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**100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment**  
**Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances**  
**Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!**

**6 Steps to Finding the Best Acupuncturist For You**

**By Brian B. Carter, MS, LAc**

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6 Steps to Getting the Best Chinese Medicine (CM) Practitioner for You

1. Use The Pulse of Oriental Medicine's Acupuncturist Finding Resource (<http://pulsemed.org/findacupuncturist.htm>), and look for your town. If you don't see it, click on the "general databases" link, then choose "National Certification Committee for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine," then search by your city. If that doesn't work, try state-wide, and choose the nearest ones.

2. Candidates:

Pick 3 or 4 names, and give them a call. Ask if they provide a "short, free consult." If they offer to do this in person, take them up on it, because you'll get a much better sense of them that way. However, many will assume you mean a free "phone consult." Make sure you get to talk to the actual acupuncturist. Most of them will talk to you for as much as 15 minutes. If only one of your group does this, I'd say that's a strong testimony to their sensitivity and marketing savvy, unless they are so successful that they don't have time. Try to get even 5 minutes on the phone with them. While you're listening, look for intelligence, sensitivity, compassion, ability to listen and adapt, and ability to communicate clearly.

3. Education:

Ask them about their education (where, when, how many years). Find out if they got a degree in Chinese medicine, or – if they are a medical acupuncturist (chiropractor, MD, DO, or naturopath) – if they just took a weekend course, or even worse, a video course. You want someone who either got a 3 or 4 year Master's degree, and had to take a licensure exam required by the state, or a medical acupuncturist who devotes all or most of their practice time to Chinese medicine.

4. Experience:

Ask them about their experience treating your condition (see above caveat). This will tell you how confident they are. A good practitioner with little experience may still know how to do as much for you as possible, especially if they keep up on the literature! But experience does have value.

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### 5. Cost & Payment:

Find out how much they charge for initial and follow-up visits, if they have payment arrangements, and if they will bill your insurance (if your insurance covers it). Their charge will tell you more about their confidence level, and to some degree this is a measure of competence, although I have heard of bad care given by practitioners who nonetheless charged more than they deserved. Likewise, some very good and confident practitioners may not charge exorbitantly for their own philosophical reasons. The reasonable range is from \$80–300 for an initial 2 hour visit, including acupuncture, and from \$50–150 for follow up visits.

### 6. Compare & Decide:

Compare the results of your phone consults, not just in numbers and data, but on your "gut" feeling. It's important to have a good rapport with your practitioner to facilitate essential communication, relaxation,

and trust. People are sometimes different on the phone, so I wouldn't make this your determining criteria, but it may help you decide if the other factors are more or less equal.

Acupuncturist, herbalist, and medical professor Brian B. Carter founded the alternative health megasite The Pulse of Oriental Medicine (<http://www.PulseMed.org/>). He is the author of the book "Powerful Body, Peaceful Mind: How to Heal Yourself with Foods, Herbs, and Acupressure" (November, 2004). Brian speaks on radio across the country, and has been quoted and interviewed by Real Simple, Glamour, and ESPN magazines.

## **Does Acupuncture Hurt?**

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### **Does Acupuncture Hurt? by Brian B. Carter, MS, LAc**

I understand the fear of needles. What most people are familiar with is the hypodermic needle of western medicine. They use it to draw blood or inject fluids, so they have to be hollow, and as a result are much bigger than our needles. Ours are solid, and much, much thinner. In fact, they are only about twice the thickness of hair. It's probably more accurate to describe them as filaments, but needles are the usual word.

When I show them to new patients, and demonstrate how easily you can bend them, they say, "how can you make this go straight?" That's just one of the skills of the acupuncturist we learn in school. I actually was able to get through a leather shoe with a 34 gauge needle without bending it.

Most new patients are amazed how little they feel when the acupuncture needle is inserted. Sometimes they ask, "Did you put it in already?" If you feel anything, there may be a quick sharp sensation as it goes through the skin. Then there will be nothing at all, or a dull spreading sensation. This is call "big qi."

That dull spreading sensation isn't painful, but it can be intense depending on the situation or the needling technique. Some patients are very sensitive, so we don't needle as deeply on them.

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A couple other sensations that we don't want are the shooting electric feeling if we hit a nerve, or the sharp feeling of being too close to a vein. Neither does much harm. The worst that happens is you get a small bruise in the area. We never get any residual effect from hitting a nerve. You should tell the acupuncturist if you feel the electric or sharp sensations, and they can change the location or direction of the needle. These are rather rare occurrences, though.

Basically, acupuncture is very comfortable, and what little temporary discomfort might occasionally occur is more than made up for by its relaxing and healing effects.

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