

Why are you in pain

Pain is often, but not always, a signal that something is wrong. After having suffered chronic pain for more than three months the nervous system has become hyper sensitive and you react to a touch as if it was a blow.

This is caused by a muscle which has gone into spasm due to overstretching or trauma that decreases blood circulation and lactic acid starts building up.

The lactic acid stimulates the muscle to contract even more and the circulation is further inhibited. The vicious circle closes and treatment is now imminent to get out of it; for example massage, manipulation, acupuncture or electric therapy.

But why do we get pain in the first place?

A trauma is not always the easy explanation why we have pain. A very common cause is a monotonous movement pattern like sitting in the wrong posture in front of the computer, or constant sleeping in the same position in an uncomfortable bed.

Another cause is unbalanced or too intense exercise that the body will react to in a negative way. If you experience muscle pain day and night for several weeks you have overdone it and a two months rest is recommended.

Bad habits can be a killer.

Smoking inhibits the oxygen to reach our discs of the spine. As the discs do not have direct blood supply they are depending on the small surrounding vessels (regressed due to the nicotine) from whom they get their nutrients through diffusion/osmosis.

However, and here is the good news! Give up smoking and the blood vessels are back within a year!

Another problem is overweight, or even worse, an unhealthy diet with lots of sugar, wheat and milk products that all trigger inflammation. If you continuously eat something that you have an allergy against you maintain an ongoing inflammation in the stomach which in turn affects the nerves along the spine.

It is far from common knowledge that medication can actually cause pain. Statines that lower the cholesterol and some antibiotics has pain as a common side effect.

Many headache patients are poisoned by all the painkillers they take on a regular basis which can even worsen the headache.

In this case a two weeks detoxification with acupuncture is recommended to ease the pain.

Within Traditional Chinese medicine you speak of the six external pathogens (wind, cold, heat, damp, dryness and fire) that invade the body usually from the outdoors. For example during the winter in Spain when the temperature fluctuates a lot between sun & shadow and day & night we are very susceptible to wind, cold and damp.

But imbalances can also be caused by excess emotions. Fear will deplete the kidneys and throw the lumbar out of balance. Grief related to the lungs can cause shoulder or arm problems. Not to mention all the stress and frustration nowadays, affecting the liver, which in turn will tense the muscles and tendons in general.

Within the Indian tradition, Ayurveda and Yoga, you speak of seven Chakras-energy centres along the spine-each connected to specific functions and feelings. For example the first chakra is located in the pelvic floor/perineum and when big changes occur in your life like family crisis, financial problems or moving house, this chakra can be thrown out of balance.

But by practising yoga you keep the 72 000 gateways of energy open and blocked energy will be removed and the healing life force can flow freely!

We all have our own pain history with weak spots that worsen when something trigger them. It could be anything from over swinging the golf clubs, not putting that extra sweater on while sitting in draft to getting into a conflict with someone close to you. Many times one can see a pattern but sometimes you have to lay a new jigsaw puzzle every time you end up in a painful situation.

The conclusion is that you cannot normally rest yourself better but you do need advice how to break the vicious circle and how to recover through active resting designed especially for you!

PS. This is a translation of an article by me published in the "Svenska Magasinet" in February 2013.