



FALL/WINTER 2007
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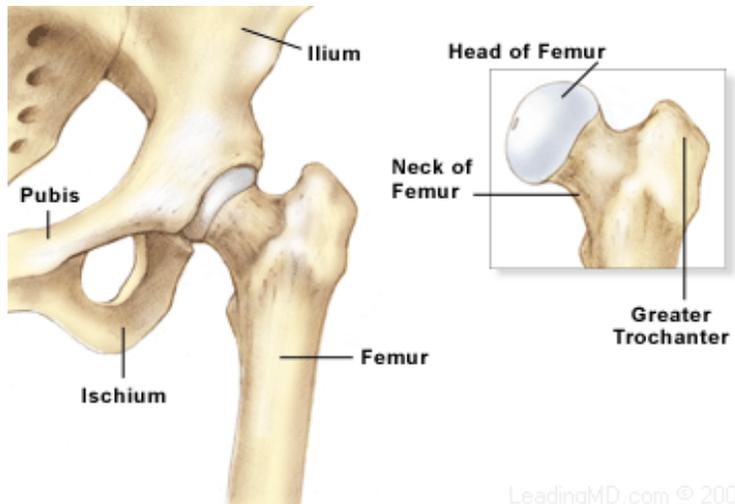
ACUPUNCTURE AND HIP PAIN

Our patients are hip to the relief provided by acupuncture. In fact, some of our patients are hip to the hip relief provided by acupuncture. Here's some information about the joint providing the second-largest range of motion in the body (second only to the shoulder).

ANATOMY OF THE HIP

The hip is a ball-and-socket joint, like the shoulder. The *acetabulum*, or "socket," is formed by three areas of the pelvic structure: the *ilium*, the *ischium* and the *pubis*. The femoral head is the "ball" located on the upper end of the *femur*.

Strong ligaments in front of the hip provide a great deal of stability and prevent dislocation. Both the femoral head and the acetabulum are covered with a layer of cartilage, which provides shock-absorption and helps distribute weight more evenly within the hip. *Bursae* (singular *bursa*) are fluid-filled sacs that cushion the bony part of the hip. Numerous muscles help provide stability in the hip, one of which is the *gluteus medius*. This is a muscle deep within the buttock, and it plays an important role in allowing us to walk.



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HIP INJURIES

Due to the muscle pull and joint forces that occur, the hip routinely supports approximately three times a person's body weight. Any degenerative condition in the hip will alter biomechanical relationships and can cause limping, leg length inequalities and disability.

The most common hip complaint is *hip arthritis*. Hip arthritis is any condition that leads to degeneration of the hip joint and its cartilage surfaces. Some of these conditions are *osteoarthritis*, *rheumatoid arthritis*, *osteonecrosis (avascular necrosis)* and *congenital dysplasia* of the hip. Fractures and other injuries to the hip can also lead to hip degeneration.

Osteoarthritis is a degenerative condition that may affect many other joints in the body. It causes changes in the mechanical structure of the cartilage, leading to its breakdown. Over time, complete loss of the articular cartilage can occur. Changes in the underlying bone and loss of cartilage can result in joint space narrowing, **peripheral osteophytes** (bone spurs), loss of motion, pain and disability.

Rheumatoid arthritis is an inflammatory condition that affects the lining of all joints in the body. It causes an inflammatory response in the joint lining which destroys the articular cartilage and surrounding tissues.

Osteonecrosis or **avascular necrosis** is a condition in which blood flow is restricted and the bone within the femoral head dies. This eventually leads to the collapse of large segments of the bone supporting the cartilage of the hip joint. It ultimately causes the destruction of the hip. The main causes of osteonecrosis include injury (such as femoral head fracture or hip dislocation), high dose corticosteroid (employed in the treatment of lupus, asthma, and spinal cord injury), and heavy alcohol abuse.

Hip dysplasia is more common in animals other than humans. In hip dysplasia, the ball part of the hip fits loosely or only partially in the socket, and the acetabulum is not smooth and round, but misshapen. This lack of proper fit of the ball and smooth socket can cause joint pain and even dislocation.

Bursitis occurs when the hip's bursae become inflamed.

Tendonitis is inflammation of the tendons, and can also cause hip pain. It can occur in any of the tendons surrounding the hip joint.

ACUPUNCTURE & TREATMENT FOR THE HIP

Several studies have been done to test the efficacy of acupuncture in treatment of hip pain. A randomized, controlled study of 3,633 osteoarthritis patients, published in the November 2006 issue of **Arthritis & Rheumatism**, assessed the effectiveness of acupuncture along with routine care compared to routine care alone in patients with osteoarthritis of the hip or knee joints. Patients who received acupuncture with the routine care improved markedly compared to patients who only received routine care. Patients were randomly assigned to receive up to 15 acupuncture treatments in a 3-month period versus a control group that received no acupuncture. Some patients who did not agree to be randomly assigned also received acupuncture. The randomized and non-randomized acupuncture patients showed significant improvement in symptoms at three months and the improvement was maintained at 6 months compared to patients not receiving acupuncture. Quality of life also improved in the acupuncture group.

Herbs can also help those suffering hip pain. A few Herbs Dr. Wang recommends: Jian Bu Wan, Zuo Gu Shen Jing Tong Wan, Shen Tong Zhu Yu Wan, Gu Ci Xiao Tong Wan, Du Huo Ji Sheng Wan, Feng Shi Xiao Tong Wan, Xiao Huo Luo Wan, Gu Zhi Shu Song Wan, Geng Nian An Wan, Zhang Gu Guan Jie Wan, and Jin Gu Die Da Wan.

Other recommendations to treat hip pain:

- Rest
- Weight loss – excess weight can greatly strain the hip
- Stretching the muscles and tendons surrounding the joint
- Ice/Heat -- use ice on a new injury to control inflammation, use heat for chronic conditions
- Deep-heating ointments
- Massage

AMERICAN SPECIALTY HEALTH

Dr. Wang is once again affiliated with American Specialty Health (ASH). If you have insurance through ASH, or if your insurance contracts with ASH for acupuncture benefits, we will accept co-payments for service. Some ASH plans cover only chiropractic -- check to see if yours covers acupuncture as well. Generally ASH covers acupuncture for pain syndromes but not for most other illnesses. If you have any questions about ASH or wish to purchase insurance through them, please call (800) 848-3555 from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. PST.

URGENT NEWS: REVERSE 911

We extend our best wishes to those who have been impacted by the October fires. Dr. Wang has lived and worked in San Diego for three decades, and he is impressed with the generosity and caring shown by San Diegans during this crisis.

A great innovation used during the evacuations was something called Reverse 911. During emergencies, Reverse 911 contacts both listed and unlisted landline phones (including TTY/TDD) in the affected areas. This innovation undoubtedly saved many lives by alerting thousands to the dangers of the fast-moving wildfires and the need to evacuate their homes and businesses.

However, some people now rely on cell phones or VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) and do not have regular landline phones. If another disaster occurred during the night while they slept, they might not be awakened to the peril until it was too late.

Here's the good news: these folks can register their mobile phone and VoIP numbers with Reverse 911 in order to receive important instructions in the event of an emergency. (*This only applies to city of San Diego residences and businesses.*)

You can register your cell phone or VoIP with Reverse 911 online. Go to:

www.sandiego.gov/ohs/reverse911

Have happy, healthy holidays, and stay safe!



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