

Acupuncture for Urinary Tract Infections

One of the most common health problems women can suffer from are recurrent urinary tract infections (UTI's). They can be caused by bacteria that enter the urethra and begin multiplying. They are often painful and disruptive to normal activity, and anything that can effectively help reduce them, is to be welcomed.

It now seems that acupuncture may be able to significantly reduce the recurrence of UTI's.

Researchers in Norway have published a report which shows that in a study of 94 women who had suffered regularly from the problem in the previous 12 months, there was a 50% improvement in those women who had had a course of acupuncture compared to the control group. The women who had the acupuncture also showed that they were able to more completely empty their bladder than the other women – a fact that may help explain how the acupuncture works. Acupuncture theory states that the 'energy' or functioning of a particular organ (e.g. the bladder) can be improved by the process of acupuncture.

The women had 2 treatments a week for 4 weeks, and were assessed in the 12 months before the treatment and regularly for 6 months following it.

"Our results showed that acupuncture reduced the recurrence rate among cystitis-prone women to half the rate among untreated women," the researchers noted in their conclusion. "Also, women in the acupuncture group exhibited reductions in residual urine. In summary, our results, as well as previous findings, indicate that acupuncture treatment may be effective in preventing recurrent lower UTIs in healthy adult women."

Mark Goulding, who is an acupuncturist in the Novara Centre Bray, says the research is yet another step along the road to showing how versatile a tool acupuncture can be.

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