

## **The Role of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM)** **and Acupuncture in cancer care**

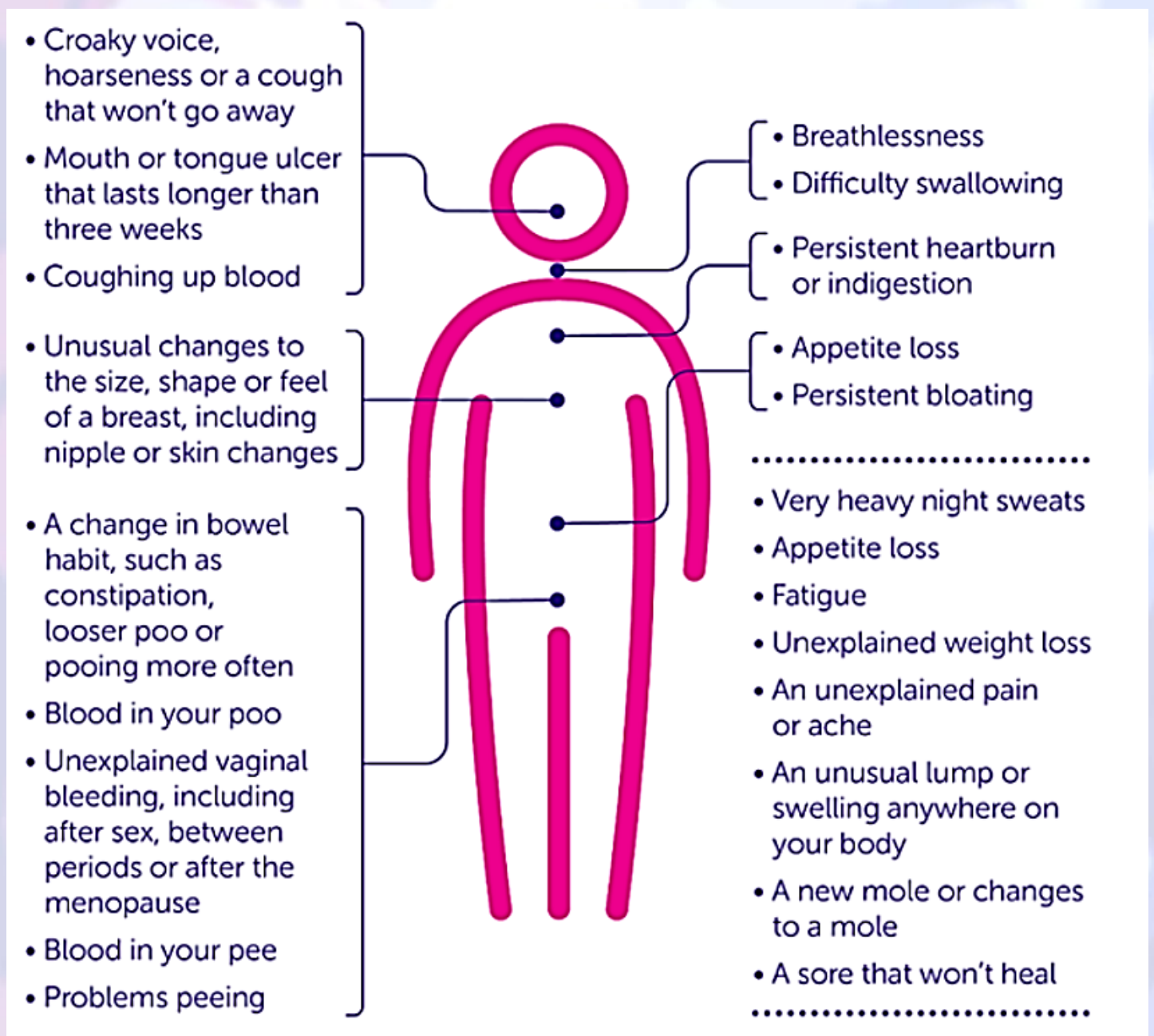
Cancer occurs when there is a gene change, which causes cells to become abnormal. A tumour is formed when the abnormal cells grow, divides and multiplies itself in an uncontrollable way. Sometimes, a secondary tumour is formed when the abnormal cells spread to other tissues and other parts of the body.

