

Here are a few recommendations for the day/evening following your treatment:

- **Take it easy.** If exercise is important to your routine today, moderate exercise is best (e.g. swimming, walking, biking, gentle yoga, tai chi, physical therapy).
- **Treat your body well.** You have brought your body into a state of healing; drinking alcohol, doing recreational drugs, or overdoing stimulants like caffeine, nicotine and sugar will put your body back on the defensive.
- **Eat well.** Acupuncture has increased your ability to assimilate nutrition, which aids in repair and balance. Take advantage of it! Always eat natural, nutrient-dense foods like organic, seasonal vegetables and fruits, pastured/organic meats, eggs and fish, whole, fermented dairy products, and sea vegetables. Avoid artificial or processed foods, refined flours, grains and legumes (which tend to irritate the gut), unfermented soy, modern vegetable/seed oils, factory-farmed/low-fat dairy and sugar. (See the Resources page at Bridgeacupuncture.com for links to nutritional information and local food sources.)
- **Get enough rest.** The body does most of its healing and repair while you sleep. Adequate sleep in a well-darkened room is also critical for weight loss and lowering inflammation. Sleep on a regular schedule and reduce artificial light exposure before bedtime. Meditation, visualization and deep breathing are also highly beneficial.

During the hours/days following a treatment, many describe a feeling of “energy moving around,” including minor aches, heaviness, tingling and other benign sensations, as well as shifts in energy level. Please note that some patients occasionally form a small hematoma (bruise) at certain sites of needle insertion, or a tiny blister from moxibustion. These are harmless and not cause for concern.

“How often do I need to come?” This has to do with your individual case, history, lifestyle and goals, and other therapies you are using. Acupuncture engages your body’s own natural healing ability, a process that may be gradual and incremental, or even cyclical. There is a clear *cumulative* benefit to acupuncture treatment—meaning, you are most likely to experience its benefits after some repetition. Best results are always seen in conjunction with the incorporation of nutrition, fitness, and other lifestyle considerations that may be recommended during your session.

- Acupuncture can sometimes have immediate and dramatic results, but to give acupuncture a “fair try”, come at least 3 or 4 times, about a week apart, to allow your healing response to kick in.
- A case of moderate severity usually sees improvements within (or before) 3-5 weekly treatments, but additional follow-up, at varying intervals, may be helpful until you reach your health goals (after which, come only as needed!).
- For severe cases, dedicated athletes, stress management, etc, continued weekly or bi-weekly treatment may be desired.
- For regular health maintenance and prevention, every four to six weeks or during the change of seasons is a popular routine.