

Acu News

"A smile will gain you ten more years of life"- Chinese Proverb

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Acupuncture and Addiction

Addiction affects millions of Americans each year. Whether it's substance abuse from alcohol, nicotine or other drugs, addiction is a disease that takes treatment and commitment to overcome. Many times, rehabilitation doesn't work the first time, but takes many tries to really kick a habit for good. Acupuncture has been proven to be an effective alternative option that can help treat addiction.

A study done by researchers at Yale University found that around 55 percent of cocaine addicts seeking rehab who were treated with auricular acupuncture were tested clean during their last week of treatment compared to only 23.5 percent that did not. Auricular acupuncture involves the placement of five needles in the outer part of each ear, left in place for about 30 minutes. These points on the body specifically are focused on to treat addiction. These points result in a release of endorphins, the body's natural painkiller. When this happens, cravings can decrease.

According to the Huffington Post, more than 2,000 drug and alcohol treatment programs in the U.S. have used ear acupuncture as part of their treatment plans. Ear acupuncture, known as micro-



acupuncture, has been proven effective in treating and helping curb addiction. Lincoln Hospital in New York delivered 100 acupuncture treatments a day for over 35 years as a part of their substance disorder program, finding patient's anxiety and agitation were reduced, as well as reaching patients who were reluctant to attend treatment programs.

The American Cancer Society also acknowledges acupuncture as a method for quitting smoking. Acupuncture treatment can help reduce symptoms of withdrawal such as cravings, irritability, jitters and anxiety. A study from the University of Oslo, Norway, found that acupuncture reduced the desire to smoke as well as reduced the craving for the flavor of cigarettes for up to five years after treatment.

Acupuncture works by addressing the body as a whole and getting to the root of the problem. Each acupuncture point is based on the meridian system, the body's natural energy system in which Qi flows through. When there is a blockage in this system, the body cannot function properly. Acupuncture points work to release these blockages and return the body back to balance and health.

6 Ways to Help Alleviate Addiction

1 Meditation

Mindfulness is an important practice for overcoming addiction. Taking the time to become aware of our body and mind and self-reflect is important in the process of recovery. Meditation, whether or not it's just five minutes a day of deep breathing in a quiet place, can help keep the mind at ease and decrease negative thoughts that could trigger relapse. Meditation is an easy way to regulate mood and lower stress.

2 Yoga

Yoga incorporates poses with deep breathing and meditation. Not only is this practice good for the body but the mind as well. Yoga promotes well being through poses that are intended to decrease stress and anxiety. Yoga of Recovery offers retreats and classes integrated into a 12-step recovery program. Retreats are done all over the world.

3 Acupuncture

Acupuncture treatment has been proven to help addiction. Acupuncture can help reduce stress, anxiety and depression and increase the release of endorphins, which can help fight addiction. Treatment has been shown helpful for alcohol, opium, heroin, cocaine and tobacco dependency.

4 Gardening Therapy

Gardening therapy can be used for many reasons to promote mental well being. Gardening can prove to be a relaxing activity that gives a sense of purpose. Research has shown that gardening can lower irritation, improve self-esteem, lower anxiety and depression and improve concentration.

5 Exercise

Exercise is a must when it comes to recovering from an addiction. Not only is physical activity great for the body but for mental health as well. Exercise releases endorphins to fight cravings as well as lowers anxiety and depression. Adding in just 20 minutes of some sort of activity whether it is running, swimming or walking can help boost your mood and help you on the path to recovery.

6 Animal therapy

Having a pet has been proven beneficial in many ways for mental health. Studies suggest that those with an animal companion have lower stress, anxiety, depression and lower blood pressure. Animal therapy such as riding horses has also been proven effective and helps recovering addicts focus on caring for someone else.



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