

Dr. Ulrich Werth Makes a Good Point

Small titanium acupuncture needles invented by Dr. Werth have shown surprising success for brain health.

by LeRoy Perry, Jr., D.C.



Dr. LeRoy Perry, president of the International Sport-science Institute™ in Los Angeles, five-time Olympic Team doctor; sports scientist, chiropractic orthopedist, and member of the Journal's Advisory Board, joins our editorial staff to report the latest breakthroughs in health from around the world.

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On a recent trip to Vienna, I met German neurologist and psychiatrist Ulrich Werth, M.D., and learned that he's exploring cognitive health in a particularly interesting way. Originally from Magdeburg, Germany, and a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Bremen, Dr. Werth practices medicine at his clinic in Valencia, Spain. As a result of his studies, he has developed a possible treatment for patients with Parkinson's disease called peripheral brain stimulation (PBS).

Derived from auricular acupuncture, a 5,000-year-old Chinese technique, PBS involves implanting small titanium needles (actual size shown on finger, lower left) under the skin of the ear. There, they continually stimulate selected acupuncture points. (In Traditional Chinese Medicine, known as TCM, the ear—hence “auricular”—has over 330 acupoints that correspond to parts of the body.) Since titanium won't react with adjacent tissue, these needles can stay in the ear forever. Dr. Werth calls his invention the Lifelong Needle.

Pointing the Way to Practical Applications

Dr. Werth has achieved good results with many malfunctions related to the central nervous system, but his greatest success has been with Parkinson's disease. This neurological disorder, which causes tremors, rigidity, loss of balance, and other motor impairments, arises from the destruction of brain cells that make the neurotransmitter dopamine. Dr. Werth has discovered the auricular acupoints that correspond to the part of the brain—the substantia nigra—where these cells live.



More research is needed to determine exactly how PBS works, says Dr. Werth, but he theorizes that permanent neuronal stimulation of these areas in the brain has replaced, or at least substituted the function of, lost dopamine-producing cells. He also postulates that perhaps stem cells have moved from another part of the brain into the substantia nigra, where they transformed into dopamine-producing cells.

Making a Difference

In the fall of 2006, Dr. Werth met a former boxer named Enrique, who suffered from strong tremors, sagging posture, and speech problems. Dr. Werth sent him for a diagnostic test, the results of which confirmed Parkinson's disease. The doctor then implanted his permanent auricular needles in Enrique's ears, and Enrique began to feel a difference in his tremors and posture.

Today more than 200 needles are embedded in Enrique's ears, and the only symptom left is a slight tremor. He can stand up straight and, besides a nasal voice and slight mumble, speaks clearly. His head feels clear and he is back in school learning another language. Most telling, however, is a brain scan taken nine months after the needles were implanted: it clearly shows that dopamine production has increased. Dr. Werth says his experience with Enrique—who is now the doctor's assistant—and other patients has shown him that those with more implanted needles have fewer symp-

oms and need fewer conventional medications.

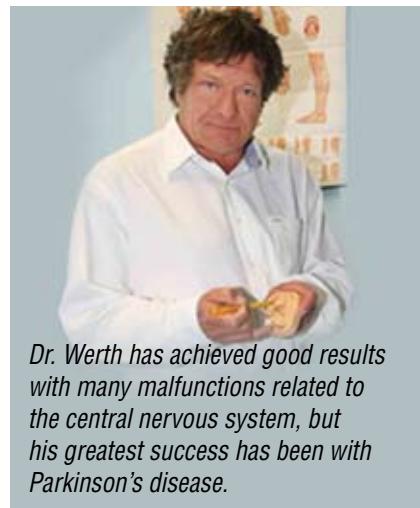
Doctor Becomes Patient: Experiencing PBS Firsthand

Coincidentally, a camera crew had come to Vienna to film an interview with Dr. Werth as I was visiting him. Since they needed a demonstration of Dr. Werth's technique, I volunteered to be his subject: I had been having problems with memory and concentration for a few years. Dr. Werth implanted a total of 80 Lifelong Needles in my ears. Within 72 hours I felt clearer and more focused, and this feeling has persisted. I have a heightened desire to read and acquire knowledge, and I can also read much faster now.

Potential for Other Brain Benefits

I asked Dr. Werth about the results he's had with other degenerative diseases like multiple sclerosis (MS) and Alzheimer's disease. He says that, though his technique cannot cure MS or other diseases, his patients report improvement in their symptoms. With Alzheimer's, permanent auricular acupuncture may be able to help improve symptoms as long as the procedure is initiated in the early stages of the disease.

Patients struggling with addiction to food, alcohol, tobacco, and other substances also respond well to PBS, according to Dr. Werth. However, the first step on the road to recovery is an



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addict's desire to help himself. Hence, PBS is best combined with psychiatric or psychological counseling.

Looking to the Future

While additional studies are needed to learn more about PBS, it is comforting to know that there are health pioneers out there working to give us hope. Across the globe, medical practitioners are exploring alternative methods to help us enjoy and maintain our health at every stage of life. **JOL**

For more information on Peripheral Brain Stimulation and the Lifelong Needle, e-mail Dr. Werth at info@werthparkinsoncenter.org or visit his Web site, www.werththerapie.de. To learn more about Dr. Perry and the International Sportscience Institute™, log on to www.drleroyperry.com.



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