

## Putting a Pin in Cold and Flu Season

The temperatures are dropping, leaves are starting to turn and pumpkin spice everything is taking up most coffee house menus. Fall is officially here, which means cold and flu season is right behind it.

However, before the first sniffles set in, treating your body's deficiencies in a natural way could help you avoid a cold or flu illness this season – or at least lessen the misery.

Jay Chang is a licensed acupuncturist at OSF HealthCare Illinois Neurological Institute. He says acupuncture, a form of traditional Chinese medicine that is more than 5,000 years old, has the power to help alleviate cold and flu symptoms by finding your body's balance naturally, without drugs.

“In our human body we have meridians,” explains Chang. “Along those meridians you have energy running through. But any time energy in your meridians is blocked, or the energy is stagnated, that's when the disease will occur.”

Chang says when it comes to a cold or flu, he treats based on symptoms. He notes a patient's sleeping patterns, lifestyle, complexion, eating habits, etc. to determine an individual treatment plan.

“When you apply acupuncture at a certain point along those diseased meridians, and you insert the needle, that activates your body's energy, so your body heals on its own because of healing energy.”

Needles not your thing? Chang says most nervous patients leave their fears behind after their first treatment.

“The needles I use are really small, like a hair size of needle. Some people feel it. You do feel when you insert the needle for a second, but it won't stay there,” said Chang. He continued, “As long as people get the first experience, the second time they come here, they are not afraid of it anymore.”

Chang uses acupuncture to treat a wide variety of ailments at OSF Illinois Neurological Institute, including chronic or acute pain, anxiety, depression, insomnia, digestive issues, menopause symptoms, infertility or fatigue and nausea related to cancer treatments.

He says the number of treatments, the length of the treatment sessions and the method of acupuncture vary based on a patient's unique needs.

For more information about OSF HealthCare Illinois Neurological Institute and acupuncture services, click [here](#) or call (309) 624-4000.