

## **Aghhhh! Is for Acupuncture**

I'm not kidding; take those needles away from me!

You see, I may be very open to chomping on a piece of bark, or putting an element from the Periodic table in my body, if it will help my cancer, but have needles stuck in my body? No way.

For nearly three years now, my friends, AND my doctors, have been trying to get me to go for acupuncture. They swear that it eases nausea during treatment; that it can stop joint pain; that it reduces stress and gives a sense of well being. Well, believe me, when the going gets tough, I've considered it. I almost, very nearly, just once, picked up the phone and stared at the number of an acupuncturist. Then I put it down again. So what stops me? A fear of needles? Please, how dare you! The basic truth is - I'm a scientist. Always have been, always will be. Although, given that I haven't done any for years, what is the Periodic Table again?

So, what this means is, if I don't understand it, I don't like it. Now, I can accept that putting various organic nutrients in my body may alter my body's chemistry, and do some good. I also know that if I smear myself with ginger oil before I go to bed, not only does it make my bedroom stink, but it also relieves my neck pain. Did you know ginger is recommended by the Arthritis Association? Of course, I also know there may be some risk to it, but its natural right? Ginger, bark, tea, its food!

Sticking metal needles in my body is NOT NATURAL! So, tell me that acupuncture is going to free my energy channels, and its "Get away from me dude, too much voodoo."

Before all the acupuncturists out there start writing to the Editor, I have to say, for the first time in 3 years, someone tried to explain acupuncture to me recently, and it actually started making sense.

Ever watched House? (I love that program, and not only because Hugh Laurie can pull off a ludicrously good American accent, something I've been failing at miserably for 9 years.) When your heart stops, they put a huge surge of electricity through your body to restart your heart. Your heart needs electricity to stay beating. In the same way, every cell in the body has positive or negatively charged electrons in it. You're a walking electric circuit!

So think of electron charge as the 'energy' and your nerve system as the 'channels'. Ahh, now you're talking. If the electron balance between positive and negative (Ying and Yang in ancient eastern terms) gets out of whack, a blockage occurs. To follow the analogy, it's like a capacitor holding charge and not letting energy through. Your 'energy' collects in certain parts of your body. Ah, now the light is dawning. See, you just had to talk to me in my own language.

But the question still remains, why does sticking needles in your body unclog you? To put it another way, why is acupuncture a laxative for the nervous system?

Ha! Now I've got you. Got no answer have you? Well, unfortunately, neither has the medical community. Some suggest it activates endorphins in the area, which rev up the body's defense system and takes away the pain. Some suggest it activates the nerve endings, and in some way rebalances the charge. To be honest, no one knows. And that's my problem.

But Kay, you're usually so open-minded and philosophical. Whatever happened to "Life is worth living...try anything once"? I admit, I drink a tea that has only circumstantial evidence that it works and, yes, I still drink it. But, ask me to embark on a treatment that has been around for thousands of years and helped millions of people, sorry I ain't going there. I could give you a thousand jokes – because porcupines never smile; because if a fire breaks out, there's no way I'm jumping onto that trampoline!, because I'm on pins and needles - Bad huh?

I just have no logical explanation as to what is stopping me. I have the greatest respect for people who do it. I'm honestly glad it helps them. I have nothing against licensed acupuncturists. They are trained professionals committed to helping people. So all I can say is help me! And hurry up and find an explanation I can believe in.

Next month.....Why not to do massage and other people I can irritate.

*Kay Kerbyson is Secretary of the Los Alamos Council on Cancer and Founder/President of Ovarian Cancer Together! Inc. Help, support and resources for those affected by cancer can be found at [www.LosAlamosCouncilonCancer.org](http://www.LosAlamosCouncilonCancer.org) and [www.ovariancancertogether.org](http://www.ovariancancertogether.org)*

