

Alternative Treatments for Arthritis and Fibromyalgia

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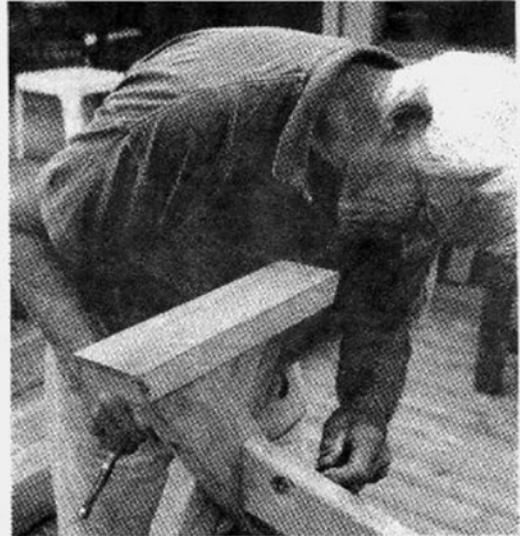
Fall is here and we are marching into winter! The air is crisp, the leaves crush beneath our feet and even here in SoCal, there will soon be the smell of fireplaces burning as the nights get colder. Those chilly nights are welcome by many, but for those who suffer from rheumatic disorders, winter is not a welcome time of year – as the cold weather brings pain, stiffness and muscle aches.

According to the American College of Rheumatology, fibromyalgia is the second most common rheumatic disorder in the United States behind arthritis. People diagnosed with fibromyalgia can suffer from widespread pain and tenderness in the muscles and soft tissue (including tender points) as well as sleep problems, fatigue, and intestinal dysfunction. Prescription medications have proven limited in the relief they can provide, thus encouraging university and research institutions to probe the success of alternative treatment methods.

In August of this year, the International Association for the Study of Pain held its 11th World Congress in Sydney, Australia. During the conference, it was announced by Mayo Clinic scientists that "acupuncture can provide significant relief from the symptoms of fibromyalgia." According to conference attendee



Arthritis pain can prevent patients from doing the things they enjoy most.



Alternative treatments can provide relief from the pain of arthritis and fibromyalgia.

Dr. David Martin, "The most dramatic improvements were observed in the relief of pain, anxiety and fatigue."

Martin's study included 50 fibromyalgia patients whose symptoms hadn't improved with other treatments. Results were based on questionnaires completed before the study, immediately after a treatment, and one month later – with the greatest improvement seen one month after starting treatments. The researchers noted, "The acupuncture treatments were well tolerated, with minimal side effects."

Acupuncture has been used in traditional Chinese medicine to treat pain for centuries. The practice involves inserting tiny needles in strategic parts of the body to improve the flow of what practitioners call chi, or vital energy, said to travel through the body on energy pathways called meridians. When these pathways are blocked, this leads us to experience pain. Dr. Mindy Dai, a leading acupuncturist in the Burbank area, explains, "My goal is to

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determine at what points the flow of energy has stopped. If I can re-establish that flow, my patients are usually amazed with the results."

Dr. Dai has been successfully treating patients suffering from arthritis and fibromyalgia for over three years. An alternative medicine specialist, Dr. Dai specializes in acupuncture, Chinese massage, detoxification and ancient Chinese herbal nutrition therapy. She was not at all surprised by the results of the Mayo Clinic study, offering, "For arthritis and fibromyalgia, I encourage my patients to combine an alternative treatment plan with their medication. I find that is very successful. Using acupuncture, massage and herb therapy, often times my patients are able to reduce the dosage of their medications and/or the frequency that they need it. I also offer customized dietary plans and exercise regimens to those who are interested."

Dr. Dai shares, "Each patient responds to treatments at a different pace and success rate and with varying results. I consider it a gift to have a successful practice that allows me to alleviate pain from peoples' lives. My

patients are loyal, happy people who pay me the most amazing compliments about how I've helped them enjoy life again. I

can't think of any career that could be more rewarding."

Dr. Mindy Dai would be happy to answer any questions

you may have about the alternative treatments she offers at (818) 842-8177, (818) 216-4887, or via e-mail at minhongdai@poi.net.

Her office is located across from the NBC studios at 2601 W. Alameda Ave., Ste. 402 in Burbank.