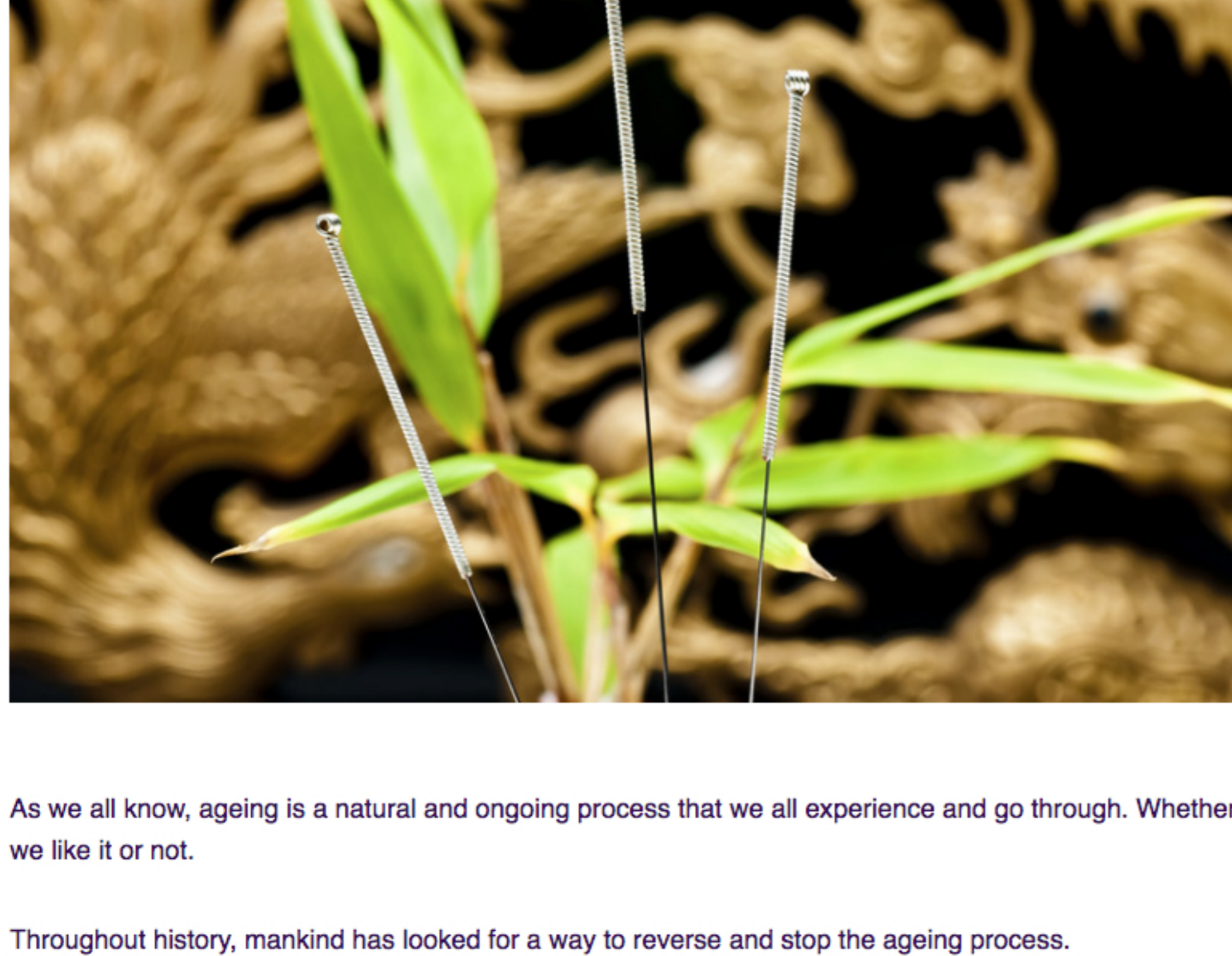


LIFESTYLE WHAT'S NEW IN TOWN

'Cosmetic Acupuncture' – Could This Be Your Next New Best Kept Beauty Secret? with Sahar Hooti

BY LONDONMAG
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As we all know, ageing is a natural and ongoing process that we all experience and go through. Whether we like it or not.

Throughout history, mankind has looked for a way to reverse and stop the ageing process.

We are actually currently living in a day and age where anti-ageing medical treatments and staying young has become an obsession. There are debates as to why we persist in fighting the ageing process. Many reasons such as fear of death, loss of both mental and physical control as we get older, and loss of sex appeal.

