

# Acupuncture for Multiple Sclerosis Pain

## Introduction

- Until 20 years ago pain was not recognised as a common symptom of MS
- Up to 68% of people with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) in the UK suffer with pain (MS Trust 2011) Central pain and neuropathic pain are commonplace in MS (Kaliv, O'Connor 2005)
- Neuropathic Pain
- Urch and Dickinson (2008) described Neuropathic pain as: *'Pain that has no protective function and is a result of nerve lesion damage or dysfunction of the nervous system'*
- Conventional management for neuropathic pain involves the combined use of a range of pharmacological approaches eg. Amitriptyline, Gabapentin, Pregabalin, Opioid's, NSAIDs and topical treatments such as Capsaicin (chilli pepper) and Lignocaine.
- Non drug approaches can also be effective - Acupuncture, TENS and aromatherapy/massage (Sykes 1997)
- Psychological treatments can benefit some



## Acupuncture

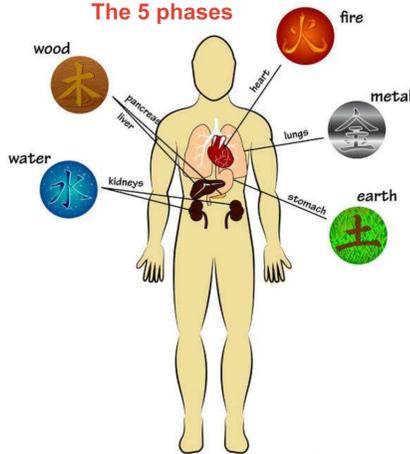
- Techniques resembling acupuncture have been used for over 5000 years
- Because of increasing public interest in the subject over the last forty years, considerable scientific research has been carried out, though much remains to be done.
- Modern imaging techniques have demonstrated changes in brain activity – particularly those areas responsible for the processing of pain.
- Chinese Acupuncture dates back 3000 years and is recognised as an integral part of traditional Chinese medicine.
- It derives from the philosophy that we all have Yin and Yang.
- Qi is the life energy that accumulates in the body's organs & flows around the body in channels or meridians
- By needling points along the meridians it is possible to influence the flow of Qi and exert a therapeutic effect on the organs.
- There are 14 meridians in total
- The body also has five phases (elements) - wood, fire, earth, metal and water.

## How Tiny Is An Acupuncture Needle?

- Acupuncture Needle .25 mm
- Sewing Needle 1.02 mm
- Medical Syringe 28.5 mm
- Match Stick 42 mm

