



Long Covid Help

by Shoshanna Katzman



Acupuncture has been used throughout the centuries to restore homeostasis, relieve symptoms and thereby manifest health and wellness. With the advent of Long COVID, many sufferers have been seeking the help of acupuncturists to deal with their stubborn symptoms with great success. Some of the most common complaints reported by “long haulers” include extreme fatigue, brain fog, fever, pain, shortness of breath and sleep issues.

The World Health Organization estimates that approximately 10-20% of those infected with COVID-19 may suffer from medium and long-term COVID. Recent research has found acupuncture to be a viable adjunctive health care modality as part of a multidisciplinary approach to control symptoms and manage disease to improve quality of life. An acupuncturist typically views the extreme fatigue associated with this condition as deficiency of Qi (vital energy) and blood along with imbalance of yin and yang.

A “long hauler” may find additional help with Chinese herbal medicine as many traditional formulas are designed to eliminate pain, strengthen Wei Qi (immune function) and eliminate heat toxins (inflammation). In addition, the ancient Chinese exercises of Taiji and Qigong are of great support to re-establish homeostasis and build upright Qi. These exercises are particularly helpful when performed outside in the sunshine due to helping one connect with nature, deepening meditation through movement and soaking in natural vitamin D through the skin.

Relief through the nutritional wisdom gained from Chinese food therapy can also help. Balancing the body’s yin and yang energies through food is particularly important because Chinese medicine views Long COVID as associated with the yin qualities of cold and dampness. As such, eating warm and dry foods (rather than cold raw) and consuming room temperature or warm drinks (rather than from the fridge or iced) is best. Drinking ginger tea is another great choice as is drinking plenty of high quality water.

Following specific dietary recommendations, furthermore, has the potential to nourish vital organs that are deficient. This may include eating white foods (aka white beans, onions) or pungent foods (ginger) to strengthen the lungs. In addition, naturally salty foods (miso) or dark blue foods (blueberries) build energy of kidneys. Eating a balanced diet filled with varied colors and flavors is also highly recommended. And avoiding dairy allows the body to recover from its deficiency.

A “long hauler” will find it beneficial to eat foods high in antioxidants and/or supplement with ubiquinol (CoQ10), vitamin E and glutathione. Adding nutritional supplementation and foods to support mitochondrial health makes good sense due to their physiology being altered during a COVID cytokine storm (aka hyperinflammation). A few more possibilities include calcium, magnesium, vitamin D3 and fermented wheat-germ extract.

Getting plenty of sleep and maintaining a good work/life balance is essential. Minimizing stress and maintaining healthy and balanced relationships is also important. Having energy for life is a precious commodity, one that can be restored when your innate healing capability is stimulated. There is nothing more important than remembering your body heals. Keep faith in your body and commit to doing whatever is necessary to bring this to fruition.

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