The anti-ageing market is a multibillion dollar industry that has no growth limitation even in the midst of a recession. A branch of science has been created to specifically focus on the study of preventing and reversing the ageing process. Scientists have cracked the DNA code which enables us to learn more about how we are made and as a result we learn more about how we age.

At this current time there is no found method to reverse ageing. However, we do know how to slow it down. We live in an amazing time where the average lifespan of a human being has doubled since 1900.

The cost of our beauty obsession



In 2008 a publication by the YWCA, a worldwide multicultural women's organisation, the effects of our culture's obsession with an impossible standard of beauty has been reported as "Beauty at Any Cost". This report detailed the different impacts that such an obsession with beauty has made on women's lives. These impacts are:

1. ECONOMIC COSTS

Women are spending so much money on quick-fix beauty solutions, money which in the long term could potentially

provide for a comfortable retirement.

This expectation of physical beauty has impacted women economically through *lookism* in their workplace. Lookism is prejudice based on physical appearance and attractiveness which has always been an equal-opportunity problem.

2. SELF-ESTEEM

More women tend to judge themselves based on their physical appearance. I.e. if they don't meet certain physical expectations they will not be accepted by others.

This self judgement has been associated with increased anxiety levels in both adolescent girls (12 to 13 year olds) and adult women. Also, this type of behavioural pattern has been linked to impaired performance on mental activities.

3. HEALTH CONCERNS

The pressure involved in the pursuit of beauty has led to various health concerns such as unhealthy dieting, eating disorders, smoking, and drug use. Another health concern is the risk that may come with medical cosmetic procedures such as cardiovascular complications from anaesthetics.

Why do I think the YWCA "Beauty at Any Cost" report is important?

This report can come across as anti-beauty and dismissive to aesthetic medical treatments.

However, my role as an 'Anti-ageing and Hormonal Balance' acupuncture practitioner puts me directly in the position of either supporting or not supporting the impossible beauty standards set by our culture. I need to understand where my patients' expectations are coming from. I need to be fully aware of how to gently let a patient know that her expectations may not be safe nor achievable. To me it seems that some women would literally rather take on the slogan "kill me but make me beautiful" (well not literally but you know what I mean).

I am obsessed with unleashing people's true beauty from within. During this process I watch my patient gain (more) confidence and good self-esteem. Life becomes more meaningful and happiness follows. Now you can't deny that this defines ageing gracefully at a whole new level as opposed to what our society may expect from an ageing woman. This level of care and treatment not only shows us that we can be naturally beautiful but it also reveals that true beauty is in the eye of the beholder. I find myself responsible for bringing out a person's untouched inner beauty while simultaneously enhancing his/her natural features holistically. I believe that "no one is born ugly" and it is only culture and society that can shape and support this way of thinking.

Instead of looking for beauty quick fixes, we should be working together (practitioner and patient) to maintain optimum skin health holistically, which will in turn improve the overall appearance of an individual.

The Holistic Approach to ageing gracefully

First of all, we need to know what ageing gracefully means. Many say that it is all about attitude, acceptance and being flexible with life changes. Yes this sounds about right. But if you are thirsty to find natural beauty solutions, then ageing gracefully becomes more than just the above. It becomes about *doing what you can but without inflicting any further harm*.

My preferred approach to beauty is definitely a holistic one. Holistic beauty means looking at the entire person including areas such as lifestyle, diet, medical history, personal stressors, skin care, exercise and attitude.

I believe that attitude is the key factor that defines the result a patient gets from his/her treatment. I regularly get new patient enquiries who have unrealistic beauty expectations. But once we sit down and go through the initial consultation my patient realises and becomes educated as to what will really benefit them in the long run. They always choose to go down the holistic approach route. It's a bit like them coming in looking for just one quick fix solution for their beauty needs but they end up leaving my treatment room with having more than just a beauty treatment. Their stress levels reduce due to the anti-inflammatory effects of acupuncture and hence skin conditions improve dramatically.

So why should you adopt 'Cosmetic Acupuncture' as your new best kept beauty secret

If like me, you prefer a holistic and natural alternative approach to beauty then Cosmetic Acupuncture is the next and right way forward. Adopting this method enables you to ditch the mentality of needing surgery, fillers, Botox and similar invasive treatments.

For thousands of years, the Chinese have known that internal nourishment and the smooth flow of blood and energy within the body reveal themselves through a healthy external radiance. The practice of acupuncture to enhance beauty dates back to China's Song Dynasty (960-1279) when it was used by the Empresses and the Emperors' concubines.

