



Chinese Medicine for Postherpatic Neuralgia

Jocelyn Joy, MS, L.Ac
Joy Acupuncture Health Centre



Postherpatic Neuralgia Overview

One of the most painful conditions that Chinese Medicine successfully treats is Postherpatic Neuralgia. Nearly 200,000 people in the U.S suffer from it each year. The emphasis is on “suffer”.

The pain can be excruciating, lasting for months to years. Most people describe it as a constant, severe stabbing or burning pain. The pain can make people unable to sleep, eat, or bear the weight of clothes on their skin,

Postherpatic Neuralgia is the pain resulting from damaged nerves following a bout of Shingles. Shingles is an outbreak of the same virus that causes chickenpox. The virus can lay dormant in nerve roots and can become activated by a compromised immune system, stress, and certain medications. The activated virus produces small, painful fluid-filled blisters along a nerve path typically wrapping around the trunk. It can, however show up on the face, arms, shoulders, legs and feet. It mainly occurs in those over 50 years of age.

Traditional medical treatments include powerful topical pain relieving patches, creams or gels, strong narcotics, nerve blocks, steroids, and possibly antidepressant medications. All of these provide little and usually short-term relief. Most of these treatments have their own side-effects that can make them undesirable.

What can Chinese Medicine Do for Postherpatic Neuralgia?

Chinese Medicine is a comprehensive medicine and includes acupuncture, herbal medicine, physical therapy, nutritional and lifestyle therapy. It has been providing patients with real and lasting relief from postherpatic neuralgia and has the ability to do so without the harsh side-effects of traditional western medicine.

Chinese Medicine Treatment for Postherpatic Neuralgia

After a thorough health assessment, which may include pulse and tongue diagnosis, the practitioner will develop a personalized treatment plan utilizing one or more modalities. The number and frequency of treatments will vary for each individual and will depend upon the severity of the symptoms and the patient’s overall health.

Each practitioner has a unique style. Some may treat around the painful area, while others may treat only on the hands and feet or the scalp to balance the body. Most likely an herbal formula will be prescribed and can come in the form of capsules, granules, teas, and/or external applications.

The important thing is to see the treatment plan through. One or two treatments or doses of herbs will not be enough to help most people with postherpatic neuralgia. Chinese Medicine works with the body’s ability to heal itself and if treatment is discontinued too early the body can revert back into the old painful pattern.

Chinese Medicine can be a safe and effective treatment for Postherpatic Neuralgia. If you are suffering with this condition and have found little help with western medicine, this may be a solution for you!

We hope you have found this information useful. If you are interested in more information about Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine in San Diego and its environs, please visit Joy Acupuncture Health Centre online at www.joyacupuncture.com, 2602 First Ave., Suite 103 San Diego, CA 92103, 619-322-4492