

## Ear acupuncture

In all cultures and times till date, there were and are still healers who used and use the ear to treat diseases with needles. The ear acupuncture or "Auriculotherapy" goes back to the 50s when the French physician from Lyon, Dr. Nogier, described this new concept of diagnosis and therapy for the first time.

Ear acupuncture is not a healing method that can simply be made part of the system of classic acupuncture methods but is rather a "reflex zone therapy" in which a therapeutic effect of the effector organ in the body is stimulated through a cut or any other manipulation (pressure, massage, electric stimulation, laser) of a reflectively excitable region in the auricle. This region or points always need to be understood as projection of disturbance in the body onto the organ. In contrast to the classic acupuncture points, these points can be determined when there is any disturbance in the body. As mentioned already, the ear acupuncture or "auriculotherapy" according to Dr. Paul Nogier is a "reflex zone therapy". Numerous neurophysiological mechanisms lead to projection of peripheral disturbances onto the ear and to the possibility of having an effect back on the body through certain stimulations such as those caused with help of needles etc. The auricle is innervated by three large nerves: trigeminal nerve, vagus nerve and cervical plexus. The nuclei of these nerves lie in the brain stem region (medulla oblongata), and are linked to the "reticular formation" present there.

The "reticular formation" is netlike loosened grey matter. All commands of the brain, whether they be the voluntarily controlled ones from the cerebrum or the involuntary ones from the cerebellum or the upper part of the medulla oblongata (breathing circuit and other important reflex centres), pass through the reticular formation. Conversely, all messages carried out to the brain are first processed in the reticular formation, then distributed here before being further transferred. If one stimulates a single point in the auricular region with a needle or manipulates this region in another way, the signal is transferred through an extremely short undisturbed pathway to the reticular formation and then from there out to the brain and the effector organ in the body.

Ear acupuncture is widely used for treatment of vertebral pain (back pain), tinnitus (noise in ear), skin eczema, chronic intestinal catarrhs, allergies and against addiction in case of overweight, smoking or alcohol abuse besides many other problems.