

# HEALTH REPORT

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## THERE ARE MANY REASONS PATIENTS COME TO ACUPUNCTURE

People seek help from an acupuncturist for all sorts of symptoms – and in growing numbers – as this healing profession becomes increasingly known and its services more accepted in the western world. Now that this is occurring, have you ever wondered what the main reasons might be that bring a person to Acupuncture?

Researchers in the Department of Health Sciences at the University of York, England were curious as well. In addition to wanting to know, they also wanted to find out if people's reasons had changed from a similar query back in 1988. The information assembled came from a survey of 9,408 British Acupuncture patients. Some of the demographics, reasons for treatment and who paid for the office visits are quite interesting.

The first finding of the study is that women are more likely to visit an Acupuncturist than men – 74 percent of the patients were women. Their average age was 51 years, and 87 percent of the patients had received Acupuncture at least once before. Of note is that 95 percent paid for treatment out of their own pocket.

The most common problem reported, with relief for symptoms being sought, was for musculoskeletal issues at 38 percent. This was followed by psychological concerns at 11 percent, general (unspecified) at 9 percent, neurological problems at 8 percent, and gynecological/obstetric problems at 8 percent. An additional 5 percent of the patients said they were seeking treatment for their own “general well-being.”

As for what prompted them to become an Acupuncture patient, a self-referral was most common with 39 percent of the visits falling into this category. However, 78 percent of the patients surveyed said they had discussed their problems or symptoms with a doctor.

The study results compared to 1988 were quite limited, but researchers did point out that the number of people seeking help for musculo skeletal problems had dropped significantly. To the researchers, this indicated a wider case mix (a greater variety of reasons for people seeking treatment) than among patients from 20 years ago.

Acupuncture brings over 5,000 years of help and treatment knowledge to bear on numerous conditions. Help can be only a single treatment away or achieved through a series of visits over a specified time period. Solutions are drug-free and generally quite painless. Whatever the symptoms, there is a good chance there is a solution waiting with a visit to an acupuncturist.