

# Acu News

"Peace comes from within. Do not seek it without." - Buddha

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## How Acupuncture Can Safely Help With Allergies and Asthma

**D**o you suffer from allergies or asthma? If so, you aren't alone. It's estimated that more than 26 million Americans have the chronic inflammatory disease asthma, and more than 50 million Americans have nasal allergies. While most people resort to harsh prescription drugs to treat these conditions, a safer and more effective solution may lie in the Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) acupuncture.

Some people might turn their head at the thought of treating asthma by placing small needles under your skin. However, this ancient practice is believed to be effective in the treatment of numerous respiratory disorders, including asthma. The World Health Organization (WHO) even listed asthma as being "a condition for which the therapeutic effect of acupuncture has been shown but for which further proof is needed." This doesn't necessarily mean that acupuncture will cure your asthma, but it can help alleviate the symptoms and reduce the frequency of flareups.

Acupuncture involves the placement of fine needles in specific points of the body, known as acupuncture points. The idea behind this practice is that placing the needles in these areas will restore the body's flow of energy (Qi). When Qi becomes stagnant,

it leaves the individual susceptible to disease and illness, which is why it's important to keep it moving throughout the body. Professional acupuncturists often treat asthma by using acupuncture points found in the Lung, Stomach and Kidney meridians.

Acupuncture may also help those who suffer from allergies. Allergies are the result of the immune system's wrongful identification of what it believes to be a foreign invader. When you are exposed to an allergen, your immune system may view the substance or pathogen as being a foreign invader, at which point it responds by manifesting symptoms like sneezing, runny nose, itchy eyes, etc.

By restoring the body's Qi, the immune system is given a helpful boost of energy that allows it to properly identify what's a foreign invader and what's not. Whether your allergies are minor or severe, you should consider seeking the services of an acupuncturist. It's a safe and painless process that can reinvigorate your body and mind, alleviating the symptoms of both allergies and asthma. A study published in the journal *Annals of Internal Medicine* found acupuncture to offer greater relief of allergies when compared to both antihistamines and sham acupuncture.



## Acupressure For Asthma

**A**ffecting nearly 1 in 12 people worldwide, asthma is an all-too-common respiratory disease. It's characterized by chronic inflammation of the airways, which subsequently triggers a wide range of symptoms like wheezing, coughing, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, and tightness in the chest. While some people assume asthma is nothing more than a mild condition with no real health implications, this couldn't be further from the truth. In 2011 alone, a quarter of a million people lost their lives as a result of asthma-related complications.

If you or someone you know suffers from asthma, you should consider using acupressure to treat it. While there's no known cure for asthma, many people have reported significant relief through acupressure.

### What Is Acupressure?

Not to be confused with acupuncture, acupressure is a form of alternative medicine that involves pressure exerted on specific areas of the body in an attempt to restore the body's flow of life energy (Qi). Treatment typically involves placing the fingers, hand or elbow on the problematic meridians and pressing down with moderate pressure. By placing pressure on these areas, the body's Qi is able to flow freely once again; thus, relieving a wide variety of adverse symptoms and conditions.

In 2011, researchers performed a systematic review of the effectiveness of acupressure to treat various symptoms (e.g. nausea, pain, insomnia). In 35 of the 43 controlled trials analyzed, researchers found acupressure to be an effective form of treatment. Another study conducted that same year found acupressure to effectively relieve pain during childbirth.

### Using Acupressure To Treat Asthma

One of the many benefits of acupressure is that it can be performed anywhere, anytime. Furthermore, you can perform it on yourself, negating the need for a therapist.

If you suffer from asthma, try placing pressure on your upper left or right chest area, about three finger widths under the collarbone. Using two or three fingers, gently press this area and hold it in place for 30-45 seconds before releasing. In addition to treating asthma, this acupressure point is also known to relieve chest congestion, coughing and difficulties breathing.

Another helpful acupressure point for asthma sufferers is found next to the breastbone, also below the collarbone. Simply follow the steps outlined above by placing two or three fingers here and you should notice an improvement in your symptoms.



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