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## **Ancient therapy that still has place in 21st century**

When Kerry Warren needed relief from the migraines she'd been suffering from, acupuncture wasn't the first treatment that came to mind.

But after trying it she was so impressed with the relief that it brought that she trained to become an acupuncturist herself.

From her clinic in Southampton Road, Portchester, Kerry now treats people for a vast range of ailments, niggles, stresses and strains.

And as the UK's first acupuncture awareness week draws to a close, she wants others to open their minds to the potential power of this ancient therapy.

'Like a lot of people, I'd tried everything else and nothing had worked,' explains Kerry.

'I thought "I'll give acupuncture a go", which is a common comment I get from other people. They have done all the Western stuff, with various side effects from medication.'

Combined with a Chinese massage technique called Tui na, she uses thin needles to release built-up blockages of energy in the body.

'We work with meridians, or channels, that run around your body like a network,' she says.

'Through these channels you get your energy, the qi [pronounced chee], and when the qi stops you get problems, like migraines.

'We get fine needles and put them through these channels to release the energy and let the qi flow.'

She adds: 'One of the biggest misconceptions is that it's like having an injection. It's not painful, it shouldn't hurt at all.'

Kerry will typically use between 12 and 14 needles per treatment and will also examine a client's tongue and pulse to assess where their problem stems from.

Those interested in trying it should find a practitioner who is registered with the British Council of Acupuncture, the regulatory body that upholds standards within the industry.

Acupuncturists like Kerry have trained for three years and the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) now recommends the treatment for those who suffer from lower back pain.

The vast majority of Kerry's clients come to her with sports injuries but she also treats those with fertility problems, digestive ailments and stress.

While a course of acupuncture won't cure someone of a diagnosed fertility problem, stress can be a barrier to conception and Kerry says the treatment can promote relaxation.



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In September, Kerry will travel to America to learn more about how acupuncture is being used by the US Air Force on the battlefield.

But for now she's focused on raising awareness of the practice in this country and hopes people will think about acupuncture before other types of treatments in future.

'We want to change the order of when people come and see us,' she adds.

To find out more about the British Council of Acupuncture log on to [acupuncture.org.uk](http://acupuncture.org.uk) or Kerry's own website [theacupunctureclinic-portsmouth.com](http://theacupunctureclinic-portsmouth.com)

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