

HEALTH REPORT

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DRY EYES BENEFIT FROM ACUPUNCTURE TREATMENTS

People who suffer from a condition known as dry eye syndrome often experience quite a number of irritations with their vision. Dryness, a burning sensation and sandy-gritty eye discomfort are just some of the symptoms that seem to increase in sensation as the day progresses.

In one such case, Rebecca had been suffering the condition for 3 years. The dry eye pain was described as excruciating during the day and caused problems with her sleep as well. At times, her eyes were so dry she literally had to peel her eyelids off her eyes, she said. Numerous trips to doctors and one to a dietitian produced no results. She decided as a last resort to try Acupuncture.

Even though the initial treatments showed no marked results, she decided to continue with her program because of confidence in the acupuncturist. After 14 treatments that included Chinese herbs as well, her condition literally improved overnight. All of her symptoms disappeared and have been gone for over a year.

That Acupuncture improves dry eye syndrome was the focus of a recent study conducted at the China Medical University in Taiwan. A group of 43 dry eye syndrome patients were divided into a control group, a second group that received Acupuncture and a third group that received SSP electro-therapy. (SSP is Silver Spike Point low frequency electro-therapy, also known as Needle Free Acupuncture.)

All of the participants first received an artificial tears treatment. The Acupuncture and the SSP groups then each received two 20-minute treatments of Acupuncture or SSP. Several different measurement tools were used to determine tear production including the Schirmer's test where strips of paper are inserted into the eye for several minutes to measure the production of tears.

A variety of test results showed that both Acupuncture and the SSP electro-therapy treatments brought positive results. After just 4 weeks of treatment, both the Acupuncture and SSP groups showed improvements over the control group. Tearing in both eyes had improved during this time.

After 8 weeks of treatment, both of these groups continued to show improvement over the control group. Overall, the Acupuncture group showed the greatest improvement in reducing the symptoms of dry eye syndrome. Interestingly, the SSP group showed the greatest overall improvement in the reduced need for artificial tear application.

Rebecca, in the case study first reported in this story was so pleased with the results of her treatment that she embarked upon a study of Acupuncture. How's that for a true convert!

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CATARACT PATIENT'S FEARS EASED BY ACUPUNCTURE

Surgery to remove cataracts is one of the many medical techniques that have dramatically changed over the past several decades in terms of safety, simplicity and recovery speed. Still, patient anxiety about undergoing the surgery remains.

Now, based on the results of a recent study in Milan, Italy, receiving Acupuncture prior to surgery may help patients to keep some of these anxious moments in check.

Researchers at the Vita-Salute University of Milan recently enrolled 75 patients in a program to determine if Acupuncture could provide a calming effect for those about to have eye surgery. Pain levels were assessed by patient interview and scaled by severity.

The sample group was divided three ways. Group A received “no” Acupuncture. Group B received “true” Acupuncture. Group C received “sham” Acupuncture. Each group had 25 patients.

Each of the cataract surgical operations was done in the same manner using standard methods. All were performed with topical anesthesia. It's interesting to note that any patient who had previous knowledge of the principles Acupuncture was eliminated in the selection process for the study.

Anxiety levels were noted following any treatment received and just prior to surgery. The result was very clear that Group B, the patients receiving Acupuncture, showed significantly lower anxiety levels than the other two groups. There was also a significant difference in postoperative anxiety levels noted between the Acupuncture group and the patients who received no treatment at all.

Researchers found it easy to conclude that Acupuncture was effective in reducing anxiety related to cataract surgery under topical anesthesia.

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SIGHT RESTORED WITH ACUPUNCTURE TREATMENTS

Acupuncture may provide the hope of regaining sight for some who are legally blind or have severe vision problems. Reports of gains made by patients of one well-known European acupuncturist may give new light to people who have been told their condition was hopeless.

For instance, here is an account of an 18-year-old named Christian. He had been blinded as the result of an accident suffered when he was just one. Now, after receiving treatments from acupuncturist John Boel of Aulum, Jutland, in Denmark, he is able to read, bike ride and work toward a career in a precision trade.

Prior to treatments, Christian was told his condition would never improve. At best, he was able to see a faint light through one eye. Just two days after receiving his first treatment, his dad and he were enjoying lunch together and Christian asked, "Isn't there a fog in the air?" He was pointing to the steam coming from the cup of coffee. Soon after, he read numbers on license plates.

After six weeks of treatment, this is what he said of the results: "My sight grows better and better each time. This summer, my vision was so good that I started an education to be a turner (lathe operator) just like my father. The instruction is a piece of cake."

In another scenario, Kare lost half his sight years ago due to a brain hemorrhage. He had no right side normal field of vision. He lost his ability to drive a vehicle and to hold a driver's license. Now, with Acupuncture treatments received from Boel, he has experienced big improvements. He has now been given the okay from his eye specialist to get a driver's license again after many years without one.

Unfortunately, all cases treated for this condition have not responded. However, the majority have. Four additional cases out of five treated for hemorrhaging have regained full sight. In these cases, as in Christian's as well, the patients had little hope of ever seeing clearly again. And then they received Acupuncture treatments from Boel and got a new lease on sight and on life.