

# Let's Talk About...

## Acupuncture

### What is pediatric acupuncture?

Pediatric acupuncture is a specialized approach to acupuncture. It involves the insertion of hair-fine needles under the skin, or other similar methods, for children between 1 month to 18 years old. The main goal of all acupuncture is to balance, regulate, or strengthen a patient's energy, which is called Qi. We offer two types of acupuncture. Both styles promote a child's body to heal naturally and improve function.

- **Shoni-shin:** This is a painless Japanese type of acupuncture with no needles. Trained practitioners use small metal shoni-shin tools to scratch, tap, or brush on the child's skin over acupuncture pathways. This treatment gently relaxes and stimulates the child's body back into balance. Shoni-shin was developed in Japan and is still a main method for pediatric healthcare there.
- **Acupoint stimulation:** This type can include the following:
  - **Acupressure:** Touching or massaging specific acupoints on the child's skin
  - **Acupuncture:** Inserting very thin (as thin as a hair), sterile, single-use needles into the skin at specific acupoints on the body. Sometimes, small bandages with tiny stimulating points are used. These are called acu-tacks.

### What can pediatric acupuncture treat?

Pediatric acupuncture can be useful in the following conditions:

- Allergies
- Anxiety
- Asthma
- Bed wetting
- Cold and flu symptoms
- Colic

- Constipation
- Cough
- Cancer symptom relief (nausea and fatigue)
- Diarrhea
- Ear infections
- Eczema
- Emotional outbursts
- Headaches
- Muscle weakness and fatigue
- Pain of all kinds
- Poor sleeping patterns
- Seizures and epilepsy
- Stomachaches



## Does pediatric acupuncture hurt?

Most children do not think the treatments are painful. They say Shoni-shin feels like light tickling or a small mosquito bite, if they feel it at all.

## Is pediatric acupuncture safe?

Yes, pediatric acupuncture is safe. For children with low immune function or blood cell problems we may make adjustments to the type and timing of treatments.

## What can I expect at my child's acupuncture appointment?

At your child's first appointment, a pediatric acupuncturist will evaluate your child's condition and decide on a treatment plan. This may include acupuncture, herbs or supplements, and nutrition and lifestyle changes.

## Before acupuncture treatment

- Have your child eat before their appointment. It is best for your child not to receive acupuncture if they have an empty stomach. However, your child should not eat a heavy meal before or after the session. Do not give your child caffeine for several hours before and after the treatment.
- Do not brush your child's tongue. The acupuncturist will look at the color and texture of your child's tongue during the appointment to make sure they can perform acupuncture safely.
- Have your child wear comfortable, loose clothes to the appointment. The acupuncturist may need to roll up your child's sleeves and pants to the knees and elbows. If your child needs a back treatment, they will put on a hospital gown.

## During acupuncture treatment

- After evaluating your child's condition the acupuncturist will put sterile, superfine needles at points where your child needs them. These needles are about three hairs thick and used only once. The acupuncturist will throw them away immediately after your child's treatment.

- Your child will feel a light tap when the needles are applied to their skin. After a moment, they may feel warmth, heaviness, tingling or pressure around the needle. These feelings are normal.
- Acupuncture makes your child's body relax, and they may fall asleep during treatment.
- A typical acupuncture appointment lasts 1 hour. This includes time to talk about your child's progress as well.
- Each child responds to acupuncture at a different pace. Children with acute conditions may be treated within 6–12 acupuncture sessions. Children with long-lasting conditions may need more treatment. The acupuncturist will give you and your child an estimate for treatments at your child's first appointment.

## After acupuncture treatment

- Your child will usually feel great after an acupuncture treatment. However, their body is still rebalancing.
- To maximize the effects of acupuncture, have your child relax and avoid vigorous exercise for several hours after treatment.
- Make sure your child drinks plenty of water. It's important to keep hydrated to help the body heal and recover.

## Notes

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