Researchers have found over two hundred different types of cancers. Cancers are classified depending on where the abnormal cells were first formed. There are five main cancer groups and these are carcinomas, lymphomas, leukaemia, brain tumours and sarcomas. Carcinoma cancers occur in the skin or tissues that covers internal organs. Sarcoma cancers are found in the connective or supportive tissues, such as the bone, cartilage, fat, muscle or blood vessels. Cancer that starts in the white blood cells are known as leukaemia cancers. Lymphoma cancers are developed in the cells of the immune system. Cancers found in the central nervous system causes tumour to develop in the brain and spinal cord.

There are two common treatments for cancer and these are chemotherapy and radiotherapy. Chemotherapy is powerful cancer-killing medicines and radiotherapy controls the cancer by high-energy X-rays. Cancer affects one in two people. They are likely to develop some form of cancer during their lifetime. Cancers are preventable and there are different ways to reduce the risk of developing cancers. Regular exercise, healthy

balanced diet, no smoking, good weight control, low alcohol intake and low exposure to ultraviolet (UV) lights can all help to prevent cancer from occurring.

It is important to look out for signs of cancer and seek help when needed. According to the Cancer Research UK, here are some possible signs of cancer:



(More information can be found on the Cancer Research UK website: <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/>).



## **The role of TCM in cancer care**

According to Traditional Chinese Medicine, illness affects people when Yin and Yang are imbalance. To treat the illness, we need to restore of the harmony of Yin and Yang.

When patients with cancer are treated with chemotherapy or radiotherapy, they may experience feeling of tiredness, fatigue and breathlessness. Patients experience these symptoms because chemotherapy and radiotherapy can cause damages to the flow of energy (qi) and blood in the body. It also affects the functions of the internal organs.

To treat patients with symptoms affected by chemotherapy and radiotherapy, TCM practitioners will aim to promote qi and the flow of blood around the body. Treatments will aim to restore the functions of the internal organs, such as helping to strengthens the stomach and spleen, bring nourishment to the liver and kidney, remove the heat from the blood, get rid of toxic materials in the body and regulate the immune system.

### **How acupuncture can help with cancer care?**

Acupuncture can help to reduce nausea and vomiting caused by chemotherapy and radiotherapy. It can also help to control stress, anxiety, depression, insomnia, pain and mood changes.

Cancer Research UK found that acupuncture can help to stimulate the nerves. Researchers found that it can help with pain relief and promote the wellbeing of the individual. When fine needles are inserted into certain acupoints, it encourages the body to release endorphins (this is a natural morphine-like





substance in the spinal cord and brain), as well as Serotonin (a key hormone for controlling our mood, wellbeing and feeling of happiness).

The National Cancer Institute (NIH) found that acupuncture can help to increase the flow of saliva in patients with symptoms of dry mouth after radiotherapy treatments. There are evidences that suggest acupuncture can help to reduce swelling, improved levels of energy and decrease pain in patients with lymphedema. Researchers have also found that acupuncture can help with insomnia and improve sleeping problems in patients. Furthermore, researchers have found that acupuncture can help to prevent hot flashes and reduce cancer related fatigue.

Other researchers found that acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) can help to treat other symptoms affected by cancer treatments include night sweats, weight loss, joint pain and stiffness, lack of appetite, constipation, diarrhoea, finger and toe numbness, stress, anxiety and depression.

## **Other TCM treatment that can help with cancer care**

Researchers have found that acupressure can help to reduce nausea and vomiting in cancer patients who are undergoing chemotherapy. Acupressure can also help to relieve pain and anxiety. In addition, treating patients with moxibustion can help to improve the patient's levels of energy.

For more information, please contact us on:

Address: **50 Bridge Street, Manchester, M3 3BW.**

Phone: **0161 711 0456**

E-mail: **info@acuspa.co.uk**

Website: <http://www.acuspa.co.uk>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/AcuSpa.UK>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/acuspamcr/>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/acuspamcr>