

## Ear Acupuncture

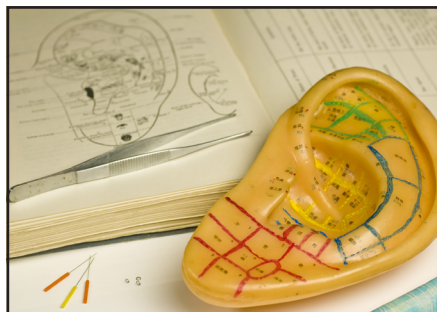
BY DR. BIJANA KADAKIA, ND, SERENITY WELLNESS CLINIC

Sometimes my acupuncture patients are surprised by where I place their needles. If your back hurts, for example, I might put a needle in your ankle, your hand or your scalp. Yes, I might also put needles directly in your back, but it's not always necessary. Patients are never more surprised than when I put needles in their ears, though. Ear acupuncture, known as auricular therapy or auriculotherapy, is an incredibly effective technique that can be used as a complete treatment itself or added to body points to enhance the treatment.

Auriculotherapy, like other acupuncture techniques, has its origins in China, but was further developed in France. There are several theoretical explanations for how auriculotherapy works and the truth likely includes elements from all of these theories. Explanations include elements from neurology, embryology, reflexology, endorphins and energetic explanations based on classical Chinese physiology. Based on experience, research and these theories, there are maps of points for nerves, joints, specific symptoms and elements of the nervous system on the ear.

Auricular therapy can be used to treat many problems. Acupuncture and auricular therapy are included in several addiction treatment programs. Acupuncturists Without Borders provides acupuncture and specifically uses ear acupuncture protocols to treat emotional trauma in areas affected by war, natural disasters, and other catastrophes. Ear acupuncture can even be used during surgical procedures and may reduce the required amount of anesthesia!

In my practice, I've seen ear acupuncture contribute to good results for a wide variety of complaints including post-surgical pain, acute injuries, chronic pain, digestive issues, addictive behaviors, and emotional complaints such as stress and anxiety. I frequently combine ear acupuncture




with body points, but these can be used exclusively. Some patients who are sensitive to acupuncture body points may tolerate ear points better.

Recently, I've had good success treating pain after surgery with ear points. For these patients, I often use acupuncture needles in the ear in the office and then send patients home with ear seeds to stimulate the points between treatments. Ear seeds are either literal seeds or small, smooth, metal balls with a bandage backing that can be applied to ear points and left in place. Patients gently squeeze these points and the seed or ball stimulates the point. I sometimes call this "acupuncture to go."

My acupuncture style is designed to be comfortable and this includes ear acupuncture. From the needles I used to the preparation of the points and needling styles, I work hard to ensure that my patients have a comfortable and effective treatment. Ear acupuncture is one of the techniques I use to that end. If you're interested in trying acupuncture or ear acupuncture, schedule an appointment at [doctorbijana.com](http://doctorbijana.com).



**Dr. Bijana Kadakia** is a naturopathic physician and acupuncturist serving the area since 2008 and practicing in Tigard at 12570 SW 69th Ave, Suite 101. 503-987-3622.



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