

# ACUPUNCTURE

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them lose weight.

Although there are many different theories about how acupuncture works, Mrs. Suzuki believes it stimulates a hormone which relieves pain.

"When (acupuncture is applied), the pulse will change," she said. "It will become more slow, and the pump becomes stronger and bigger."

Although the Chiba School for the Blind teaches students from kindergarten through high school, the acupuncture program is on the junior college level. Students receive intensive training before they are allowed to practice acupuncture on others.

"They take theory classes, and demonstration classes," Mrs. Suzuki said. "They practice (on animals), and then they practice on each other."

"There are other classes to teach them where to place the needles," she said, pointing to an enormous model car ear marked with raised points to show where needles can be inserted into the ear.

"They learn 708 points, 354 points on each side of the body," she said. "There are 12 lines (running from the top of the head to the soles of the feet) with important points on each."

During the third year of study, students must perform an internship in a hospital, and work two hours a day as interns in the school clinic. Students in this program also learn both European and Oriental massage.

When students graduate from the Chiba School for the Blind acupuncture program, they can attempt to enter Japan's College for Acupuncture.

"Next April, we will have a national junior college for acupuncture," Mrs. Suzuki said. "These students can go on if they pass the exam."

At present, there are only five doctors of acupuncture in Japan.

"All are visually impaired," Mrs. Suzuki said. "One of the five is completely blind. They wrote theses on acupuncture, and the medical society approved these theses."

In the school clinic, Mrs. Noriko Arita was being treated by Masamitsu Kudo. She had suffered from a headache for several days, and desperately wanted some relief.

Kudo felt the different vital points on her body, then he began his half hour acupuncture treatment by sticking a long, skinny needle into her right foot, and gently wiggling it around.

Mrs. Arita lay back, closed her eyes, and relaxed.

A few minutes later, before her treatment was half over, she was asked how she felt.

She smiled weakly. "I have relief already," she said.

# ACUPUNCTURE: The blind practice it in Japan

**C**HIBA-SHI, Japan — Like blind students in America, visually impaired students at the Chiba School for the Blind in Yotsukaido, Chiba, Japan, attend classes in math, English, physical education and biology. But unlike blind students in America, many of the visually impaired students at the Chiba School for the Blind also study the theory and practice of acupuncture.

"Every blind school in Japan teaches acupuncture," said Mrs. Yoshi Suzuki, a certified teacher of acupuncture who is also visually impaired. "This is a typical occupation for blind people (in Japan). Most hospitals here have a blind acupuncture specialist."

According to Mrs. Suzuki, visually impaired specialists have practiced acupuncture in Japan since the latter part of the 18th century when a governor was cured by a blind physician.



**View from Japan**  
KAREN CUBIE

"But after World War II, General MacArthur ordered that acupuncture not be (practiced) anymore," Mrs. Suzuki said. "He thought it wasn't scientific." The Japanese community of visually impaired people refused to accept this legislation.

"Many visually handicapped people went to the government," she said. "They said they'd like to continue working with acupuncture, and they sat in front of the capital until (General MacArthur's) government allowed it."

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Although sighted people also practice acupuncture in Japan, it's the only country where visually handicapped people are trained to practice it.

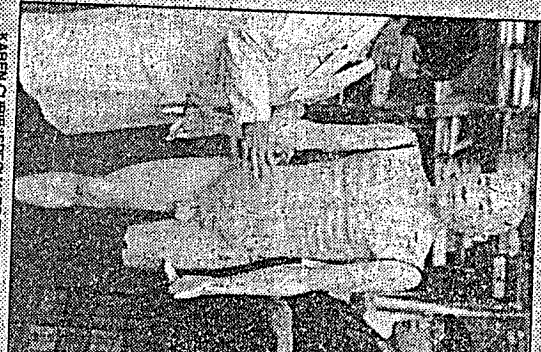
"Even in China they cannot do this," Mrs. Suzuki said. "I don't know why visually impaired people practices only here, but I think blind people in China just haven't learned it. In Korea, they cannot do it, so some (visually impaired) Korean people come to learn in our school."

Acupuncture, which was first used in China about 3,000 years ago, has been growing more and more popular in Japan.

"Sighted people now work in acupuncture more than visually impaired people," Mrs. Suzuki said. "Acupuncture wasn't popular among sighted people before, but now it is popular to have acupuncture during surgery in place of anesthesia."

According to Mrs. Suzuki, acupuncture can cure almost any pain. "It cures headaches, tummy aches, arthritis pain, toothaches, rheumatism shoulder pain, back pain, and menstrual pain," she said. "One person had trouble with his Achilles tendon after running a marathon. He had acupuncture treatment, and he was cured."

It has even been known to cure nerveous breakdowns. Mrs. Suzuki said, Many people also receive treatment to help



KAREN CUBIE/SPECIAL TO THE SUNDAY ENTERPRISE  
Mrs. Yoshi Suzuki, left, and Junko Wachi demonstrate acupuncture can be performed.