

Why I Decided to Use Acupuncture

Paloma Alvarez

I used to suffer from anxiety, depression, and migraines. My doctor gave me medicine to treat these problems, but I felt bad side effects. When I went home to the Dominican Republic, I decided to try acupuncture. Acupuncture is a technique used by the Chinese for thousands of years. The doctor inserts very thin needles into certain points in the body. This process helps balance the energy in the body so that the patient can be healthy.

When I arrived at the acupuncture clinic, they asked me to take off my shoes. I noticed that everything was white—the chair, the bed, the table, and the doctor’s clothes. I was afraid because I saw a small table with many needles of different sizes. I was worried that these needles would make me bleed and cause pain. But the needles did not hurt too much and I did not bleed.

I went to the acupuncture treatments twice a week for almost three months. I began to get positive results. The depression, anxiety, and migraines almost disappeared. My experience with acupuncture was very pleasant. I had no bad side effects.

Since I moved back to the United States, I have not been able to get acupuncture treatment. It is too expensive, and is mostly not covered by



health insurance. I believe health insurance companies should pay for acupuncture treatments. They work. And they do not cause side effects like some drugs can.

Paloma Alvarez is from the Dominican Republic. She is a single mom with two wonderful kids. In the Dominican Republic, she earned a degree in television journalism. She is studying English at the Adult Learning Program in Jamaica Plain, MA. Read another learner’s perspective on alternative medicine: “Homeopathy Eased My Father’s Pain” by Gladys Clymer can be found at <www.nelrc.org/changeagent/extras>.

What Do You Think?

In the chart below, list some of the advantages and disadvantages of alternative medicine, like acupuncture.

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES