AcuNews

"Tension is who you think you should be. Relaxation is who you are." -Chinese Proverb

Three Acupuncture Points To Reduce Stress

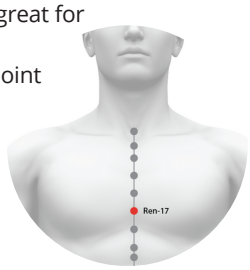
The dictionary defines stress in multiple ways, but there is only one that matters when we discuss how stress affects our physical bodies. The definition is this, "stress is a physical, chemical or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension." **And while most people think of stress as being detrimental, it truly does have a function in our bodies.** Stress is the body's way of signaling for help or a break in the routine. If we don't listen to these signals, we can develop imbalances in our bodies, which can then lead to illnesses. Cortisol is the hormone most closely related to stress. Cortisol is a big component of the "fight or flight" response we feel when we are scared or threatened. And in small bursts, cortisol is helpful. However, when stress becomes chronic, the cortisol levels become elevated and never return to normal. This puts the body in a constant state of being on edge, eventually causing insomnia, depression, anxiety, digestive issues and even mental illness.

Acupuncture has been around for thousands of years and it is becoming more mainstream every single day. It is even being used in some hospital emergency rooms for those who are in pain and anxious. **Acupuncture acts like physical therapy for the nervous system.** The tiny needles re-train the nervous system and the brain to behave as it should normally. For the nervous system to act and respond accordingly, cortisol has to be at normal levels and only used when a true "fight or flight" situation occurs. Studies show acupuncture does this.

HERE ARE THREE GREAT ACUPRESSURE POINTS FOR MANAGING STRESS.

Yin Tang - This point is located midway between the inner ends of the eyebrows. Yin Tang is used to treat stress, anxiety and insomnia. It is also a great point to use for eye issues, nasal problems and headaches.

Ren 17 - Located in the center of the chest, midway between the nipples on the breastbone or sternum, this point is great for opening the chest. Many people feel chest tightness and constriction when they become stressed. This point will definitely help. It is frequently used to treat anxiety, depression and nervousness, as well as asthma or other lung issues. It can also be added to treatments to help with digestive issues or heart problems like palpitations.



Heart 7 - This point is located on the underside of the wrist crease on the outer edge. It is found in the depression on the outer side of the tendon. In Traditional Chinese Medicine, this point is used to calm the mind and heart. It works well for anxiety, stress and anger too.

Today the average worker experiences stress levels higher than in previous decades. There are many causes for the increase in stress but there are also many ways to effectively combat these stressors and experience a life with less stress and more happiness. One of the main reasons people feel so stressed out is that with the invention of the Internet, email and, most notably, the smartphone. The pressure to always be connected is hard to let go of, especially when your smartphone is in your hand. One way to combat this is to set guidelines for yourself. Turn the phone off when you are home and off of work. If that is not possible, schedule when you will check your messages. **When you are not at work, make sure you can keep those boundaries firm and not be drawn to work 24/7.**

While in the office there are many ways you can destress yourself. The easiest one is to **take deep breaths**. If you are in a tense moment, stop what you are doing, close your eyes and take a deep breath. Once you are more grounded, you can act instead of react and handle the situation more logically. Breathing is so important and it is free, easy and you can do it anywhere you are.

When on lunch or a break try to **get outside and take a walk.** The fresh air and nature are beneficial in many ways. The sun will help your body produce vitamin D which is essential for good moods and emotional well-being. Being outside in nature has a calming effects, as does the physical exertion of taking a walk.

If you like tea, drinking a warm cup of tea can be relaxing, especially an herbal tea with chamomile or mint. **Nourish your body inside and out.** If you are feeding it well, it will treat you well. Sugar and highly-processed foods can cause spikes and big drops in blood sugar which can acutely affect your mood and exacerbate the feeling of stress.

Lastly, **find a support system**, whether it is inside or outside of the company you are in. People whom you can use as a sounding board with your concerns and can help you strategically work to find solutions in the workplace to have a happier and more productive office environment. Having people around you who help build you up and help you achieve your goals are the people you want around you. Distance from those who will try to bring you down or cause unnecessary stress.

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