



ELEMENTS  
*of*  
HEALTH

# Acupuncture, Nutrition & Herbal Medicine

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## ACUPUNCTURE FACT SHEET

Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (AOM) has been employed as a health care modality for over 3,000 years. It is based on a complex diagnostic system designed to both prevent and treat disease. It is well documented that preventing disease is the most cost-effective way to address health issues. Currently, Oriental Medicine (inclusive of acupuncture and herbal medicine) serves over a billion people globally.

The Center for Disease Control's (CDC) Advance Data Report on the 2002 National Health Interview Survey cited that 55% of adults have used complementary and alternative medicine therapies, most of which were paid for out of pocket. 26% reported that they did so on their doctor's recommendation, whereas 28% felt that the conventional care they were receiving did not completely address their chief complaint.

According to the 2009 report published by Society for Acupuncture Research, "Healthcare settings appropriate for integration of acupuncture are: post-surgical healing, neurobiological rehabilitation, pain management onsite and offsite, reproductive services and in oncology as an adjunct for the side effects of chemotherapy and radiation, as well as anxiety. Acupuncture can be utilized as a support for outpatient services, treating an array of symptoms of many conditions."

### Acupuncture Training

There are over 65 schools and colleges (accredited or with candidacy status) in the US. In 1973, Oregon and Nevada were the first states to license the practice of acupuncture. Currently acupuncture is regulated in 42 states.

In general, 60 semester credits (or 90 quarter credits) of accredited college courses is required to matriculate into any acupuncture school. In some states a bachelor's degree is required as well as a master's in Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine in order to practice. Programs around the country vary from school to school but generally training programs range from 3-4 years, including internship.

Requirements for licensure depend on the state of practice but a national examination is required in all states except for California (which administers its own exam). There are nearly 26 thousand acupuncture practitioners in the US today (Society for Acupuncture Research, 2009).

Almost one-third of American medical schools (among them Harvard, Yale, John's Hopkins, and Georgetown Universities) now offer coursework in alternative methods.