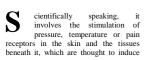
## Shock wave acupuncture

## An option for treating coxarthrosis and gonarthrosis

CONSTANCE The principle behind acupuncture, the stimulation of points on the body surface to influence deep-seated diseases, is one of the oldest methods of treatment in all of medicine and has been known in different forms in all cultures. Our traditional medicine is also familiar with similar techniques.



our ears; the technique itself, however, is an efficacious one. Formerly, needles, heat, cold or the

pressure of massaging fingers were used to stimulate acupuncture points. More recently, stimulation currents and laser have been employed for the same purpose. Shock waves are a new form of therapy for which medical uses emerged only 30

years ago. Their first application was the disintegration of kidney stones. For some years now, new techniques have been available for generating shock waves using far smaller devices which enable 'gentler' waves - known as ballistic



reflex responses in other regions of the body. The most accurate mapping of the effective points and the most precise description of their use originate from ancient China. The nomenclature used with the method also dates from this era and therefore sounds rather strange to

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shock waves - to be produced. I had the

notion that ballistic shock waves could also be highly suitable for exerting pulsating pressure on acupuncture points. Perhaps the pressure receptors of certain ncture points would respond better to this kind of stimulation than to needles

This method would also be less painful. In 2002, Swiss-based manufacturer STORZ MEDICAL provided me with a device that was, to my specifications, equipped with a particularly small shock transmitter. This enabled me to direct shock waves onto very small areas of skin and the underlying tissue The method was complemented by the additional stimulation of peripheral acupuncture points with needles, in line with traditional theory on distant points. Using this device, therefore, I devel-

oped a new method of treatment combining ancient knowledge of acupuncture with the new technique of

shock wave therapy. Between 2002 and 2003 I conducted the first open-label study on 22 patients with gonarthrosis (Stoßwellenakupunktur, eine neue Methode zur Stimulation von Akupunkturpunkten; 'Shock wave acupuncture, a new method of stimulating acupuncture points'. Deutsche Zeitschrift für Akupunktur; 2005.48(2): 13-21). The results were so encouraging that I followed it with a second study in 2004, this time on the treatment of coxarthrosis (Stoßwellenakupunktur, eine neue Methode zur Behandlung von Schmerzen im Hüftgelenk; Shock wave acupuncture, a new method of treating pain in the hip joint'. *Erfahrungs-heilkunde* 2005.9:568-574).

Both studies revealed that shock wave acupuncture was more efficacious than simple needle acupuncture. The main impact: contractures of the joint system could be relieved more easily. Joint mobility also improved, thus also enhancing the scope for physiotherapy and training. Those patients diagnosed with incipient coxarthrosis benefited the most. In these cases, there was lasting improvement or even complete freedom from pain after 12 treatments, if not before. In older patients with advanced osteoarthritis, however, there was often no alternative to arthroplastic interven-tion. With gonarthrosis, too, the best outcomes were observed in younger patients suffering from postoperative restriction in mobility of the knee joint, for example.

However, it became evident from further observations that shock wave acupuncture is not a suitable treatment where joints are inflamed or excessively irritated. Needle acupuncture is far superior in such cases.

Over the last ten years, in more than 1,000 treatments, Í have encountered any significant side effects. This is undoubtedly due to the 'gentleness' of the method. As I recently genteress of the method. As Precently published, however, a number of other applications for this technique have been discovered (10 Jahre Akupunktur mit Stoßwellen; '10 years of acupuncture with shock waves'. Deutsche Zeitschrift für Akupunktur 210; 55(4):12-15).

Not only can lumbago, cervical syndrome, heel spur and other forms of tendinitis be treated highly effectively, but also asthma, dry coughs and poorly healing wounds. Interest in this method is now grows, indexed with hereby is now grows, as indicated by the increasing number of enquiries from patients and the abundance of Internet references – to other practitioners as well. I would be delighted if I have well. I would be delignieu in a man-succeeded in adding a string to our collective therapeutic bow.

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## Stoßwellen-Akupunktur



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