

Acu News

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

VOL 8.2

Acupuncture Enhances Sports Performance and Recovery

Acupuncture has been used time and again to help athletes relieve pain. But acupuncture and the accessory modalities associated with it can do so much more. Using acupuncture treatments can actually enhance an athlete's performance and recovery from any sports-related injury. Let's take a look.

When an athlete is in training, he or she is constantly pushing themselves to be better: a better time, a longer jump, a further distance, etc. An athlete's body is put through constant stress. Muscles are pushed to their maximum and sometimes tiny microscopic tears form. If the athlete were able to rest properly, these micro-tears would heal. But, when an athlete is in training, the micro-tears don't have time to heal properly. So the body becomes fatigued, sometimes painful and the probability of serious injury increases. Acupuncture helps the body to heal, restores healing levels of energy or Qi (pronounced "chee") and strengthens the body inside and out, thus accelerating the athlete's recovery time.

One of the accessory modalities in the toolbox of most acupuncturists is something called gua sha. Gua sha involves gently scraping the skin with a smooth instrument like a ceramic spoon. The areas scraped are directly over the muscles. Gua sha stimulates blood flow to the muscles allowing them to relax. Gua sha is a great recovery tool for athletes and it was even recently featured in the 2016 NBA Finals. Gua sha is best performed by a trained professional who knows the body well and can determine the best pressure level for your condition.

Athletes who receive acupuncture treatments while in training generally recover quicker. They also tend to have more energy and stamina. Acupuncture can be used as a training tool for athletes with great success. But, if you are unable to get regular acupuncture treatments, you can still utilize acupressure on specific points to help boost your Qi and energy levels. One such acupressure point is on the stomach energetic meridian, stomach 36. To locate stomach 36, the leg should be flexed. The point is on the lateral or outside of the leg about three finger breadths from the lower edge of the kneecap, in between the heads of the tibia and fibula (lower leg bones). Applying pressure to



this point will increase levels of Qi and blood in the body providing more stamina and fighting fatigue.

Another point to utilize is along the large intestine energetic meridian which runs down the arm to the tip of the forefinger. This point is large intestine 4 and it is great for calming spasms and relieving pain. When you squeeze the thumb and forefinger together, the point is at the apex of the mound of flesh that is created. Large intestine 4 is frequently used by acupuncturists to combat pain anywhere in the body.

As any athlete knows, stretching prior to a game, match or run is imperative. One of the best ways to stretch is tai chi. Tai chi is an ancient martial art that focuses more on being defensive instead of aggressive. It also utilizes almost every muscle in the body through slow, fluid, animal-like movements. The other nice thing about tai chi is that it helps you focus on your breathing, which helps greatly when training. By practicing tai chi prior to a workout or event, the athlete is getting the best of both worlds, a full body stretch session as well as breathing techniques. Overall, this makes for a more balanced and relaxed athlete. There are many forms of tai chi and tons of videos available, so try I and find one that works best for you and your particular sport.

As you can see, Traditional Chinese Medicine has much to offer for athletes both from the training standpoint as well as helping with recovery from an injury. Always seek out a properly trained, fully licensed acupuncturist so you can get the maximum benefits.

When you add acupuncture to your training regimen, you should notice quite a difference in your performance.

Now go get em!

Contributing writer: **Kim Filkins, B.S., M.S.O.M., L.Ac.**



Kim M. Filkins, is licensed by the state of Wisconsin as a practitioner of acupuncture and she is recognized by the National Certification Commission of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine.

Performance-Enhancing Herbs

Everyone is looking for that competitive edge. Have you ever wondered how you can easily increase your athletic performance (legally of course)? Well, look no further. Here are three performance-enhancing herbs that will kick your body into gear and have you playing to the fullest of your potential.



1 Ginseng - Ginseng is a well-known fix to increase performance. So well-known, that many consider ginseng to be the most-studied herb in the field of performance enhancement. It is said to restore Qi and increase physical power.



2 Gotu Kola - Known more commonly as Indian Pennywort, gotu kola increases energy levels and aids in quick recovery of sports-related injuries. The herb can be consumed in pill form, in a drink or in a salad.



3 Rhodiola - Rhodiola may just be your new favorite go-to herb. Ditch the 5-hour Energy, and pick up some of this miracle herb. From fighting fatigue to increasing overall athletic performance, there is little rhodiola can't do. You can find rhodiola in both pill and powdered-form.



AbsoluteQi Acupuncture and Wellness Center * Rhonda Hogan, L.Ac.**
710 Easton Ave, Suite C
Somerset, NJ 08873
732-227-9991
www.AbsoluteQi.com

© 2016 Copyright Acupuncture Media Works/AcuDownloads, All Rights Reserved. The information contained within the AcuNews newsletter is only used to educate and inform. This newsletter is not a substitute for the advice of a licensed and registered health care provider. Seek prompt attention for emergencies. Consult a health care provider for specific health concerns, and before starting a diet, cleanse or exercise routine.
Photo Credits: ©iStock.com/Deklofenak, ©iStock.com/Aksonov, ©iStock.com/dangdumrong, ©iStock.com/Sergei Dubrovskii, ©iStock.com/4kodiak, ©iStock.com/lzf