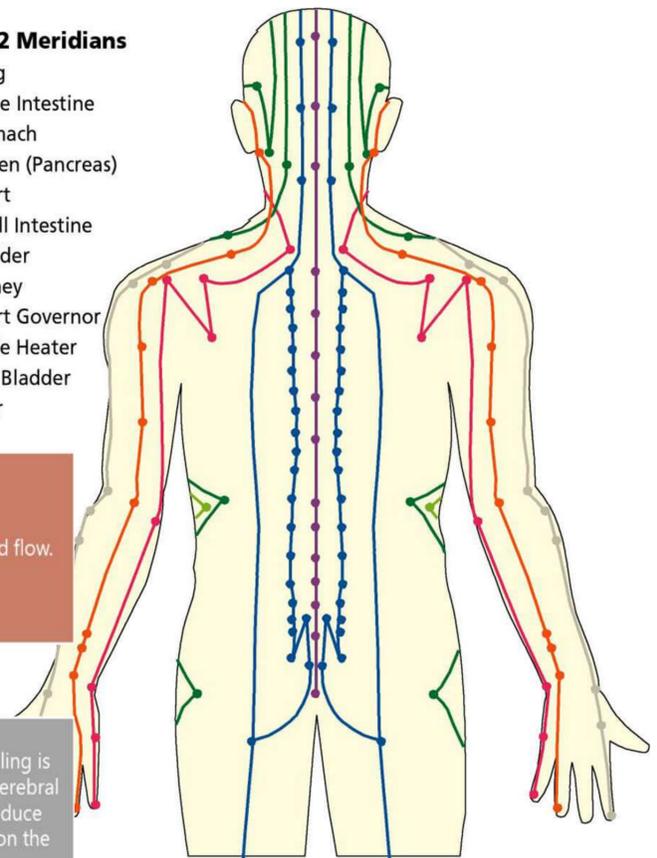


## The 5 phases

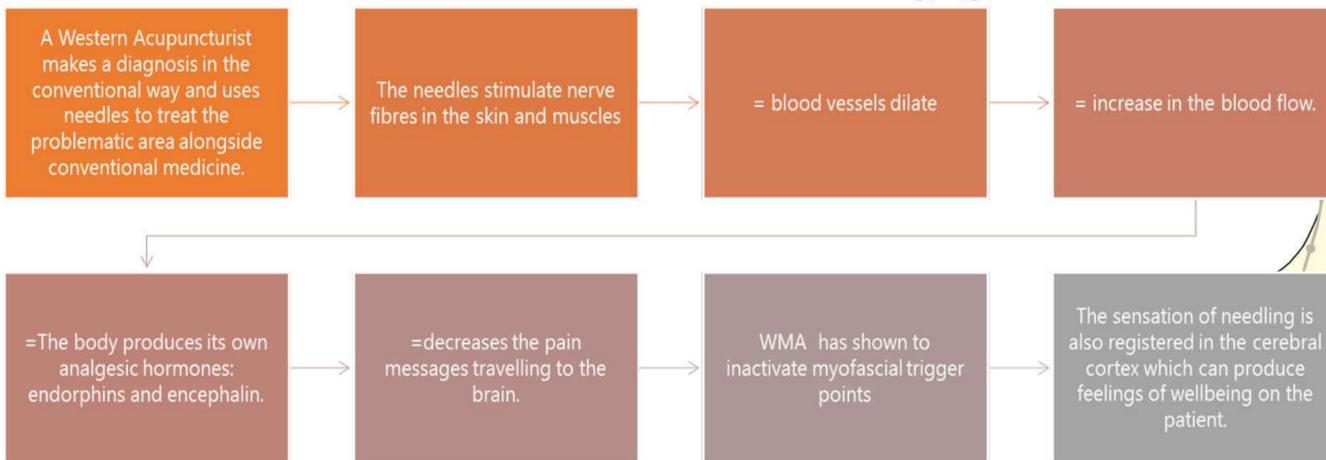


## The 12 Meridians

- Lung
- Large Intestine
- Stomach
- Spleen (Pancreas)
- Heart
- Small Intestine
- Bladder
- Kidney
- Heart Governor
- Triple Heater
- Gall Bladder
- Liver



## Western Medical Acupuncture



## Review of Acupuncture in the Management of Pain associated with Multiple Sclerosis

### Methodology

- 53 Responses over 6 months
- Questionnaire given to patient to fill out during appointment
- 40 patients had relapsing remitting MS
- 9 patients had secondary progressive MS
- 3 patients were unsure of their type of MS
- The average duration they had been receiving Acupuncture was 4.4 years
- 40 patients described Neuropathic pain, all had between 5-9 different descriptive symptoms
- 30 patients had between 1-5 descriptors that included mechanical or muscular skeletal symptoms

### Results

Average percentage of relief of pain symptoms: 68%  
Average duration of relief: 4.7 weeks

#### CHANGE IN MEDICATION

- 26 patients no change
- 6 reduced a lot
- 11 reduced a little
- 5 increased their medication

#### SLEEP

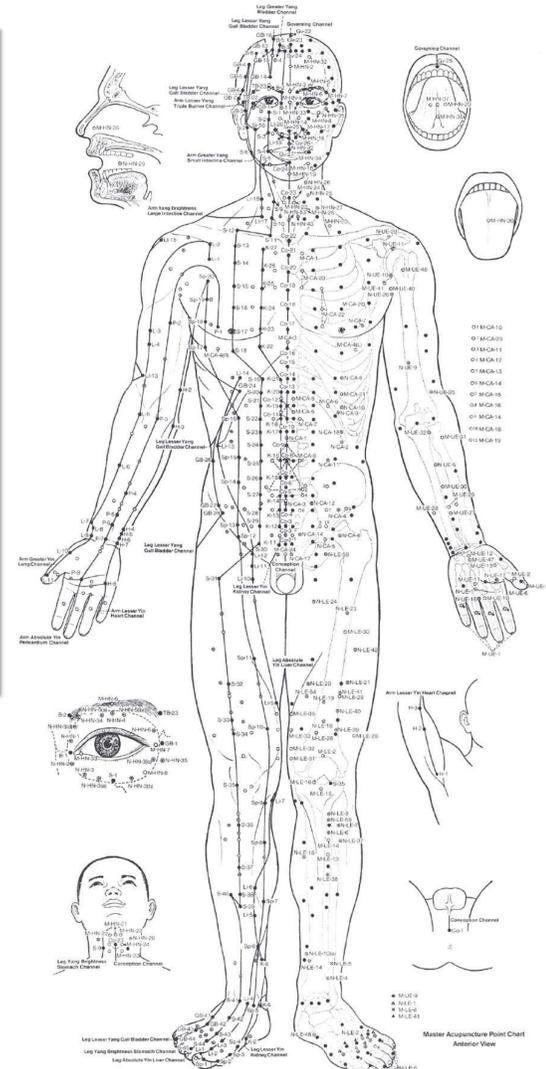
- 20 had improved sleep
- 33 slept the same

#### FEELING OF WELL BEING

- 48 patients had an improved feeling of well being
- 3 had no change

#### MOOD

- GAD 7 scores = average was 8
- PHQ9 scores = average was 9.1



### Patients comments

*'Acupuncture gives your body a relaxed and pain free period'*

*'Hope this isn't a study to cut back, I was very low and depressed. I was on MST now stopped, back at work. Improved mood and mind-set'*

*'Acupuncture doesn't provide instant pain relief but I know when I am due for it as my symptoms increase'*

