

FEBRUARY 2005

# The Greater Lansing BUSINESS MONTHLY

## Integrative Medicine

AREA PRACTITIONERS  
COMBINE TRADITIONAL AND  
ALTERNATIVE HEALTHCARE



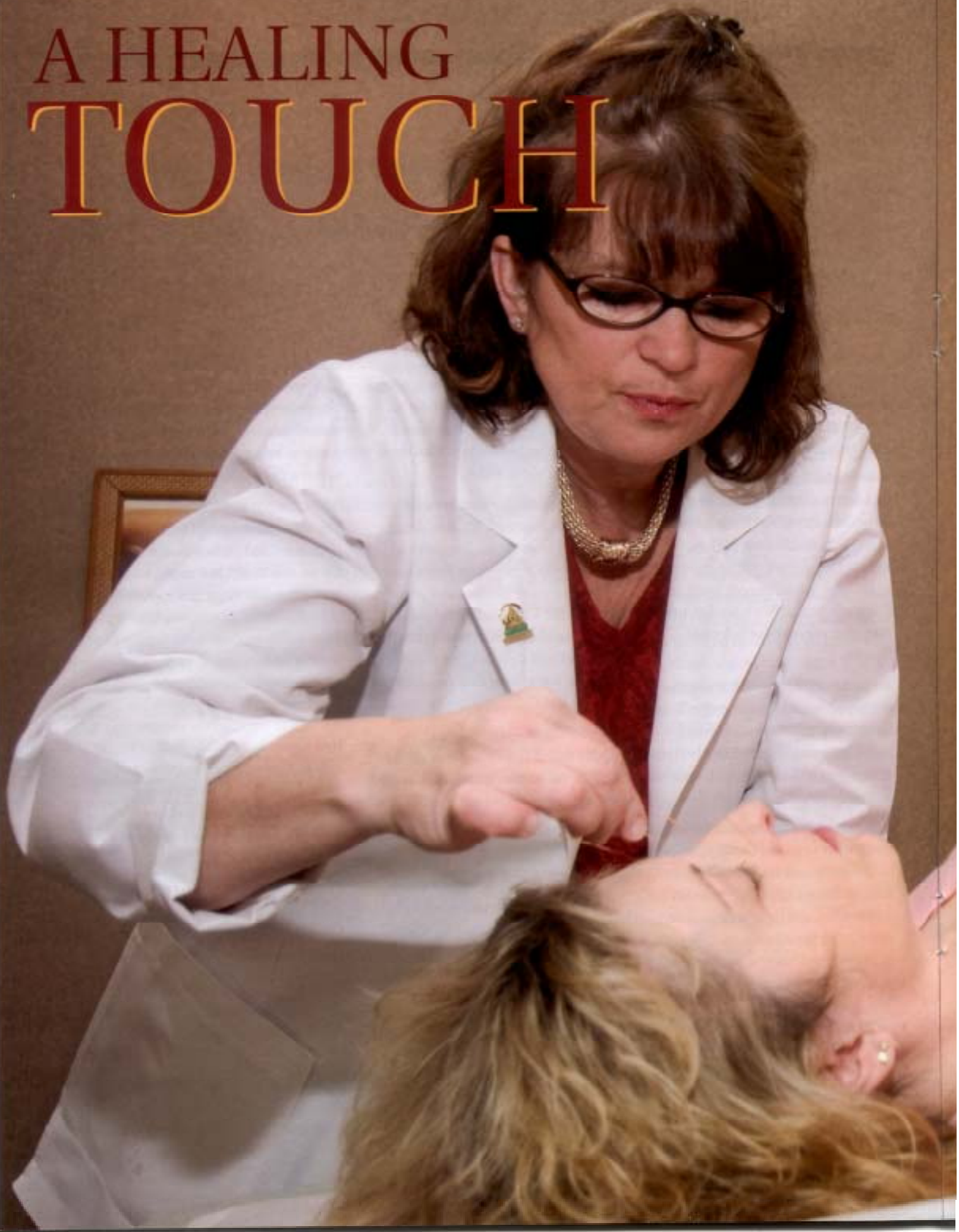
The Greater Lansing Business Monthly


614 Seymour Avenue  
Lansing, MI 48933

ALSO:

- Literacy in the workplace
- Protecting intellectual property
- Local population trends

# A HEALING TOUCH





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Acupuncture has been practiced for thousands of years, but it hasn't been until the last few decades that the Western world has become aware of its efficacy.

by Jane Whittington. Photo by Terri Shaver.

- In 1971, President Nixon, intent on developing trade, cultural and diplomatic links to China, was accompanied to that country by James Reston, a *New York Times* reporter. When Reston became ill with appendicitis, he was treated with acupuncture for pain relief before, during and after his appendectomy. Reston's reports of its benefits piqued interest in this ancient practice, and the rest, as they say, is history. By 1997, the National Institutes of Health stated that acupuncture was being widely practiced for relief of pain and various other health conditions, and, in 1998, according to a Harvard University study, Americans made more than 5 million visits a year to acupuncture practitioners.

