

# Acupuncture Provides a Safe & Effective Alternative for the Treatment of Mental Health Disorders

**S**tress is our body's natural response to the various demands that we put on it. In ancient times, our stressors usually came from life threatening situations like being confronted by a wild animal or an attack from another village. When under stress, our body begins to pump out stress chemicals including cortisol and norepinephrine, so that we are more alert, stronger, and faster. This is also known as our fight or flight response. When facing the ancient stressors, this response system was extremely beneficial and could even save our life.

In our modern world, stress is considerably higher, more frequent and more consistent than in ancient times. Unfortunately, when we encounter stress now, we are usually not able to fight or flee the situation. Rather, we need to stay and face the situation and submit to our boss or the situation at hand. This results in the body being flooded with stress chemicals which can lead to anxiety, nervousness, anger, irritability, or depression. Over time, ongoing stress and unhealthy responses to stress can be detrimental to our health.

The statistics are bleak. According to the National Center of Health Statistics, during 2011-2014, 8.6% of males and 16.5% of females, aged 12 and over, took antidepressant medication. 25% of those people had been taking these medications for 10 years or longer.

The Journal of Affective Disorders analyzed 207 clinical studies in 2010 on the effectiveness of acupuncture in treating depressive disorders. According to this analysis, the efficacy of acupuncture was comparable to antidepressants alone in improving clinical response and alleviating symptom severity of Major Depressive Disorder.

Anxiety disorders are the most common mental health disorder in the U.S, affecting 40 million adults and costing more than \$42 billion per year, according to the Anxiety Disorders Association of America. These disorders include generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), social anxiety disorder, panic disorder, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).



A clinical study conducted in China in 2010, has concluded that acupuncture is a “safe and effective” treatment for mood disorders including anxiety and depression making it a great alternative for people that have intolerable side effects to medication or choose not to take medication.

The good news is that acupuncture can significantly help the entire spectrum of mood disorders. There are three mental health patterns that I commonly see in my clinic and that respond beautifully to acupuncture therapy within a relatively short period of time.

The first pattern is the Jueyin-Yangming Pattern and is characterized by nervousness. These people are jittery, speak fast, tend to shake their legs and have a hard time settling down. They are often plagued with fear and suspicion and have a very hard time accepting compliments. Physical symptoms may include a tight chest, palpitations, allergies, insomnia, heart disease, headaches, PMS and stress induced digestive disorders. All physical symptoms are worse with stress.

The Jueyin-Shaoyang pattern is characterized by a rigid or stiff personality and they often feel rushed for time. They are so inflexible in their personality that it leads to muscle tension and stiffness in the entire body. These people think things should be a certain way and have difficulty when things don't go that way or if they feel out of control. Physical symptoms of this pattern include pain on the sides of the body including the head, jaw, shoulders,

chest, ribs and hips. Other manifestations of this pattern include insomnia, PMS, nausea, constipation, abdominal pain, hyperthyroidism, seizure, stroke, and Parkinson's Disease.

The Shaoyin-Shaoyang Pattern is characterized by physical and mental exhaustion. Their outlook on life is very negative. These people often are depressed and lack the motivation and enthusiasm to participate in activities they once enjoyed. These people usually sleep frequently.

It is my job, as an acupuncturist, to perform a thorough diagnostic evaluation and determine which pattern is at the root of your imbalance. Your unique treatment plan will restore balance, uplift mood, alleviate your physical symptoms and assist you in handling stress more effectively.

Acupuncture provides a safe, natural, drug-free and effective way to address all mental health disorders. Most people feel tranquil and relaxed after the first treatment, however acupuncture is not a “quick fix”. You may need to receive weeks or months of treatment in order to see lasting results. Give yourself the time required so you can experience the maximum benefits acupuncture has to offer. Call now to schedule an appointment, 239-260-4566 or go to my website, [www.AcupunctureSolutionsOnline.com](http://www.AcupunctureSolutionsOnline.com) for more information.

