# Acu News

*"Quiet thoughts mend the body." - Chinese Proverb* VOL 9.2

## Acupuncture for Weight Loss

It seems that everybody is always looking for a quick fix or the easiest way out. That is definitely no different when it comes to weight loss. Think about the number of fad diets that have come and gone over the past decade. And the outcome is always the same, weight is lost but it always comes back, sometimes worse than before the diet began. Why? Because a diet is not the answer. Lifestyle changes are what is needed when somebody wants to lose weight. This is where a system like Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) becomes a good choice for those who truly want or need to lose weight and keep it off.

According to TCM, excess weight is rooted in an imbalance within the body caused by the malfunctioning of the liver and spleen organ systems and energetic meridians. In TCM theory, the spleen is responsible for proper functioning of the digestive system. When the spleen is functioning properly, the food we eat is transformed into Qi (pronounced "chee").

Qi is the vital substance of life and when there is disharmony in the spleen, there will be symptoms such as fatigue, slow metabolism, water retention, feelings of heaviness and loose stools. The liver system is supposed to keep the body's Qi and blood flowing and running smoothly. Unfortunately, our fast-paced modern lifestyle and chronic stress levels tend to negatively impact the liver's ability to function properly. Because the liver and spleen work in conjunction, when one isn't functioning properly, neither is the other. This leads to a poorly functioning digestive system that decreases metabolism and can trigger cravings.

The acupuncture points, foods and herbal supplements used in TCM are specifically chosen to assist with weight loss and influence the Qi of the spleen and liver systems, thus treating the root imbalances causing the weight gain to begin with. Physically, TCM has been shown to have an effect on the function of the nervous system, the endocrine system, the digestive system, food cravings and metabolism. All of these things help to maximize the absorption of nutrients, energize the body, control overeating, suppress the appetite and reduce anxiety.

Unlike most fad diets, acupuncture treatments are catered and customized to the needs of the individual. Acupuncture points can be used to affect the overall well-being of the patient with the objective of increasing circulation and calming the nervous system. Also, specific points can be incorporated to help with different symptoms as they arise. Auricular or ear acupuncture points have been found to be particularly effective for helping with weight loss.

Another way TCM differs from fad diets in treating weight loss is that TCM is a total health program. Not only are acupuncture treatments used, but other modalities such as herbal formulas, energetically healing foods, abdominal massage, exercise and meditation are usually suggested and recommended to the patient. This ensures those who utilize TCM to lose weight usually have a better chance of keeping it off.

If you're trying to lose weight, why not consider acupuncture and TCM as your method of choice? It is much less radical than a fad diet and the outcomes are usually better and more permanent. To find out more, contact your local licensed acupuncturist.

## 3 Sitting Exercises for Weight Loss

Whether we are at the office, in the car or at home, we spend much of our day sitting down. So much time in fact that it can impact how active we are throughout the remainder of our day. Because of the amount of sitting we do, it can be hard to find times to be active and burn calories. If you still want to lose weight, but can't avoid the huge amount of sitting throughout your day, check out these three sitting exercises that promote healthy weight loss.

**1 Replace your chair**
This is a very easy way to get in some key exercise while you are sitting at work. Take your old office chair and replace it with an exercise ball. More specifically, a stability ball. A stability ball will help you tighten and strengthen various parts of your body, including your core, leg and back muscles. It has been proven that when you do this you can burn up to an extra 100 calories a day!

**2 Set healthy reminders for yourself**
This is a simple practice that can greatly improve your health, quality of life and weight. If you set healthy reminders for yourself throughout the day while at work you can avoid staying stagnant and eating potentially unhealthy foods. For example, set reminders on your phone to tell yourself to get up and walk around the office for a few minutes, or to walk up and down a set of stairs. In addition, you can set reminders telling yourself what snacks you should eat during the work day, or what healthy option you should have during your lunch break.

**3 Drink lots of water**
Hydrate. Hydrate. Hydrate. Keeping yourself properly hydrated is very important. And by doing this you can even help yourself lose weight without getting up and impacting your work day. Drinking lots of water ensures that your metabolism and other bodily functions can work to the best of their ability. Keeping your metabolism hydrated and fully operational helps reduce your calorie intake.

A fine balance health care
2117 Summerfield Blvd SE Airdrie AB
Stacey King
403-540-8878
www.afinebalancehealthcare.ca

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