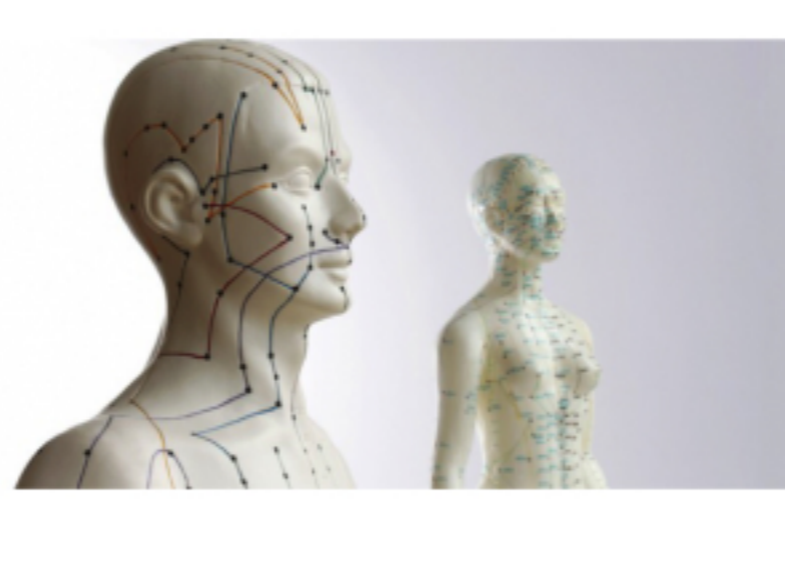
In the contrary to what you might think, Cosmetic acupuncture is primarily about health- not beauty. You will see immediate results cosmetically but also with long lasting effectiveness due to balancing your internal health and hormones.

But before we look into cosmetic acupuncture's many amazing benefits, we really need to know what acupuncture is all about and how it actually works:

You probably already know someone who has had acupuncture. More and more people are discovering for themselves that traditional acupuncture brings huge relief for all types of health, beauty and skin problems without any of the side effects associated with painkillers, medication and medical cosmetic procedures.

Traditional acupuncture is a complete, evidence based healthcare system that stimulates your body's natural healing response. For thousands of years it has been refined through research, observation and practical application to successfully treat disorders of all the body's function, digestion, immunity, breathing, hormonal, cardiovascular, fertility, mental and emotional health, and not to mention skin disorders.

In short, the theory of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is based on the meridian system. This system comprises of 12 energy channels running up and down the body, starting or ending on the face. These meridians have been recently proven to comprise a part of our micro circulatory system. For our face and body to be *in balance*, there must be a smooth flow of energy (I.e. Qi- *chee*) within these meridians.



Disrupted energy flow within our body starts to show its signs on our skin and also in our health.

What happens during a Cosmetic Acupuncture treatment session?

I use many diagnostic methods to put together an individual treatment plan based on your state of health, skin and lifestyle. I will take a complete medical history, read your pulses, I will examine your skin and also look at your tongue. After coming up with an individualised treatment plan, incredibly thin (hair fine) acupuncture needles* are then inserted into specific points selected to affect your whole body, as well as your skin/face.

Once the needles are left in this is what happens during an Acupuncture Face-Lift treatment:

- messages are sent to our brain saying "help! there are minor injuries on my face and body";
- the brain gets tricked into thinking that our skin is injured;
- immediately blood gets rushed to the face and skin;
- this in turn increases blood circulation to the treated area and therefore stimulates the production of collagen and elastin within the injured area;
- after a few minutes our facial muscles start to visibly tone up and lift.

Which means (drum rolls ready please!): our wrinkles disappear or become less apparent! Literally.

Also we must not forget that hormones play a major role in our skin health.

