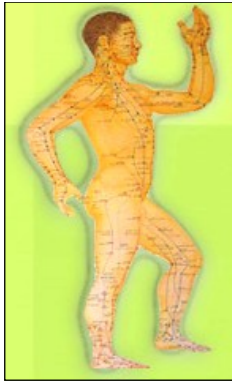


## What is acupuncture all about?

Acupuncture is a 5000 year old therapeutic tradition, one of the many treatment methods applied in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM).

It involves stimulating the body's natural healing abilities to promote physical and emotional balance.

Acupuncture is based on the theory that channels of electromagnetic energy circulate in regular patterns throughout the body all along the nervous system.



These energy channels, called meridians, are like rivers flowing through the body. An obstruction in the flow of these energy rivers can lead to a variety of health issues.

Treatment consists of needling specific trigger points to re-establish the regular flow through the meridians, helping the body to correct physiological and chemical imbalances.

## A widely recognized practice

Acupuncture is a registered profession in Quebec since 1995 and is fully recognized by the National Institute of Health (NIH), the U.S. authority in the field of health technology research.

Although proven to be effective, acupuncture is not miraculous. It is used on its own to treat a wide range of ailments. However, it can also be used in addition to conventional medical treatment methods to treat overly compromised systems and more acute cases. It is medically recognized in the treatment of many health problems, including digestive disorders, emotional conditions and to relieve withdrawal symptoms associated with substance use.

**Acupuncture is currently used in more than 700 addiction treatment programs worldwide.**

## How can acupuncture help me?



**It can help alleviate methadone side effects :**

- Constipation
- Insomnia
- Excessive Perspiration
- Sexual Dysfunction
- Apathy, etc ...

**It can relieve methadone withdrawal symptoms by:**

- Stimulating the release of endorphins
- Controlling pain and muscular spasms
- Preventing/Treating diarrhea or nausea
- Alleviating shakiness and sweating
- Reducing cravings and agitation
- Etc ...

**It can help manage stress, anxiety and depression.**

**It has been known to relieve withdrawal symptoms associated with heroin, cocaine, alcohol, benzodiazepines, nicotine, etc...**

## Counter-indications:

- Medical emergencies requiring immediate assistance, in which case it is best to consult a doctor.
- Being Pregnant—the stimulation of certain points can provoke uterine contractions so it is important to inform your acupuncturist of your pregnancy.
- Homeostatic Disorders: it is proven that the stimulation of certain points can alter your blood chemistry.

## Side effects ?



**NONE** or very few ! Occasional swelling or redness can sometimes occur around needle insertion points.

Acupuncture is among the safest of medical treatment methods. Disposable needles are generally used to avoid the risk of infection. Acupuncturists are bound by standard medical safety guidelines.

What if the sight of needles makes me nauseous?



Although the needles may look painful, they rarely are. Some people report feeling minimal pain as the needles are inserted but once they are in place, there is no pain felt. Acupuncture needles are about three times the width of a hair and are designed to pierce the skin without any resistance. However, modern alternative methods do exist, such as electropuncture or laser acupuncture. For further information, contact: *l'Ordre des Acupuncteurs du Québec*

Substance users have experienced significant improvement with acupuncture in the following areas:

### Physical

- + relaxation
- + pain relief
- + immune system and energy levels
- + withdrawal symptoms
- + sleep patterns
- + appetite regularity

### Mental / emotional

- + stress management
- + depression treatment
- + mental clarity, alertness and emotional stability

## Where to find an Acupuncturist

*Association des acupuncteurs du Québec* : 450 679 0853  
*Ordre des Acupuncteurs du Québec* : 1 800 474 5914 ou (514) 523 2882

The *Collège de Rosemont* offers an student clinic within its acupuncture program; treatment costs vary from **\$10 to \$20**. (514) 376 1620 extension 353

Here are a few acupuncturists who treat addiction-related health issues:  
Average cost = 50 \$

- ◆ Judith Curnew  
1613 Fullum  
(514) 527 8785
- ◆ Josée Aubry  
5870 Sherbrooke est  
(514) 899 0668

CRAN is not responsible for the quality of services offered outside of its own programs.

**Document prepared by :**  
Marie-Claude Fugier, Nurse  
in collaboration with C.R.A.N. clinical personnel  
And Alain Bernard, Acupuncturist  
**Layout by** Caroline Vaillancourt

## Acupuncture/Methadone :

### A winning combo



- **Having problems coping with the side effects of methadone ?**
- **Experiencing difficulties withdrawing from methadone ?**
- **Finding it hard to withdraw from heroin, alcohol, cocaine or other substances ?**
- **Living with persistent health problems ?**

**Read on... Acupuncture might be of help.**