



Peripheral Neuropathy

And Chinese Medicine

Background

- Graduated University of Texas at Austin
Pre-Med(Biology and Chemistry)
- Attended AOMA for Chinese Medical
School for 4yrs.
- 10 yrs experience
- Expertise in thyroid, hormones, digestive,
allergies, pain, neurological
- Always looking for the source of issues

What is Peripheral Neuropathy?

- Peripheral neuropathy describes damage to the peripheral nervous system, which transmits information from the brain and spinal cord to every other part of the body.
- In most cases, peripheral neuropathy is secondary to conditions including diabetes, lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, scleroderma, alcoholism, nutritional deficiencies, AIDS, or poisoning from heavy metals, chemotherapy, or various drugs.

- Other causes include compression or entrapment (carpal tunnel syndrome), direct physical injury to a nerve (trauma), penetrated injuries, fractures or dislocated bones, pressure involving superficial nerves (ulna or radial) which can result from prolonged use of crutches or staying in same position, tumor, intraneural hemorrhage, exposure to cold, radiation or atherosclerosis.
- It is a syndrome which includes symptoms of numbness, tingling, pricking sensations, sensitivity to touch, burning pain, and muscle weakness and atrophy of the arms and legs. The feet and legs are likely to be affected before the hands and arms.

○ **Symptoms of peripheral neuropathy may include:**

- numbness or insensitivity to pain or temperature
- a tingling, burning, or prickling sensation
- sharp, burning pain or cramps
- extreme sensitivity to touch, even a light touch
- loss of balance and coordination
- muscle weakness
- muscle wasting
- paralysis
- *These symptoms are often worse at night. Many people have signs of neuropathy upon examination but have no symptoms at all.*

How can acupuncture treat peripheral neuropathy?

- Traditional Chinese medicine teaches that Peripheral neuropathy is due to dampness moving to the limbs, where it obstructs the flow of Qi (energy) and Blood within them.
- The treatment is twofold, to treat the underlying factor that is causing this dampness to accumulate and to directly facilitate the circulation of Qi and Blood in the affected area.
- By improving the circulation, the nerve tissues of the affected area can be nourished to repair the nerve functions and reduce pain.

- In addition to acupuncture, other methods such as transcutaneous electronic nerve stimulation (TENS), which uses small amounts of electricity to block pain signals, cutaneous acupuncture, herbal and physical therapy may be combined to achieve faster results.
- Applied Kinesiology(AK) or muscle testing can also be used to get more information about the body and its disbalances
- The AK can also be used to find the best herb or supplement(and the correct dosage) for the body

What is Cutaneous Acupuncture?

- Cutaneous Acupuncture is the use of acupuncture needles to stimulate an area superficially by tapping to promote the smooth flow of Qi and Blood.
- The Plum blossom needle and the Seven-Star needle are special tools that are composed of a small bunch of needles attached to a handle like a hammer or broom. They are often used in the treatment of peripheral neuropathy. The affected area would be lightly tapped starting at the toes or fingers and then up the legs and arms.
- Plastic, disposable plum blossom needles or seven-star needles are available for treatment at home.

What Points Are Used?

- In treating peripheral neuropathy, acupuncture points on the affected area are used (treating the branch) as well as points on various parts of the body to treat the person according to their particular pattern (treating the root).
- Each patient is custom-treated according to his or her specific and unique diagnosis. There are many acupuncture points on the hands and feet. Often the points will be chosen by which are the most tender to obtain the best results.

What will an Acupuncture Treatment feel like?

- There seems to be little sensitivity to the insertion of acupuncture needles. They are so thin that several acupuncture needles can go into the middle of a hypodermic needle. Occasionally, there is a brief moment of discomfort as the needle penetrates the skin, but once the needles are in place, most people relax and even fall asleep for the duration of the treatment.
- The length, number and frequency of treatments will vary. Typical treatments last from five to 30 minutes, with the patient being treated one or two times a week. Some symptoms are relieved after the first treatment, while more severe or chronic ailments often require multiple treatments.

What Lifestyle and Dietary Changes Should I Make?

- Adopting healthy habits - such as maintaining optimal weight, avoiding exposure to toxins, following a physician-supervised exercise program, eating a balanced diet, correcting vitamin deficiencies, and limiting or avoiding alcohol consumption - can reduce the physical and emotional effects of peripheral neuropathy.
- Consider relaxation techniques such as yoga, meditation, self-hypnosis or biofeedback. These can help you learn to control the external factors that trigger pain.

What else can help?

- The Qi machine
- Can increase up to 25% more oxygen to the lower limbs using for 15min 1 to 2x/day

