



David Mortell Licensed Acupuncturist
Pittsburgh Acupuncture Center
5655 Bryant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
412-363-0886

Five Top Men's Health Concerns and How Acupuncture Can Help

Acupuncture has been used to treat men's health concerns for thousands of years and is growing in popularity. The reason for this growth in popularity is that many health issues that men face, such as high blood pressure, prostate problems and depression, respond extremely well to acupuncture treatments.



Here is a list of five health issues that affect men and how acupuncture can help:

Cardiovascular Disease

Cardiovascular disease is the leading men's health threat with heart disease and stroke topping the list of the first and second leading causes of death worldwide. By integrating acupuncture and Oriental medicine into your heart healthy lifestyle, you can dramatically reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease.

Taking small steps to improve your health can reduce your risk for cardiovascular disease by as much as eighty percent. Steps to prevention include managing high blood pressure, quitting smoking, maintaining a healthy weight, reducing stress and improved sleep - all of which can be helped with acupuncture.

Acupuncture has been found to be particularly helpful in lowering blood pressure. By applying acupuncture needles at specific sites along the wrist, inside the forearm or in the leg, researchers have been able to stimulate the release of opioids, which decreases the heart's activity and its need for oxygen. This, in turn, lowers blood pressure.

Lung Cancer

Lung cancer is the leading cancer killer in men. Tobacco smoke causes ninety percent of all lung cancers. If you are ready to quit smoking, acupuncture can help.

Acupuncture has shown to be an effective treatment for smoking. Acupuncture treatments for addiction and smoking cessation focus on jitters, cravings, irritability, and restlessness; symptoms that people commonly complain about when they quit. It also aids in relaxation and detoxification.

In This Issue

Five Top Men's Health Concerns and How Acupuncture Can Help

Foods Men Should Eat Every Day

Foods Men Should Eat Every Day



Adding nutrient-rich super foods to the diet can give men a healthy boost. Here are some foods that can help maintain muscle mass, prevent prostate cancer, and more.

Spinach: Popeye had this one right. Spinach is one of the most nutrient-dense foods in existence. Spinach can help protect against prostate cancer, reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke, lower blood pressure and strengthen muscles.

Yogurt: Eating yogurt that contains live bacterial cultures everyday improves digestive health, boosts the immune system, provides protection against cancer and may help you live longer. Not all yogurts are probiotic though, so make sure the label says "live and active cultures."

In one study on substance addiction, a team from Yale University successfully used auricular (ear) acupuncture to treat cocaine addiction. Results showed that fifty-five percent of participants tested free of cocaine during the last week of treatment, compared to twenty-four percent and nine percent in the two control groups. Those who completed acupuncture treatment also had longer periods of sustained abstinence compared to participants in the control groups.

Prostate Health

The prostate is prone to enlargement and inflammation as men age, affecting about half of men in their sixties and up to ninety percent of men as they approach their seventies and eighties. If left untreated, benign prostate gland enlargement, which presents with symptoms such as frequent nighttime urination, painful urination, and difficult urination, can lead to more serious conditions such as prostate cancer, urinary tract infections, bladder or kidney damage, bladder stones, and incontinence.

Acupuncture and Oriental medicine can be used to treat prostate problems to relieve the urinary symptoms and prevent the more serious conditions from occurring. The few studies completed on acupuncture and prostatitis show positive results with participants noticing an marked improvement in their quality of life, decrease in urinary difficulties, and an increase in urinary function.

Depression and Mental Health

Suicide is the eighth leading cause of death among all men; for young men it's higher. While experts previously thought depression affected far more women than men, it is now believed that that men's tendency to hide depressed feelings and not seek professional help has skewed the numbers.

When suffering from depression, brain chemicals and stress hormones are out of balance. Sleep, appetite, and energy level are all disturbed. Acupuncture and Oriental medicine can alleviate symptoms associated with depression and mental health issues by helping to rebalance the body's internal environment.

The growing body of research supporting the positive effects of acupuncture on depression, anxiety, insomnia, and chronic pain syndrome is so strong that the military now uses acupuncture to treat troops with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and combat stress syndrome.

Sexual Health

While sexual health concerns may not be life threatening, they can still signal significant health problems. Two-thirds of men older than seventy and up to thirty-nine percent of forty year old men report having problems with their sexual health.

Acupuncture and Oriental medicine are well known for improving men's sexual performance; in fact, there have been medical textbooks devoted to the subject. Chinese Emperors took their sexual health quite seriously and would consult with a team of physicians if they experienced any difficulties in the bedroom.

Acupuncture can be used to treat premature ejaculation, low sperm count, diminished sperm motility, erectile dysfunction, male climacteric (menopause) and increase libido.

Call now to see how acupuncture and Oriental medicine can improve your health and well being!

Avocados: Avocados are a good source of vitamin K, dietary fiber, vitamin B6, vitamin C, folate and copper. Rich in potassium, avocados contain more of this nutrient than bananas. Potassium is needed to regulate nerves, heartbeat and, especially, blood pressure. An added bonus for men: Avocados inhibit the growth of prostate cancer cells.

