



## After your first acupuncture treatment:

Most patients will feel the effects of acupuncture immediately and for others it may take a few treatments before they notice a difference. Both situations are completely normal as each body responds in its own unique way.

The most common side effects of Acupuncture are things everyone wants: **better sleep, more energy, mental clarity, better digestion, less stress**. The most common side effect is a feeling of extreme **relaxation** or euphoria.

Remember to **stay hydrated** after acupuncture, refrain from vigorous exercise, and limit your alcohol or caffeine intake after acupuncture treatments.

Although not very common, side effects that are less pleasant may occur. They are good to be aware of so that if you do experience them, you know they're normal and nothing to be too concerned about.

**Fatigue:** People can feel wiped out after acupuncture. A more common result is increased energy, but sometimes the "acu-land" effect hangs on a little longer. This is your body telling you that it's depleted. If you have this experience, take it easy for the remainder of the day. Take a bath that night. Go to bed early. Come morning, the combination of acupuncture and rest will leave you feeling born again.

**Soreness:** Body parts where acupuncture needles get inserted can feel sore after needles are removed. I've found that this most commonly occurs with points in the hands and feet. Soreness from acupuncture typically dissipates within 24 hours.

**Bruising:** Although less common than soreness, bruising can occur at the needling site. They are generally nothing to worry about beyond the aesthetic inconvenience.

**Lightheadedness:** This is pretty rare, but it can happen. When your acupuncture session is over, take your time getting up and move gently as you gather your things to leave. If you find yourself feeling lightheaded after the treatment, sit for a few minutes and take some deep breaths. Eating a small snack before your treatment can greatly reduce the likelihood of this happening.

**Emotional release:** Sometimes people cry in acupuncture. Not because they're in pain, but because their emotions, which can get stifled while powering through life, become free-flowing. The emotional release that can happen in acupuncture usually is a positive experience, but it can sometimes be surprising. From an acupuncture perspective, physical and emotional health are interconnected, so emotional shifts suggest forthcoming physical changes as well.

**Symptoms may appear worse:** While most people notice a marked improvement in their symptoms following acupuncture, some may feel worse before they start feeling better. In natural medicine circles, this is sometimes referred to as a healing crisis. The good news about this side effect is that it's a sign that things are moving. In the case of acupuncture, this means that the primary objective is being met. That is, you are starting to transition on multiple levels from stuck to unstuck.

While these side effects are rarely cause for concern, you know your body best. If any of the above side effects feel like they're too severe or lasting too long -- or if you notice any additional negative reactions to an acupuncture treatment -- you should contact our office at [310.832.5818](tel:310.832.5818).