

JAPANESE STYLE

Historically the Japanese have held themselves to a higher regard than their cousins on the mainland, and this carries over to acupuncture. They saw themselves as constitutionally stronger, and therefore requiring less stimulation with medicines.

Traditionally gold needles are used to tonify one's Qi, and silver needles to sedate specific points in the cases of certain types of pain.

The General idea within Japanese acupuncture is that no sensation should be felt. Throughout treatment from the time the needle goes in to the time it's pulled out the patient should have no idea the needle is there. In its orthodoxy the medicine states that the treatment has failed if sensation is felt.



CHINESE STYLE

The Chinese idea of acupuncture is an almost complete opposite from the Japanese systems. Holding that physical strength lends to strong constitutions the Chinese Styles require heavy manipulation of the needles.

This manipulation ensures that the Qi and blood arrive at the area to promote healing, and the sensation this causes for Westerners is attributed to pain while the manipulation occurs. The nerve sensations, especially when treating for pre existing pain in a given area, are used to sending "pain" impulses to the brain so that any new nerve transmitting from the area are automatically interpreted as such.

Most feel the new sensations as a heaviness, or a shooting sensations along the meridian. However the Qi manifests – be it heaviness, shooting, or others - these sensations should not last past the times during which the needles are being manipulated.

It's also normal to have an awareness of the points used after the needles are removed. This is not uncomfortable, and the feeling should last no more than a couple of hours.

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KOREAN STYLE

This style is best described as a cross between the Japanese and Chinese. It's not unheard of for one patient to lay sedately with 4 needles, while another patient to walk up and down the hallway with 20 needles in the legs – it all depends on the desired outcome from the illness being treated.



ASK QUESTIONS

Acupuncturists trained in American schools are exposed to all these styles, and each have their benefits, and their drawbacks. Chinese Styles have a 10% more effective treatments rate than the 78% effectiveness of the Japanese System. Talk with your practitioner to find the best fit for you, and for treating your illness.