The scientific and medical communities are slow to accept alternative therapies, but even they have come to recognize that acupuncture is often an excellent treatment choice. According to the National Institutes of Health, "Promising results have emerged showing the usefulness of acupuncture in adult postoperative and chemotherapy nausea and vomiting and in postoperative dental pains. There are other situations such as addictions, stroke rehabilitation, carpal tunnel syndrome, asthma, headache, tennis elbow, fibromyalgia, myofascial pain, arthritis and back pain in which acupuncture may be useful as an adjunct treatment or alternative."

According to Deborah Lincoln, board certified acupuncturist and Oriental medicine practitioner, founder and owner of Meridian Health and Wellness Center, president of the Michigan Acupuncture Association and a board member of the American Association of Oriental Medicine, "Acupuncture is an essential element in Oriental medicine, a discipline which has been practiced for over 5,000 years and which can include not only acupuncture but also herbs, diet, massage and meditative exercises. The American practice of acupuncture incorporates medical traditions from China, Japan, Korea and other countries."

She added, "There are more than 2,000 acupuncture points on the human body, and these connect with 12 main and eight secondary pathways called meridians. These meridians conduct energy throughout the body. Imbalances of energy through these meridians result in disease.

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Board Certified Acupuncturist Deborah Lincoln, RN, MSN treats Rocky Teitsma by inserting needles in her head, face and upper chest.



## Meridian Health and Wellness Center

Deborah Lincoln, Board Certified Acupuncturist and Oriental Medicine Practitioner (NCCAOM); RN/Clinical Nurse Specialist (Public Health)  
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Photo by Roger Boettcher.

Acupuncture brings the body into balance, keeps the flow of energy clear and brings health to the body and mind."

Practitioners assess a patient's health by feeling the pulse at the wrist. According to Lincoln, there are 12 pulse readings in the wrist and each is considered in analyzing, diagnosing and treating the patient. In addition, practitioners look at the patient's tongue as well as taking a complete history of the patient's past and present complaints, work and life history, environment, family history and emotional life. Treatment is then suggested and can include acupuncture, herbal remedies, diet, exercise and/or massage as well as continued treatment with the patient's physician.

Acupuncture supposes that energy courses through the body via channels. With acupuncture, the channels are opened and closed to adjust circulation. Sterile, stainless steel, single-use, very thin needles are inserted into acupuncture points. After insertion, the needles may be stimulated to produce a stronger effect. Stimulation occurs through the practitioner's manipulation or through low-level electrical charges.

Although this may sound painful, it's almost unheard of for the patient to be uncomfortable during the treatment. Often, the insertion is unnoticed; some may feel a slight pinch or a tingling sensation, numbness or warmth. Up to 30 needles may be used at any one time and are usually left in place for 20 to 40 minutes. During the treatment, the patient remains in a comfortable position, usually lying down. Many fall asleep during treatment.

Some report an immediate response with a relief of symptoms and increased energy. Relaxation is another common feeling after a treatment is completed. According to Lincoln, "It usually takes four to six sessions for a patient to find the relief they have been seeking. Sessions are scheduled most often on a weekly basis. I've been doing this so long that I can usually accurately estimate how long treatment will continue and what level of relief a patient will achieve." The initial visit is generally about an hour and a half with subsequent visits usually lasting about 45 minutes to an hour. Chronic or degenerative conditions may require more treatments.

Meridian Health and Wellness Center sees patients through physician referrals from an MD or a DO.

Acupuncturists work with all ages, from infancy through the elderly. Patients with psychological problems like anxiety and/or depression can also benefit from acupuncture. Insurance coverage varies; so those interested in acupuncture should check their own coverage.

Deborah Lincoln was trained as a registered nurse in Australia and went on to train as a clinical nurse practitioner in England, where she also earned a master's degree in public health. She

received her training in acupuncture and Oriental medicine in England and is certified by the National Commission for Certification of Acupuncturists. She practices Korean and Japanese-style acupuncture and Oriental medicine, including Chinese herbs, balancing craniosacral therapy, esoteric healing and therapeutic touch.

In practice with Lincoln is Megan Long, also a board certified acupuncturist and treasurer of the Michigan Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine.

In December, the Michigan Legislature passed a bill that would define and regulate acupuncture and Oriental medicine. Forty-one other states already have such legislation in place. The bill is supported by the majority of healthcare groups and providers and will regulate acupuncturists and require that they meet strict Oriental medicine qualification, thus insuring consistency of care.

Oriental medicine brings the wisdom of the ages into the modern day. Many have found relief from pain and disease, and Lincoln predicts that the use of Oriental medicine and acupuncture will become more common as people become aware of their healing properties.

For more information about acupuncture, Lincoln suggests the following books:

- *Acupuncture: Energy Balancing for Body, Mind and Spirit* by Peter Mole
- *Between Heaven and Earth: A Guide to Chinese Medicine* by Harriet Beinfield and Efrem Korngold
- *The Web That Has No Weaver* by Ted Kopchuck
- *Plain Talk About Acupuncture* by Eleanor Mitchell ■