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## Treatment of Skin Conditions with Acupuncture

Acupuncture and Oriental medicine can be very effective at treating skin conditions. Treatments can provide quick relief for acute symptoms and significant and lasting relief from recurrent or chronic skin conditions.

The skin reflects and reacts to imbalances within the body's internal landscape and the effects of the environment. Internal disharmonies caused by strong emotions, diet, and your constitution, as well as environmental influences such as wind, dryness, dampness, and heat, can all contribute to the development of a skin disorder.



To keep your skin healthy and beautiful on the outside, you must work on the inside of your body as well. Increasing the flow of energy, blood and lymph circulation improves the skin's natural healthy color.

Promotion of collagen production increases muscle tone and elasticity, helping to firm the skin. Stimulating the formation of body fluids nourishes the skin and encourages it to be moister, softer, smoother and more lustrous.

General skin conditions that can be treated with acupuncture and Oriental medicine include acne, dermatitis, eczema, pruritus, psoriasis, rosacea, shingles and urticaria (hives). Oriental medicine does not recognize skin problems as one particular syndrome. Instead, it aims to treat the specific symptoms that are unique to each individual using a variety of techniques with acupuncture, such as herbal medicine, bodywork, lifestyle/dietary recommendations and energetic exercises to restore imbalances found in the body.

**If you suffer from a skin condition or would like to know how to optimize your skin health, call today to learn how acupuncture and Oriental medicine can help you.**

### Suffering from Dermatitis?

Dermatitis describes different conditions of skin inflammation. There are many kinds but the most common ones are atopic, contact and seborrheic. All three of these types manifest differently on the skin, and for different reasons.

Atopic dermatitis is more commonly referred to as eczema. The problem area typically reddens, becomes itchy, and then when scratched, the skin oozes, dries, and eventually a crust forms. It usually first appears during infancy or in young children. It often arises in the folds of the skin, where air doesn't easily reach and the temperature may be slightly higher. The face, particularly the cheeks, may also present with symptoms.



Contact dermatitis pops up when the skin makes contact with an irritating substance. Skin usually feels itchy, looks red and may blister. An irritant can be anything from jewelry to pollen blowing in the air. A

common example is the rash from poison ivy. It can be intensely itchy and take on an awful appearance, but ultimately disappears after 2-4 weeks without having done major harm. Recognizing and avoiding the irritant is sound advice in this case.

Seborrheic dermatitis is another way of describing a very bad, persistent case of dandruff. The tell-tale signs include flaky, scaly and itchy sensations on the scalp, but sometimes appear on the upper chest, back and face. When occurring in babies, the condition is known as cradle cap. The culprit is a fungus which thrives in body parts inhabited by oil-producing glands. A hair rinse made from a liter of water, mixed with 5-10 drops of tea tree oil, may help reduce skin flaking and itchiness.

Due to the variety in the different types of dermatitis, it is important to receive a proper diagnosis. Not only will any problems on the skin need immediate attention, but it is also possible that the immune system is weak and needs strengthening.

**If you suffer from dermatitis schedule an appointment today!**

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## Dry Skin Relief

The medical term for pathologically dry skin is xerosis. Xero is the Greek word for dry. Dry skin usually manifests temporarily, but in chronic cases, symptoms may persist for weeks, or in worst case scenarios, a lifetime. Certain diseases such as hypothyroidism, atopic dermatitis (eczema) and type 2 diabetes may produce symptoms of xerosis.

Xerosis presents physical and mental challenges. Some patients bear the burden of unsightly areas on the skin and suffer from pain or bouts of itchiness. For some it can be so bad as to interfere with the duration and quality of sleep.



Bleeding from cracks, or chafing from overzealous scratching open the body up to infection. For these reasons, seeking help at the first sign of any of these symptoms can help prevent symptoms from worsening.

Lifestyle factors can cause dry skin, and in these cases modifying your behavior can help reduce symptoms. Central heating units, fireplaces and space heaters generate warmth, but at the expense of moisture in the air. Try turning down the heat and using hats and blankets while indoors.

An arid environment in general, whether warm or cool, can provoke or worsen symptoms of dry skin. Adding moisture to the air can help with dry skin, so consider using a humidifier in your home. For a quick fix, place an uncovered bowl of water in your room and just let it sit. This allows the water to slowly evaporate and add moisture to the room.

