

Your Mental Health



Health & Wellness

Acupuncture

Looking to try a different technique to treat chronic pain? Acupuncture is a holistic health technique that stems from traditional Chinese medicine practices in which specific points (“acupoints”) on the body are stimulated by inserting thin needles into the skin. Surprisingly, this practice that involves needles is relatively painless!

Acupuncture is said to treat the following:

- ❖ Headaches and Migraines
- ❖ Back Pain
- ❖ Insomnia
- ❖ Pregnancy/Postpartum Pain and Discomfort

Acupuncture practitioners believe that there is a flow, known as “qi” or “chi,” that is located in certain areas (“meridians”) throughout the body. Chi is thought to be what separates the sick from the healthy; when chi is not balanced, illness, pain, poor sleep and fatigue can all occur. The belief is that by inserting needles lightly into certain points on the body, the chi flow can be tapped into and the patient’s energy can be rebalanced.

Acupuncture points tend to be located where nerves enter a muscle, the midpoint of a muscle, or at a point where muscle joins with bone.

Acupuncture frequency depends on the condition. Initial visits usually range from \$75 to \$95 for an acupuncture session and medical consultation, and routine visits usually cost \$50 to \$70. You may be able to use Health Savings Account funds to pay for visits.



Anxiety & Depression

Anxiety and depression affect more than 40 million adults in the United States. Further, nearly one-half of those diagnosed with depression are also diagnosed with an anxiety disorder. As with any illness, treatment should be tailored to a specific diagnosis and can include the following:

- ❖ Psychotherapy (psychological treatment without medical treatment) and cognitive-behavioral therapy focus on facing one’s fears as part of the pathway to recovery and don’t involve medication.
- ❖ Medications can be useful for symptoms of depression and anxiety, as both respond to treatment with selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor and serotonin norepinephrine reuptake inhibitor medications.
- ❖ Support groups, relaxation/meditation techniques, therapy and regular exercise can also help to reduce mild symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Under the Affordable Healthcare Act (ACA), all individual and small-group plans are required to cover ten essential health benefits with no annual or lifetime limits, including mental health and addiction treatment (collectively referred to as behavioral health services). The ACA also requires all non-grandfathered health plans – including large-group plans – to cover a range of preventive care at no cost to the patient. Among the benefits included are depression and alcohol misuse screening for adults and adolescents.

You can find guides to treatment, resources for support and tips for helping friends and relatives at the Anxiety and Depression Association of America website, www.adaa.org.

Infused Water & Teas

Have you ever tried fruit-infused water? Getting your daily-recommended water intake may offer more variety than you thought! Squeezing or steeping fruit to release juice can enhance water and tea’s nutritional value and flavor, among other things. And if nothing else, it just might help keep you better hydrated:

Get more nutrients in your diet.

Natural fruit juices add vitamins, minerals and antioxidants, in addition to the hydrating benefits of water. Ignore the “vitamin waters” at the store — this is the real deal.

Satisfy your sweet tooth.

Help curb those sugar cravings by adding sweeter fruits such as strawberries and raspberries to your tea or water.

Help eliminate toxins.

Due to their high antioxidant content, fruit-infused water could help cleanse the body and eliminate toxins. Black and green teas also contain antioxidants that have been linked to lower cholesterol levels. Cheers to a stronger immune system!

Overwhelmed by the store’s tea selection? These three types can help your body stay well:

- ❖ **Oolong:** 50-75 mg of caffeine; Wide range of flavors
- ❖ **Echinacea:** Caffeine free available; strong flavor
- ❖ **Lemon Ginger:** Caffeine free available; citrus flavor



Benefit Spotlight

Biometric Screenings

With corporate wellness programs on the rise, biometric screenings are more popular than ever. Employees who take preventive measures to keep disease at bay and stay aware of their potential health risks go to the doctor less, which decreases overall health care expenses. To encourage healthy living, a biometric screening, sometimes called a biometric assessment, provides a clinical survey of key health measures such as height, weight, body mass index, blood pressure, blood cholesterol, blood glucose and aerobic fitness tests. A screening may be conducted at an employer health fair, a commercial laboratory, a provider’s office, or at home using a kit. Most employers offer a variety of options to allow all employees, and sometimes spouses, to participate in the screening program. Consult your company for specific wellness program participation requirements.

