

# Acupuncture Helps Ease Indigestion

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When A.J. Burnett, a Major League Baseball pitcher for 17 years, negotiated his 2009 contract with the New York Yankees, he made sure it stipulated that the team would provide acupuncture for him.

While Burnett probably used acupuncture to ease sore muscles and tendons, it turns out he also could have used it to ease a very common form of indigestion called postprandial distress syndrome (PDS).

PDS causes meal-related symptoms such as uncomfortable and an oddly quick feeling of fullness, along with localized pain in the upper abdomen, right below the ribs. It's prevalent and persistent, often affecting relatively young people.

Research published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* reveals that 12 sessions of acupuncture over four weeks can lead to substantial improvement of PDS symptoms — and that improvement persists for at least 12 weeks.

That's good news for people taking PPI (protein pump inhibitor) medications to ease their distress, because there's a lot of emerging information on the damage those drugs can do to cognition, bone strength, and gastrointestinal health when taken for a long time.

If you're interested in trying acupuncture, you want to find a licensed practitioner with either a master's degree in acupuncture (MSAC) or traditional Asian medicine (MSTOM), or who is certified by the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine.

Insurance coverage varies from state to state and plan to plan, so ask before you are treated. Some medical centers, like Dr. Mike's Cleveland Clinic's Wellness Institute, offer acupuncture and can arrange shared medical appointments if your insurance doesn't cover all the costs of treatment.