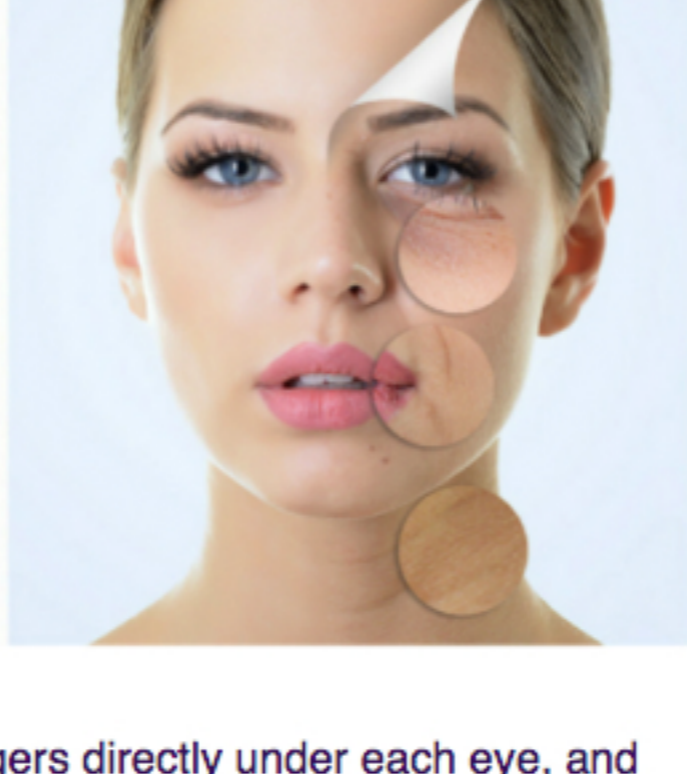
For example a female patient can suffer from very bad acne and an irregular period from her birth control medication. After six treatments of focusing directly on her skin condition and her hormone points, her period becomes consistent and her acne will tremendously improve.

*The singleuse sterile needles come in sealed packs that are opened in front of you and are safely disposed of after each treatment.

What skin conditions can be treated with Cosmetic Acupuncture?

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Wrinkles, sagging, dark spots, dullness, enlarged pores, crow's feet, dark and puffy under eyes, cellulite, acne, eczema, psoriasis and skin allergies can be improved.



What you can do at home to reduce puffy under eyes



Place your index fingers directly under each eye, and lower them until the pads of your fingers are between your lower lid and your orbital bone. Massage these points for up to 1 minute every day to reduce eye puffiness. You can even do this discretely at work or during your lunch break.

Is it better to see my Acupuncture practitioner rather than a dermatologist?

The short answer is yes in most cases (98% of the time unless you have an infection which needs immediate medical attention). Dermatologists often use antibiotics and other chemicals to treat the skin. Topical skin care products and medications help some skin conditions but not those caused by internal hormonal problems. Above all, acupuncture is a healthy and safe alternative to prescribed medications.

Some medical procedures may seem like a quick fix but think about it: you need to continue getting Botox to be line free.

The bottom line is that: Botox and all of the medical beauty solutions aren't natural. Acupuncture is. Choosing a natural method that promotes energy in the body is the best way to get long term results.

This all sounds great but I am scared of needles and I don't have much time to get acupuncture on a regular basis

Acupuncture needle VS Hypodermic needle



If you're nervous even about the thought of needles or think you don't have time to get acupuncture, let me calm your concerns. Firstly, you will rarely feel the insertion of the acupuncture needles (they are extremely thin! It takes up to 20 acupuncture needles to fill up the syringe of one injection needle!).

As for time, while it can be a struggle to make room in your hectic schedule for acupuncture, you will want to make sure it happens because you care enough about both your body and skin health. This will be time put aside and

invested for a healthier and more youthful future. All of my patients love and can't wait to come in for their appointment because it is time set aside just for them. It is the only time they can actually switch off and forget about work, social media and daily stressors. If anything my patients wake up after their session feeling less stressed, awake, ready to face the world with a healthier body and younger complexion!

In brief, Cosmetic Acupuncture will give you amazing natural results without the downtime of surgery and without the recovery time that is required with medical beauty procedures. You will keep receiving compliments from friends and family about how good you look recently and that you have a youthful glow about you. They will never know what you have done unless you tell them!

With acupuncture our interior is healthy and balanced, we have inner tranquility and happiness, and as a result our natural inner beauty will shine through.

Now who's with me?

For more info you can visit

www.acucareclinic.co.uk

About the author

Sahar Hooti BSc (Hons), is the MD and founder of AcuCare Clinic. Her experienced background as an Alternative Medicine Practitioner, Paramedic, Aromatherapist and Advanced Beauty Therapy Specialist make her a highly recommended 'Anti-Ageing and Hormonal Balance Acupuncture Practitioner'. Sahar is also the founder of her famous 'De-Stress in 3 Steps' technique. At the same time, she is proud to have developed her own Organic Skin Care range to make sure patients use only the best natural ingredients on their skin. Her philosophy of "less is more" has inspired her to launch her 3 in 1 skin care range so that you don't need to collect unnecessary skin care products on your bathroom shelf.

She believes that good education about health and how to take care of ourselves must start at schools by teaching children at a young age. It is her dream to see acupuncture becoming more mainstream, accepted and sought after within our communities and hospitals in near future so we can all live healthier and happier lives.



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