



## Acupuncture 4 Digestive Issues

*After years of suffering from digestive problems and dollars spent on useless medical diagnoses, I found Acupuncture for Health! My acupuncturist really listened to me and to my specific symptoms. Now I am free from the medicines that masked my symptoms, and more importantly, my stomach doesn't hurt anymore! Thank you!*

*Sue Casey*

Digestive problems can range from minor annoyances, such as gas, bloating, constipation, and heartburn, to life-threatening illnesses, such as Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, unremitting diarrhea, and various cancers that target digestive organs.

While some digestive disorders are acute or short-lived, the majority are chronic, and can last weeks or even months. It's not uncommon for initial symptoms to start after a major life change or trauma. Growing older can also affect a person's ability to digest.

Most digestive disorders respond very well to consistent acupuncture and herbal treatment. Acupuncture can help regulate metabolism, gastrointestinal muscle contraction and relaxation, gastric acid secretion, small and large intestine function, and stomach acidity.

Making dietary changes that restore and detoxify the gut also enhances treatment progress.

Many digestive conditions are aggravated by stress. Acupuncture is especially effective for treating stress, making it a very effective treatment for acute conditions of stress-related digestive problems.

## Digestive Self Help

### **Choose high quality, fresh, organic foods**

We all know that organic everything is best, but it's not feasible for some people. Check out the Clean Fifteen and the Dirty Dozen lists (you can find them online) to help you make choices. Look for organic, grass-fed meats and dairy products as well.

### **Don't rush**

Take your time and sit down to eat. Part of what makes food nourishing is the attention you bring to it, and when possible, the people with whom you share it.

### **Chew thoroughly**

Digestion starts in your mouth with saliva and enzymes.

### **Hydrate between meals, not during**

Liquids dilute our digestive juices, so when possible, delay drinking until an hour after eating. If you need to drink, choose warm or room temperature liquids, so your body doesn't take energy from the digestive process to warm it. Ginger tea can help digestion.

### **Track of your triggers**

A food diary can help you identify which foods "don't agree" with you. You can also keep track of other triggers such as stress, seasonal influences, or hormonal cycles.

## **It works.**

In four random controlled trials (two irritable bowel syndrome and two inflammatory bowel disease), quality of life (QoL) was found to improve significantly, independent of whether the acupuncture was real or sham. Real acupuncture was significantly superior to sham acupuncture with regard to disease activity scores in the IBD trials.

*Acupuncture treatment in gastrointestinal diseases: a systematic review. World J Gastroenterol. 2007 Jul 7;13(25):3417-24.*

In a clinical trial, the acupuncture plus proton pump inhibitor group demonstrated a significant decrease in the mean daytime heartburn, nighttime heartburn and acid regurgitation scores at the end of treatment when compared with baseline.

*Clinical trial: acupuncture vs. doubling the proton pump inhibitor dose in refractory heartburn. Aliment Pharmacol Ther. 2007 Oct 30;26(10):1333-1344.*