

Acu News

"Healthy citizens are the greatest asset any country can have."- Winston S. Churchill

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Acupuncture Sticks It to Sports Injuries



Almost everybody has participated in sports activities at some point in their life. Along with playing sports comes the possibility of getting injured. Most of the time it's something simple like a sprained ankle or general overuse of a muscle causing pain. For those weekend warriors and everyday athletes, it just means a couple of days rest. But for a professional athlete, a couple days off during the season can really derail their momentum. Many athletes are turning to acupuncture to help them heal quicker. Here are some ways acupuncture helps in treating sports injuries.

When there is injury to an area, there may be swelling that accompanies the injury. Swelling is a normal biological function and generally you should let it take its course. But, excessive swelling that doesn't dissipate can lead to stagnation of blood in the injured area. Over time, stagnation can make an injury worse. Acupuncture needles actually encourage the body to release the swelling quicker through promoting urination. This gets rid of the excess water and allows the blood to flow more freely. Proper blood flow allows the area to receive the components it needs to heal.

Sports injuries also create pain. The pain can be localized or it can radiate to other areas and acupuncture is a great tool for treating pain. In fact, pain relief is probably the most common reason people seek out an acupuncturist to begin with. Pain from injury is again related to a stagnation in the energetic channels that run through the body. Acupuncture needles open up the channels allowing blood and lymph to flow freely by

removing the blockage. Once the blockage or stagnation is gone, the pain will soon lessen and disappear.

Inflammation is frequently a problem associated with sports injuries. The thought used to be that applying ice to inflamed areas would bring the inflammation down. And for the first 48 to 72 hours, this rule still applies. However, 72 hours after an injury occurs, one should begin applying heat to prevent further stagnation in the affected area. That aside, beginning acupuncture treatments immediately following a sports injury is good medicine. There are specific acupuncture points on the body that function to reduce inflammation. So getting treated right away can actually lead to you being back on the field sooner.

Muscle tightness and spasms are also common with sports injuries. This happens when the muscles surrounding the area become overworked and overextended. Acupuncture works very well for stopping muscle spasms and releasing muscle tightness. There is an accessory modality known as gua sha that involves gently scraping a smooth surfaced item like a spoon, along the muscle to "release" the tension accumulated within it. Most acupuncturists will provide gua sha after the acupuncture needles have been pulled. This gives the

athlete a much deeper treatment and helps the muscles relax back to their normal position.

Utilizing acupuncture when you experience a sports injury is a great way to get yourself healthy. And generally, it works faster than just rest, ice and ibuprofen. The acupuncture needles enhance blood flow to the area of injury. Increased blood flow to an injured area allows for the muscles to relax and pain to dissipate. If you have a sports-related injury, consider acupuncture to help you get better. To learn more, contact a licensed acupuncturist. Your body will thank you and you'll be back out there sooner than you might have thought.

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Acupuncture in Professional Sports

Many professional sports teams now have licensed acupuncturists on staff to help treat injury and increase overall athletic performance within the players. Here are a few famous athletes who receive acupuncture.

1 Aaron Rodgers, the quarterback for the Green Bay Packers is just one of many professional athletes who use acupuncture for recovery and performance. Ever since Rodgers injured his calf in 2015 he has seen an acupuncturist to not only relieve pain, but also to increase his performance on the football field.



2 NBA superstar and newly-retired Kobe Bryant also uses acupuncture. Bryant has been a long time supporter of Traditional Chinese Medicine, and has used acupuncture to battle the many injuries he faced toward the end of his career.



3 Kim Clijsters, a former No. 1 ranked tennis player, started using acupuncture after sustaining a hip injury in 2010. After receiving treatment for the injury, the Belgian went on finish with an impressive win-streak the U.S. Open.



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