



**ALASKA CENTER  
FOR ACUPUNCTURE**

## **Monthly Featured Column in the Mat-Su Valley Frontiersman Newspaper**

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

### **“The Quick Fix Doesn’t Exist”**

We live in a culture that expects instantaneous results. It’s all about speed. Nobody wants to wait in line, wait to be served or wait on the telephone for more than a microsecond.

So, it’s not surprising that we want immediate answers to our health challenges. This attitude fuels our nation’s current obsession with finding the next best medicine or surgical procedure that can instantly solve our problems without us having to make any lifestyle changes.

The following messages are all too familiar if you’ve recently watched television, read a magazine or listened to the radio:

Depressed? Pop a pill.  
Overweight? Pop a pill.  
High cholesterol? Pop a pill.  
High blood pressure? Pop a pill.  
Upset stomach? Pop a pill.  
Impotent? Pop a pill.  
Headache? Pop a pill.

Most of the ads for the latest cure virtually guarantee quick results on top of their promise to alleviate the ailment of choice. The multi-billion dollar pharmaceutical industry has been built on and continues to thrive on your short attention span and your reluctance to make meaningful long term positive lifestyle changes.

But there is a price for the quick fix. Almost all medications have side-effects. In some cases side-effects are significantly worse than the original problem, thus requiring another pill to counteract the first pill’s side effects.

If our bodies are nothing more than machines – likes dishwashers, cars or computers – then perhaps it’s reasonable to replace worn parts when they break or rust, occasionally flush the fluids and regularly upgrade the memory chip.

So, why not take out a malfunctioning gallbladder or suck out some fat or staple a perfectly functional stomach? Why not cosmetically alter a body part or sacrifice the function of one organ system in favor of another? Why not suppress the function of the immune system or stress the liver or kidneys - after all, as they say in the Perdue chicken ads, “parts is parts”.

Pills rarely address what caused the problem in the first place, so, it’s likely that you’ll be married to your drug of choice for a long time. And, once an organ is surgically removed you will also become dependent on drugs or further medical procedures to replace the functions of the missing organs (hormone replacement therapies, dialysis, blood transfusions or colostomy bags etc.).

Of course there is an appropriate place for drugs and surgery, which have both saved countless lives and alleviated immense suffering. However, it’s essential to know when a longer, slow and steady approach to healing might be the better option for sustainable, overall health.

A person is more than just a machine operating according to predictable set of rules. Even people with the same diagnoses – like asthma, diabetes or migraines – still have unique signs and symptoms and they respond differently to identical treatments. Therefore, an approach to healing that isolates symptoms and neglects the person in pursuit of a speedy recovery is a recipe for disaster.

Ailing patients can be restored to vibrant health, just as neglected plants will revive if given the ideal environment in which to do so. But a sickly plant won’t suddenly spring to life with the first cup of water, scoop of fertilizer or ray of sunlight. It needs these things in the appropriate amounts over a significant period of time. Neither will a person’s chronic condition spontaneously reverse itself with a couple of acupuncture treatments, a bunch of broccoli and a quick jog around the block.

In our experience, chronic conditions usually require more treatment over a longer period of time, and acute conditions resolve themselves with fewer treatments. But this is a huge generalization. The speed at which a person heals has just as much to do with the person’s actions outside the treatment room – diet, rest, exercise, social situation, attitude – as it does with the actual treatments.

The benefit of a long term view to healing is that lasting results can be achieved as the body actually heals from within. Bodies and minds don’t heal on a time schedule - healing simply takes the time that it takes.

**To learn more about the Alaska Center for Acupuncture please call 745-8688 or visit us on the web at: [www.AlaskaAcupuncture.com](http://www.AlaskaAcupuncture.com)**