



Life *in balance*

A Q&A with Dr Lucy Liu, who runs her own acupuncture and Chinese medicine practice in Marlow.

Q. What's your background? "I've practised acupuncture and Chinese medicine for more than 25 years. I come from a famous family of doctors in north-eastern China and after studying Chinese medicine at Heilongjiang University for six years, I completed my hospital training and was awarded my doctor's licence in 1994. I've since worked both in China and internationally. Before moving to Marlow I ran a clinic in Bahrain for seven years. You never finish studying – I still return regularly to my professors in Beijing to update on new techniques."

Q. What is acupuncture? "It's a core part of traditional Chinese medicine dating back 3,000 years and, unlike many so-called alternative remedies, is widely recognised as a valid, mainstream treatment complementary to Western medicine – particularly in areas where drugs cannot help people with causes of pain. It is based on the understanding of the flow of "Ch'i" (or energy) around the human body. Qualified practitioners use tiny needles on the body's classical acupuncture points, enabling the body to start to heal itself, which in turn helps to treat a wide range of symptoms relating to pain and illness."

Q. Does it hurt? "As a rule no, but some are more sensitive than others and may initially have a little discomfort – however the benefits more than compensate!"

Q. What symptoms do you treat? "Most of my patients have lower back, shoulder and neck pain, weight and fertility issues, migraine, stress or circulatory problems related to diabetes, gout or arthritis. I also have patients who suffer from Parkinson's or autism or are recovering from strokes – and of course these have longer treatment cycles but I can deliver a better quality of life to them."

Q. Any final words? "Life is a balance – we Chinese call it Ying and Yang – if a body is out of balance then this affects its ability to perform properly. Acupuncture helps remedy this and can deliver life-changing results."

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