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the unconventional truth about low back pain

by Dr. David Lee, DC

Does this scenario sound familiar to You?

A typical low back pain scenario involves a patient with persistent pain expecting a clear root cause diagnosis from their healthcare professional through medical imaging (i.e. MRI or x-ray). Unfortunately, many do not understand that such a root cause doesn't normally exist. Truth is, 85 - 90% of ALL low back pain is caused by "non-specific" mechanical factors that is either not detectable by routine imaging, or is correlated with a finding that has many false positives.

The shocking truth about MRIs and common low back pain diagnoses

For example, for an individual experiencing low back pain, a herniated disc observed on an MRI becomes the definitive root "cause" of their low back pain. The truth is, a percentage of random individuals without low back pain may also present with a herniated disc on an MRI. Furthermore, even if the herniated disc was the "cause" of your low back pain, why doesn't anyone ask what actually caused the disc to herniate in the first place and how to prevent it from happening again?

Regardless of the diagnosis (i.e. herniated disc, degenerative arthritis, spodylolisthesis), many individuals are told they have to learn to live with their pain with the help of potent medications, constant manipulations, or surgery as a final treatment option.

Before accepting the common low back pain diagnosis, consider this:

Do discs spontaneously herniate on their own? Do joints normally degenerate for no particular reason? Some traumatic events may cause these conditions, however most low back injuries are not the result of a single traumatic event, but from many small, unmemorable events that accumulate over time such as stress, poor posture, repetitive strain or muscular imbalances. Then one day, you step out of your car, or bend to pick up a pencil, and your back gives out.

From my clinical experience, the usual cause of low back pain that is not a result of trauma is quite simply the imbalance of muscles surrounding and supporting the lower back. Once again, tight and/or weak muscles causing low back pain do not show up on an MRI or x-ray.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO LIVE WITH THE PAIN!

For many individuals with the common low back pain diagnosis, I have achieved a very high success rate of eliminating low back pain through an advanced soft tissue technique called Active Release Technique (ART). I also provide muscle rehabilitation sessions with my patients to prevent future occurrences.

For low back pain sufferers who have sought previous unsuccessful medical intervention, I may be able to get you out of pain as well as teach you how to prevent future occurrences.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me for an appointment or free consultation.

success of acupuncture in the treatment of chronic stress-related illnesses

by Dr. Jumy Kim, TCM

Traditional Chinese Medicine and Traffic Jams

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is based on the philosophy that stress, anxiety, depression, or any strong emotion has the potential to interrupt the smooth flow of energy throughout the body. Chinese medical theory states that this energy flows through our body by a network of "roads" similar to a highway system. Stress, anger, or any intense emotion is believed to block the free flow of energy throughout this bodily network, analogous to a traffic jam on the highway. To carry this analogy further, stress is also able to affect secondary structures of our body (ie digestion, sleep, blood pressure) just like how a block on the highway is able to affect secondary roads that feed into or out of the affected area.

Chronic Stress-Related Illnesses

Stress related illness can be defined as any illness whose root cause can be attributed to chronic excessive release of stress-related neurotransmitters. Such illnesses can include anxiety, depression, irritability, insomnia, hypertension, stroke, myocardial infarction, irritable bowel syndrome, as well as less clearly medically defined problems such as chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, and even some auto-immune diseases.

Individuals experiencing various levels of stress regularly complain of upper back, shoulder and neck pain. According to TCM, the tension resulting from stress acts like a road block, blocking the free flow of energy throughout the body thereby causing pain and tightness, often leading to pain, including headaches.

How Does Acupuncture Help?

From a Western viewpoint, acupuncture works to alleviate stress by releasing natural pain-killing chemicals in the brain, called endorphins. In addition, acupuncture improves blood circulation throughout the body, which oxygenates the tissues and releases toxins into the blood for elimination. Acupuncture is also able to decrease heart rate, lower blood pressure and relax muscles. Similar to any health care treatment, including drug therapy, each individual will respond differently to acupuncture. However, a growing number of people are claiming multiple benefits from acupuncture treatment of their chronic stress-related illnesses such as increased energy, deeper sleep, and relaxed muscles to name a few.

For more information
feel free to book an appointment
or a free consultation at the
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