

# HEALTH REPORT

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## **BLOOD PRESSURE REACTS FAVORABLY TO REGULAR ACUPUNCTURE TREATMENTS**

People who have concerns about their blood pressure, but who are adverse to the use of drugs to alter their condition may wish to consider a regular schedule of Acupuncture treatments to help handle hypertension.

A new study involving 160 people was recently conducted by researchers from the University of Erlangen in Germany and Nanjing University of Traditional Chinese Medicine in China. The goal was to determine if Acupuncture could reduce systolic and diastolic blood pressure.

The members of the study were randomly divided into two groups. Members were to receive either active or sham Acupuncture extended over a period of 6 weeks. Sessions were set to last 30 minutes and each person received a total of 22 treatments. Needling points for the active group were chosen according to a typical Chinese prescription for hypertension treatment. Those who received the sham Acupuncture were treated in locations with no relevance to blood pressure.

According to researchers, “There was a significant difference in post-treatment blood pressures adjusted for baseline values between the active and sham Acupuncture groups at the end of treatment.” For example, before treatment, the mean 24 hour systolic/diastolic reading was 131/81 for the active group and 129/80 for the sham group. By the end of the six weeks of treatment, the active group’s mean systolic/diastolic pressure was 125/78 and the sham group was virtually unchanged at 130/80. This would be an overall change of 6 points of systolic reduction and 3 points of diastolic drop.

Researchers were quick to point out that that reduction in hypertension had mainly short term value. When blood pressure was tested again at 3-month and 6-month intervals following treatment, the active group had returned to pretreatment levels. This makes it important for persons who control their blood pressure through Acupuncture to receive regular treatments.

In conclusion, the researchers recommended: “As shown in the present study, Acupuncture may offer an alternative anti-hypertensive therapeutic option. Acupuncture effectively lowered systolic and diastolic blood pressures during the treatment period with no or minimal side effects.”

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## DRIVE DOWN BLOOD PRESSURE RECOVER FROM STROKE WITH ACUPUNCTURE

The calming and regenerative effects of Acupuncture have long been known. Now, Acupuncture is becoming more widely recognized as an alternative therapy for curbing high blood pressure as well as aiding those recovering from a stroke.

Hypertension, elevated levels of blood pressure, is sometimes referred to as a “Silent Killer.” Of the 50 million Americans who suffer from some form of it, estimates show that 35% of them may not even be aware of its presence in their life.

With hypertension the body, and especially the heart, must work with extra force to perform daily functions. This often occurs without visible symptoms. It is important that those potentially affected see a doctor or a Traditional Chinese Medicine physician to be checked for these subtle symptoms.

An Acupuncture study offering hope and positive results for hypertension sufferers has recently been conducted at the University of California Irvine by Dr. John C. Longhurst. While in this case the test subjects were hypertensive rats, the results support the link between endorphin release and decreased heart activity. In addition to traditional Acupuncture methods, needles charged with a low frequency electrical stimulation were also proven to be effective in this study.

With these positive findings, the reduction of hypertension in patients could reduce the need for drugs to control the condition, as well as eliminate the onset of strokes.

Should a stroke occur, however, Acupuncture is known to be greatly effective in the improvement of motor and cognitive skills. Scalp Acupuncture, in particular, is the favored application using methods developed and popularized by Professor Ming Quing Zhu, a 1964 graduate of the Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

In this treatment, needles are inserted directly into the scalp according to a map of brain functions. The needles alter blood and hormone levels that affect both brain activity and the flow of blood to portions of the brain related to other body parts damaged from the stroke. Needles can actually remain in place from two to seventy-two hours. In addition, manual movements of the affected area of the body or visualization accompanied by specialized breathing exercises to increase Qi (energy or life force) are prescribed while the needles are in place under the skin.

As in treating hypertension, it is the release of endorphins through Acupuncture that can help to relax the muscles and tissues of the face and the rest of the body. Tension in the muscles and tissues hinders the free flow of moisture, blood, and other bodily fluids. It is especially important in cases of stroke that Qi flow be restored as everything follows in its path. Acupuncture along with conscious participation of the patient can help expedite this process.