According to the theory of acupuncture and Oriental Medicine, the lungs directly affect the state of the skin. This is because they are one of the organs responsible for fluid metabolism. A healthy respiratory system ensures the skin receives the proper amount of moisture. Assisting the lungs is necessary to create fluids which can nourish the skin.

**Whether you experience dry skin on a periodic or chronic basis, call today to find out how acupuncture can bring you relief!**

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## Study: Acupuncture Effective in Reducing Allergy-Caused Skin Irritation

A 2010 study showed acupuncture to be an effective treatment for allergen-caused itchiness and skin irritation in people with eczema. The study titled "Influence of acupuncture on type I hypersensitivity itch and the wheal and flare response in adults with atopic eczema-a blinded, randomized, placebo-controlled, crossover trial," brought good news to eczema sufferers in the acupuncture and Oriental Medicine community.

Study participants included those suffering from eczema, who agreed to be exposed to an allergen in order to elicit an allergic skin reaction. The trial then rated the itch intensity, and examined the size of the wheals (a welt, lesion or swelling) and the skin perfusion rate.

Perfusion refers to the process of blood delivery through the capillaries and into skin cells. Higher rates of perfusion are generally a positive thing. This indicates that an adequate supply of blood swiftly reaches the skin in order to expedite the healing needed at the problem area.

Not only did the real acupuncture participants feel significantly less intense itchiness, but the size of their wheals measured smaller when compared with the other groups. Additionally, the higher rate of skin perfusion observed in the real acupuncture participants also demonstrated the viability of acupuncture as a therapy for atopic eczema.

Source: Pfab F, Huss-Marp J, Gatti A, Fuqin J, Athanasiadis GI, Irnich D, Raap U, Schober W, Behrendt H, Ring J, Darsow U. "Influence of acupuncture on type I hypersensitivity itch and the wheal and flare response in adults with atopic eczema - a blinded, randomized, placebo-controlled, crossover trial.", *Allergy*. 2010 Jul;65(7):903-10. doi: 10.1111/j.1398-9995.2009.02284.x. Epub 2009 Dec 11.

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## Study Shows Acupuncture Effective for Skin Conditions

According to a large-scale analysis carried out by medical researchers, acupuncture is an effective primary treatment for a variety of dermatological conditions. As reported in the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* in 2015, evidence compiled from 24 different scientific studies, underwent a thorough investigation.



Researchers evaluated scientific studies performed on numerous types of skin conditions. They included ectopic dermatitis (eczema), pruritus (intense itching), urticarial (hives), acne, neurodermatitis (chronic, severe itching), chloasma (rashes due to pregnancy) and facial elasticity.

Out of the 24 studies examined, 17 of them showed positive results with the use of acupuncture, including significant improvements in symptoms. As the number of people seeking Oriental Medicine treatments increases, the researchers recommend further studies to fully understand the mechanisms that drive acupuncture and how it can treat skin conditions.

Source: Ma C1, Sivamani RK1. Acupuncture as a Treatment Modality in Dermatology: A Systematic Review. *J Altern Complement Med*. 2015 Sep;21(9):520-9. doi: 10.1089/acm.2014.0274. Epub 2015 Jun 26.

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## Troubling Acne?

While acne is a condition that affects nearly 85 percent of all adolescents, the American Dermatologist Association reports that 20 percent of adults have an active acne condition. Although some are led to believe that acne is a problem that only teenagers experience, the fact is that acne can impact any age group.

Acne often occurs when the hair follicles or pores become clogged from oil, dirt, dead skin cells, bacteria, environmental toxins or physical irritations on the surface of the skin. Hair follicles are connected to sebaceous glands, which secrete an oily substance known as sebum. Ordinarily, the secretion of sebum provides a luscious, healthy sheen to hair and skin. But there are times when the substance builds up, causing the pores to become plugged.

For some, acne may just simply be a nuisance from time to time, but for others the problem is chronic. Not only do they suffer from frequent acne breakouts, but also acne scarring. What's more, only as little as 11 percent of the 60 million Americans struggling with acne will seek professional treatment.

If you are showing symptoms of acne, even if it's not chronic and severe, you may want to consider

acupuncture. In addition to directly treating your skin condition through a personalized treatment plan, you can also receive treatment for any underlying issues, and if you seek treatment earlier rather than later, you may help reduce the incidence of permanent scarring.

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