its principles intuitively during physical exercise, at the age of 18. He then spent the next 50 years, first as a lay practitioner and later as a medical professional, expanding and refining his approach. Dr. Trager died in 1997. His work is carried on by Trager International and the instructors and certified practitioners of the Trager Approach.

Tui na

Tui na, (pronounced tuī ná), is a form of Chinese manipulative therapy often used in conjunction with acupuncture, moxibustion, fire cupping, Chinese herbalism, tai chi and qigong.

Tui na is a hands-on-body treatment using acupressure that is a modality of Chinese medicine whose purpose is to bring the body into balance. The principles being balanced are the eight principles of Traditional Chinese Medicine. The practitioner may brush, knead, roll/press and rub the areas between each of the joints (known as the eight gates) to open the body's defensive (wei) chi and get the energy moving in both the meridians and the muscles. The practitioner can then use range of motion, traction, massage, with the stimulation of acupressure points and to treat both acute and chronic musculoskeletal conditions, as well as many non-musculoskeletal conditions. Tui na is an integral part of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and is taught in TCM schools as part of formal training in Oriental medicine. Many East Asian martial arts schools also teach tui na to their advanced students for the treatment and management of injury and pain due to training. As with many other traditional Chinese medical practices, there are several different schools with greater or lesser differences in their approach to the discipline. It is related also to Chinese massage or anma.



Reflexology

Reflexology, or zone therapy, is the practice of massaging, squeezing, or pushing on parts of the feet, or sometimes the hands and ears, with the goal of encouraging a beneficial effect on other parts of the body, or to improve general health. Reflexology works by applying pressure to areas on the foot that correspond to areas of the body, and that by manipulating these one can improve health through one's qi.

Watsu

Watsu, a portmanteau of water and shiatsu, is a form of body massage performed while lying in warm water (around 35 °C or 95 °F). The receiver of Watsu treatment is continuously supported by the therapist while he or she rocks and gently stretches the body. Because it is performed in the water, the body is free to be manipulated and stretched in ways impossible while on the land.

Watsu was created by therapist Harold Dull in the early 1980s, then director of the Harbin School of Shiatsu and Massage in northern California. The technique slowly evolved as he began to incorporate aspects of Zen shiatsu into his therapy.