



ELEMENTS
of
HEALTH

Acupuncture, Nutrition & Herbal Medicine

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Current Theories on the Mechanisms of Acupuncture:

1. **Neurotransmitter Theory:** Acupuncture affects higher brain areas, stimulating the secretion of beta-endorphins and enkephalins in the brain and spinal cord. The release of neurotransmitters influences the immune system and the antinociceptive system.
2. **Autonomic Nervous System Theory:** Acupuncture stimulates the release of norepinephrine, acetylcholine and several types of opioids, affecting changes in their turnover rate, normalizing the autonomic nervous system, and reducing pain.
3. **Gate Control Theory:** Acupuncture activates non-nociceptive receptors that inhibit the transmission of nociceptive signals in the dorsal horn, “gating out” painful stimuli.
4. **Vascular-interstitial Theory:** Acupuncture effects the electrical system of the body by creating or enhancing closed-circuit transport in tissues. This facilitates healing by allowing the transfer of material and electrical energy between normal and injured tissues.
5. **Blood Chemistry Theory:** Acupuncture affects the blood concentrations of triglycerides, cholesterol, and phospholipids, suggesting that acupuncture can both raise and diminish peripheral blood components, thereby regulating the body toward homeostasis.

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