What is acupuncture?
Acupuncture is one component of traditional Chinese medicine that has been used for over 2,000 years to treat various health conditions. It is a method of inserting fine sterile needles into the body to help promote natural healing and pain relief. In some cases, electrical stimulation may be used in conjunction with the needles.

How does acupuncture work?
The main idea behind acupuncture is that there is energy called Qi (pronounced “chee”) flowing through the body along energy pathways called meridians or channels. Pain results when the flow of Qi becomes blocked. Acupuncture helps the Qi flow more easily. Breathing, thinking, and exercising moves the Qi as well. Western research has shown that it stimulates the nervous system to release natural substances (like endorphins) that reduce pain and may help change how the brain perceives the pain.

Who benefits from acupuncture?
At Kaiser Permanente acupuncture is used only for those conditions where it has been proven through clinical research to have beneficial results. These include certain chronic conditions such as neck, back, shoulder or knee pain, and nausea or vomiting caused from chemotherapy.

How do I know if acupuncture will work?
You and your acupuncturist will generally know within three to four treatments if acupuncture is helping you. In Chinese medicine, acupuncture is not used alone. Other components of Chinese medicine involve looking at other things that could contribute to the pain. For example, Chinese medicine encourages the patient to change his or her lifestyle, such as losing weight, quitting smoking, doing regular exercises and stretches and reducing stress.

Will acupuncture cure my pain?
For some people, acupuncture can help reduce pain for hours, days, or weeks. Although relief may last a long time, it is usually temporary. Acupuncture is one way to reduce your pain while you learn other ways to manage it.

What can I do to make acupuncture more effective?
You can make the acupuncture more effective by participating in exercise programs, learning deep breathing, relaxation and stress management techniques, losing excess weight and looking at the positive aspects in your life. Please do not overwork or exercise strenuously if you feel more energetic after the acupuncture.

Is acupuncture safe?
Acupuncture is safe because we use sterile, disposable needles. Possible risks from acupuncture include but are not limited to slight bleeding, bruising, swelling, skin infection, headache and fainting. Patients may also experience a temporary increase of pain during and/or following the treatment. If electricity is used, only a very small amount of current is used and it is very safe. You may feel a pulsating or mild tingling sensation during the electro-acupuncture treatment.

How do I get acupuncture?
You need a referral to the acupuncture program by your doctor. You will be evaluated by an acupuncturist who will determine whether acupuncture would be appropriate for you.
At Kaiser Permanente, acupuncturists only treat the problem for which you have been referred.

**Please do not**

- Wear perfume or cologne or strong smelling lotions.
- Use cell phone during treatment. In fact, turn your cell phone completely off.
- Bring children to the appointment
- Come if you are ill, or have a high fever, seizures or have a contagious illness

**Before your treatment**

- **Arrive 10 – 15 minutes early to allow time to register**
- Eat a small meal
- Take all medications as prescribed, even your pain medicines
- Wear comfortable clothes
- If treatment is located on your neck or shoulder and you have long hair, please bring a hair tie
- Use the **restroom** before registering.
- Please contact us if you have had an epidural steroid injection within the last two weeks or surgery within the last six weeks

**After your treatment**

- You will be able to drive yourself home
- Participate in light activity only, no strenuous exercising
- Continue to take your prescription medications
- Keep written notes of your response to treatment
- Do not drink alcohol on the day you have acupuncture

**Enhance the benefits of your treatment with**

- Daily stretching
- Tai Chi or Qi Gong
- Meditation
- Relaxation
- Healthy lifestyle choices

This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other health care professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult your doctor. If you have questions or need more information about your medication, please speak to your pharmacist. Kaiser Permanente does not endorse any brand names; any similar products may be used. Herbs and supplements are sold over-the-counter. Kaiser Permanente carries only herb categories for which some evidence exists to show that the herbs may be effective to treat certain medical conditions.
Is this program right for you?
As you know, chronic pain can affect everything—your ability to work and have fun, your sleep, your relationships, and your feeling of well-being. Essential Skills for Pain Management starts with a series of 4 interactive classes in which you will learn and practice skills that are proven to help with chronic pain. The program also includes optional aftercare sessions for working on your new pain lowering skills, and RN care management for one year.

What can you expect from the program?
The goal of the Chronic Pain Team is to teach and enhance self-care skills for alleviating suffering and improving your quality of life.

You will learn more about why you still hurt and what can make pain better or worse. You will learn and practice ways of managing your pain including pain lowering techniques, thought management, pacing activities, flare up management, maximizing mobility, and a variety of gentle exercises.

Our Staff
Our multidisciplinary team includes Pain Psychologists, Pain Physical Therapists and Registered Nurse Care Managers.

How can you participate in the program?

➢ Ask your Primary Care or Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation provider to refer you to the program.
➢ Following the referral, we will contact you to schedule the Pain Management Series, which is offered in multiple locations.
➢ After you complete the Pain Management Series, a Registered Nurse Care Manager will provide support by phone for the next 10 months. You can also attend monthly Aftercare Classes to further refine your pain management skills.

Sessions: Class length is 2½ hours, once per week. Specific program format may vary by facility, from a minimum of 4 sessions to a maximum of 8 sessions, followed by Aftercare Classes.

Facilitators: Pain Psychologists, Pain Physical Therapists

Fee: No Fee/Kaiser Members Only

Referral required.

For further information please call the Comprehensive Pain Management Department: 916-631-2533
Other services offered in our Department (depending on your pain diagnosis): Acupuncture, Biofeedback, Pain Prevention Workshop (for those who do not yet have chronic pain), support for reducing opioid use.
Kaiser Permanente Classes and Resources

Acupuncture (916) 631-2433

Mental and Behavioral Health (916) 973-5300
- Improving Your Sleep class
- Mind-Body Health class
- Mindfulness Meditation class
- Relaxation class
- Stress Management overview

Health Education
- Basic Nutrition class (916) 474-6269
- Healthy Weight class (916) 474-6248

Wellness Coaching by Phone 1-866-251-4514
- Physical Activity
- Quit Tobacco
- Stress Management
- Weight Management

Ask Your Doctor for a Referral
- Chronic Pain Program
- Physical Therapy

Acupuncture/North Valley 2017