Walnuts: When it comes to their health benefits, walnuts are the king of nuts. Richer in heart-healthy omega-3s than salmon, loaded with more anti-oxidants than red wine, and packing half as much muscle-building protein as chicken, walnuts are one of the all time super foods.

Blackberries: Blackberries are packed with Vitamin C, calcium and magnesium with more than double the amounts than their popular cousin, the blueberry. Vitamin C is a powerful stress reducer that can lower blood pressure and return cortisol levels to normal faster when taken during periods of stress. Magnesium and calcium act together to help regulate the nerves and muscle tone. Too little magnesium in your diet can cause nerve cells to become over activated and can trigger muscular tension, soreness, spasms, cramps, and fatigue. Blackberries also score high on the oxygen radical absorbance capacity (ORAC) scale assesses the antioxidant content of food: the higher the score, the better the food's ability to neutralize cell-damaging free radicals that lead to cancer.

NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS: Do I Need Them?

Hello Everyone,

The total sales of nutritional supplements in the U.S. are about \$24 billion a year. Every one of my clients, and virtually everyone I know, takes supplements. Yet the majority of people who take nutritional supplements have no idea what is in their products, nor do they understand what supplements they really need, if they need any!

We've all been told we need to take fish oils or Enzyme CoQ10 or Vitamins D, A, C or E. What are these things and do I really need them? And what is the source of the products I'm taking? Are the nutrients synthetic or are they from a whole food source?

I firmly believe, and plenty of evidence supports this, that it is no longer possible to get all the nutrients we need simply from food. Even if we eat a clean, organic food diet, we probably still aren't getting an adequate supply of nutrients.

Partly because of topsoil erosion, in which 75% of the topsoil in the U.S. has eroded, foods no longer have nearly as much nutrient content as they once did, even organic foods. This erosion has been accelerated by commercial farming methods, including the use of pesticides and inorganic fertilizers. Our soils no longer provide optimal nutrition to the foods that grow in it. Supplementation with organic, whole food nutritional supplements is often a necessary part of maintaining optimal health.

Let's start by drawing a distinction between synthetic supplements and whole food supplements. About 98% of all supplements sold are synthetic, which means that the nutrients are chemically recreated to be similar to the vital nutrients found in food. Similar, but not the same. In fact, many synthetics are derived from substances like coal tar!

The extraction process alone for most commercial supplements uses powerful chemical solvents such as benzene, lead, and aluminum salts, all of which have health consequences; and the process also denatures nutrients, destroys enzymes, and leaves toxic residues. And these are supposed to be good for your health?

For example, ascorbic acid, which is one part of the Vitamin C complex, is what most suppliers put in their pills as vitamin C and what is legally known as Vitamin C. Yet ascorbic acid is only the outer shell of the C complex, so when you take ascorbic acid it's like eating just the peel of the orange and not the fruit. Most ascorbic acid is synthesized from high fructose corn syrup, which we know is a major contributor to diabetes, obesity, increased heart risk, etc.

Your body is programmed to digest and utilize real foods, with their vitamin complexes largely intact. The Vitamin C complex also contains co-factors such as bioflavonoids, rutin, copper, cofactors, and enzymes, which when eaten as a food is absorbed by your digestive tract and used by your body for a myriad of functions.

When you take a synthetic form of ascorbic acid, your body has to recruit the other co-factors and parts of the C complex from other places to be able to utilize the ascorbic acid. So, in reality, when you take synthetic vitamins to treat a deficiency of a certain nutrient, you are actually creating a deficiency of the vitamin complex co-factors. A synthetic vitamin is like the image in the mirror. It looks like the real thing, but doesn't function like the real thing.

There are many scientific studies that demonstrate the dangers of synthetic supplements. Here is a list of 3 studies that used synthetic vitamins. Keep in mind that these particular journals are very conservative, so if they are reporting a problem, it is certain to be widespread and substantiated:

#1. Study using synthetic Beta-Carotene and Vitamin E halted!

29,000 male smokers were given synthetic beta carotene and synthetic Vitamin E. The study was stopped when rates of lung cancer, heart attacks, and death increased. –New England Journal of Medicine, 1994.

#2. Birth defects increased for women on synthetic supplements!

22,000 pregnant women were given synthetic Vitamin A. The study was halted because birth defects increased 400%.–New England Journal of Medicine, 1995.

#3. Men get thickened arteries on synthetic supplements!

Men who took 500 mg. Of synthetic Vitamin C (ascorbic acid) daily for 18 months showed signs of thickening arteries.–Reuters Health, 2000.

Whole food supplements work quite differently. They are made from real food that has been gently processed to maintain the high nutritional value and provide your body with an easily absorbed and usable form of essential nutrients. The whole food supplement will contain a higher dose of say Vitamin C complex, than you could get from eating a normal portion of the same food, but it is not a mega-dose and it is easily absorbed and used because your body recognizes it as food, not a drug-like substance.

It's important to get most of your nutrition from healthy, organic food sources. It is also important to fill in your nutritional 'gaps' with good quality, whole food nutritional supplements to make certain you have optimal health.

I welcome your feedback and comments about this newsletter.

To your continued health,

David Mortell, R.Ac., Dipl.Ac.
Pittsburgh Acupuncture Center
www.pittsburghacupuncturecenter.com
412 363 0886