

# Say Goodbye to Allergies

More and more people today are seeking relief from their allergies through acupuncture..

by Shoshanna Katzman



**M**ore and more people today are seeking relief from their allergies through acupuncture. This ancient Chinese medicine modality works by maximizing the body's healing response to an allergic episode. The acupuncture approach is focused on decreasing inflammation in areas of the body where an allergic reaction has been generated. It also helps to allay allergic symptoms by building lung qi (vital energy). According to Chinese medicine, this is due to the lungs role in governing the nose, respiration and the skin. The lungs also rule proper flow of qi which is at the root of vibrant health, energetic balance and a strong healing response.

Strengthening lung qi with acupuncture is also quite effective for building "wei qi", which protects the body from being invaded by external pathogens. Such boosting of energetic immunity is an important first level of defense against an allergic reaction. For many people this means becoming less triggered by pollens or smells such as perfume or cigarette smoke. Furthermore, acupuncture treatment for allergies focuses on building spleen qi which governs transformation and transportation of food. When spleen qi is strong, food is properly digested which reduces excess mucus production stemming from incomplete break down of food.

Taking Chinese herbs to strengthen lung and spleen qi is another excellent option. Chinese medicine further teaches us that eating a balanced diet filled with lots of different colors and tastes is advisable. Decreasing or eliminating dairy from the diet, even for a short period will help decrease mucus build up in the system. In addition, limit sugary desserts as they increase inflammation. It is also important to eat slowly



and chew food adequately to aid digestion, along with eating less cold and raw foods. Eating foods and drinks in just the right amount is another recommendation as it leaves extra energy for healing, rather than being used up digesting an over-abundance of food. The idea is to feel satiated rather than too full.

Making well thought out adjustments to one's environment is an important approach in decreasing allergic reactions. A major key is to inhale clean and pure air wherever and whenever possible. This may require keeping air purifiers on at home or at work. It is a good idea to see if carpeting is a culprit and be vigilant about getting rid of dust mites on bedding and clothes that haven't been worn for a while. Avoiding contact with substances or smells that trigger an allergic attack whenever possible is also important.

Taking time for meditation in the morning is a great way to begin and set the tone for the rest of the day. Regularly engaging in exercise that incorporates deep breathing may substantially help ward off allergic episodes. These can include the Chinese exercises of Qigong and Tai Chi as well as Yoga from the Ayurvedic tradition. To manage stress effectively, maintain balanced emotions and establish healthy lifestyle habits which means "burning the candle at both ends" is not an option.

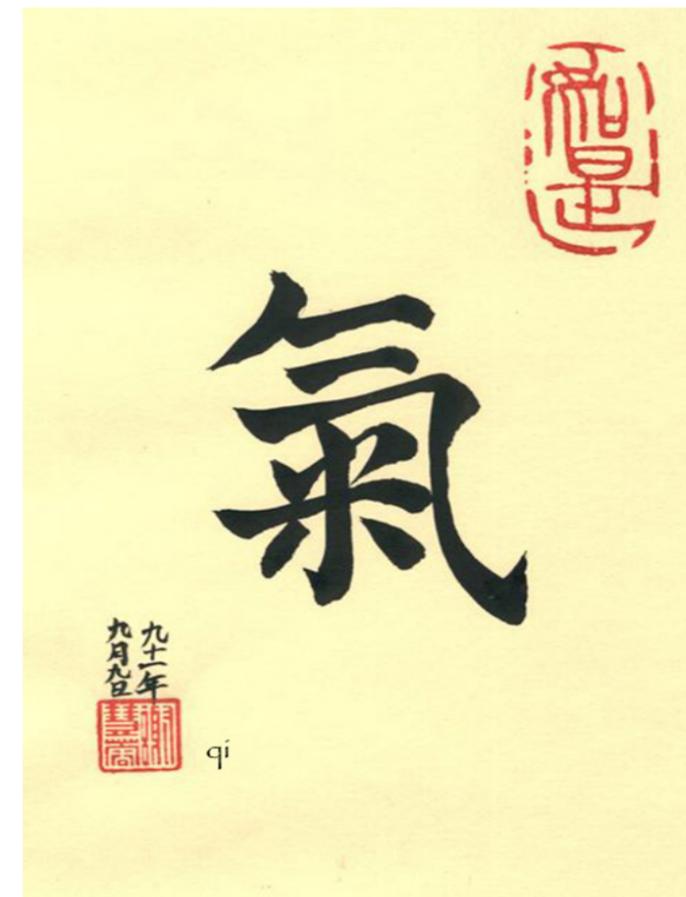
A healing side benefit of acupuncture is having "the me time" to collect and take stock in oneself. This allows one to tune into the underlying cause of the tendency toward imbal-

ance. It also provides the impetus to re-ignite one's innate healing capability. The realization and awareness derived often provokes a new commitment to incorporating healthier habits and patterns of behavior into one's daily life.

The number of acupuncture treatments necessary depends upon each person's constitution and time suffering from allergies. Just keep in mind that the body heals from the inside out and change takes time, so be patient and support your body in its healing process. The key is to surround yourself with knowledgeable and caring holistic health professionals and allopathic physicians who partner with you to achieve your health goals in the most supportive, efficient and timely manner possible.

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