



**ALASKA CENTER
FOR ACUPUNCTURE**

Monthly Featured Column in the Mat-Su Valley Frontiersman Newspaper

**By Samantha Berg and Kevin Meddleton, Licensed Acupuncturists and owners of
the Alaska Center for Acupuncture in downtown Palmer, AK.**

“Weight Loss with Acupuncture”

As the pounds creep on this holiday season, many people are wondering what they can do to lose the extra weight. Can acupuncture help?

Acupuncturists approach weight loss in the same way we address all other health issues – our goal is to help people to deal with the underlying problems which resulted in them being overweight in the first place. While acupuncture is not a quick fix, it is a sustainable solution for dealing with the emotions, the cravings, and the personal issues that prevent people from taking the necessary steps to lose weight.

Additionally, acupuncture supports and regulates metabolism, aids digestion and normalizes hormonal processes in the body.

However, it's important to realize that there are no magic bullets for weight loss. Two other key factors must be in place for people to lose weight and keep it off: A regular/enjoyable exercise routine and a commitment to making appropriate dietary changes.

With wholesome foods and exercise firmly in place, acupuncture is a powerful support to resolve the emotional issues and cravings that often sabotage a person's desire to lose weight. While addictions to food are not dissimilar to addictions to alcohol, tobacco or other drugs, food issues are often more complicated because no one can just STOP eating.

Additionally, amidst a constant barrage of advertising that pushes unhealthy, sugar-laden convenience foods, energy drinks, low-carb diets, low-fat diets, high-protein diets, celebrity diets, fasting diets, etc., it's hard to make reasonable choices about what to eat.

Combine this with a fast-paced, modern lifestyle with less than optimal sleep, and the result is a population addicted to coffee, energy drinks and sugar to get through the day.

How did we arrive at a place where something as absurd as drinking a chemical concoction like Slim-Fast in the car on the way to work replaces a nourishing breakfast consisting of whole foods?

And, by the way, don't con yourself by believing that you are making a healthy choice by opting for "diet" soda as opposed to regular. If you are serious, get that junk out of your diet completely and do it now.

Years of eating food on the run with little or no nutritional content along with constant dieting according to the latest fad are both bound to take their toll on the health of the digestive system and body metabolism. After a while, many people find that it is impossible to lose weight no matter what diet program they try.

Generally speaking, appropriate body weight is the outcome of having a healthy body and healthy life practices. This should be the focal point of any weight loss program. What have you really done for yourself if you force pounds off your body, but have learned nothing about how to properly nourish and exercise your body?

Ultimately, premature aging, allergies, fatigue, decreased immune function, pain and a myriad of other chronic health problems are the result of misguided efforts to lose weight at any cost.

Two books that we have found to be highly effective at addressing the key components to weight loss are "I Can Make You Thin" by Paul McKenna and "Eat Fat, Lose Fat," by Mary Enig and Sally Fallon.

McKenna's book addresses the behavioral issues that sabotage weight loss, such as eating on auto-pilot and not listening for what your body actually wants. Enig and Fallon's book looks at nutrition using wisdom from traditional diets that provide true nourishment.

Enig and Fallon include recipes and a resource guide to get you thinking differently about healthy eating. They also debunk the widely held belief that you must eliminate fats from your diet to lose weight. In fact, the opposite is true. With overwhelming scientific data to back them up, they clearly outline how healthy fats are essential for absorption of fat-soluble vitamins which in turn allow us to absorb nourishment from the food we eat.

In January, Alaska Center for Acupuncture will be offering a free workshop on Weight Loss. This presentation will discuss weight loss from a Chinese medical perspective and will also include presentations from Physical Therapist, Anne Thomas of Body in Balance Physical Therapy and Herbalist Stella Lyn of Red Moon Rising. Please check www.AlaskaAcupuncture.com for more information.

Samantha Berg and Kevin Meddleton are licensed acupuncturists who own Alaska Center for Acupuncture in downtown Palmer. Call 745-8688 for more information or visit us on the web at www.AlaskaAcupuncture.com