

Different Drummer Acupuncture

An Occasional Newsletter



Shoulder Pain

If you or someone you know has shoulder pain, you're not alone. According to Physician and Sportsmedicine Online

(www.physsportsmed.com), there are about 4 million people suffering from shoulder problems on any given day. We ask a lot of our shoulders. This joint has the largest range of motion and yet it also must be strong and stable to allow us to move heavy objects. When we have pain in or near the shoulder it can vary from being a simple annoyance to be incapacitating. I see a lot of shoulder troubles in my clinic and have found acupuncture to be a very effective treatment for most of those problems.

Quick Anatomy Lesson

Most of us tend to think of the shoulder as only consisting of the joint between the humerus (our arm bone) and the scapula (the shoulder blade), but actually there are two other joints involved. The clavicle (collar bone) articulates with both the scapula and the manubrium (the top of the sternum in the center of our chest). Also, there are 19 muscles that can affect the shoulder.

The most common shoulder troubles I see are rotator cuff injuries. The rotator cuff is comprised of four muscles and their tendons whose function is to stabilize the shoulder joint. These muscles often develop micro tears or worse resulting in inflammation, pain and/or weakness. Sometimes these injuries are due to repetitive movements such as in tennis, swimming, golf or baseball. Other times they

are the result of imbalance in the muscles.

This is most often brought about by poor posture, i.e. sitting at a desk hunched over.

Don't let sore shoulders slow you down!



Frozen Shoulder

Middle-aged women have a tendency to get what is commonly called frozen shoulder. In this condition the shoulder has very little range of motion and there can be excruciating pain associated with it. Sometimes patients report that they literally woke up with the pain and frozen shoulder. Most, however, report that they had a sore shoulder for a long time, but just dealt with it. Traditional treatment involves physical therapy, anti-inflammatories and steroids. It can take up to two years to resolve. In severe cases surgery is needed to sew up the tears and to clean out calcification. I am currently treating two frozen shoulder patients and they are getting great results by combining acupuncture with physical therapy. One of my patients has had the bad luck of having frozen shoulder twice. She reports that this time with the acupuncture added to her treatment she is progressing much faster.

Treatment

I treat shoulder pain the same as any other musculoskeletal problem. I test to determine the muscles affected then I needle motor points (see Motor Point newsletter on my website) as well as traditional Chinese medicine point combinations that are designed to help underlying conditions. I also will recommend stretches and exercises, and often refer the patient to their doctor to get a further diagnosis.

My advice is to not ignore shoulder pain. If you are experiencing pain, weakness or restriction in your range of motion please get it checked out and remember that acupuncture can be a very effective treatment.

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Marcia's Scones

Adapted from Fields of Greens by Annie Somerville

I have been making these for years; they are actually the only things I bake. Those that have had them tell me they are the best scones they've ever had. However if you're a traditionalist these will disappoint. I welcome feedback from any of you who try these.

- 1/2 cup chopped dates or chopped bittersweet chocolate (I use 70% cocoa)
- Juice from one orange, approx. 4 Tbsp.
- 3/4 cup unbleached flour
- 3/4 cup whole wheat pastry flour
- 1/4 lb. cold unsalted butter
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup roasted chopped pecans
- 1/2 cup buttermilk
- Zest from one orange
- 1 1/4 cups rolled oats
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda

Preheat oven to 375. Sift the flour, sugar, salt, soda and powder into a large bowl. Slice the butter into small pieces and with a pastry knife cut them into the dry ingredients until the mixture resembles a coarse meal. Add the oats,

pecans, dates or chocolate, and zest. Add the juice and buttermilk to the mixture. Mix together until the dough forms a ball. I use a fork at first, then my hands. If you didn't get a juicy orange you might have to add more buttermilk. Do not over mix.

Spread dough onto cooking sheet and form into a round approximately 1" high. Cut into 8 triangles. Spread these out on the sheet. Unless you have a double layer cooking sheet place another cooking sheet underneath. This keeps the bottoms from burning. Bake for approx. 25 minutes.

Insurance Coverage

More companies are including acupuncture treatments in their health plans. Nike, Intel and Providence Hospitals are three examples. However not all acupuncturists are covered because they are not "Preferred Providers." Because I have been credentialed by Alternare and American Specialty Health Networks I can treat patients from these companies as a "Preferred Provider." Insurance plans that can include acupuncture coverage are Lifewise, ODS, Providence, Health Net, PacificCare, CIGNA and Secure Horizons.



Marcia Mueller
Lic. Acupuncturist

About Different Drummer Acupuncture

I have been an athlete all my life. I compete as a race walker in road races, relays and marathons. I am also a proponent of cross training (I got an injury from over training), so I swim, weight lift and do yoga to compliment my walking. Athletes are a large part of my practice.

Acupuncture is a midlife career change for me. Previously I worked at Nike. During this time I used acupuncture for a back injury and from personal experience discovered the power in this ancient medicine. I am a graduate of Lewis and Clark College and the Oregon College of Oriental Medicine where I received a Masters degree in Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine. I have been in practice since 1998.