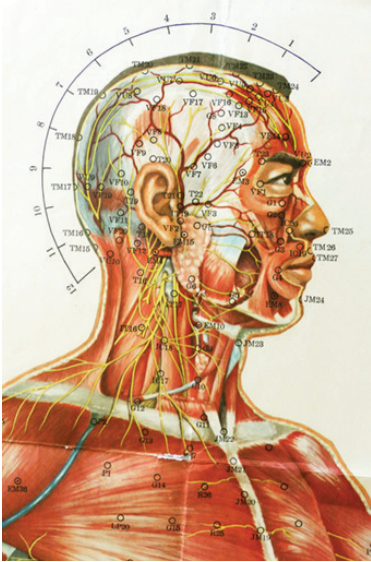


THE COTTER MEDICAL HISTORY MUSEUM



Acupuncture an ancient medical practice

A donation by a retired Christchurch doctor contained a large number of acupuncture-related items, the majority of which were manufactured in China during the second half of the 20th century.

Acupuncture in China has a 3000+ year history, with a progressive decline in its use in the 19th century being reversed during the Mao Zedong era (1949-1976). This led to increased acupuncture-related research by Chinese physicians and scientists, however, the results of that work were only ever published in Chinese journals.

In traditional Chinese medicine, acupuncture is seen as a technique whereby energy which flows through pathways ('meridians') is 'rebalanced', this then either stimulating or dispersing the flow of energy.

In contrast, western medicine sees acupuncture points as targets for the stimulation of nerves, muscles and tissue. Treatment in this context being used primarily to relieve pain. A major study of acupuncture meta-data reached the following conclusions:

1. Acupuncture has a clinically relevant effect on chronic pain that persists over time.
2. The effect of acupuncture cannot be explained only by placebo effects.
3. Factors in addition to the specific effects of needling are important contributors.
4. Referral for acupuncture treatment is a reasonable option for chronic pain patients.

Journal of Pain (2018) 19/5: 455-475.

On November 1st 2021, the profession of 'Chinese Medicine' in New Zealand was regulated under the 'Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003'.

Also of interest are results from acupuncture analgesia (AA) research (Dept of Zoology and Physiology, University of Toronto, 1987) which have led to the development of techniques for enhanced regeneration of damaged nerves. Using a 10 μ Amp DC current with the negative pole (needle) located distally to the damaged (lesioned) sciatic nerve, regeneration was reduced from 35 days to 30.

Image information. Chinese script on both acupuncture models states... 'Acupuncture meridians model' and 'Made in China'. The width of the child's hand model is 67mm, and the cardboard body map is 995mm high.

