

*In 1990, the Director General of the World Health Organization proclaimed to an international gathering that - "Auricular acupuncture is probably the most developed and best documented, scientifically, of all the microsystems of acupuncture and is the most practical and widely used."*

**Auricular acupuncture, or ear acupuncture** as it is more commonly known, is similar to body acupuncture but with ear acupuncture stimulation is only to the external ear. It is a method of treating a variety of physiological and psychological health problems by the stimulation of certain acupuncture points on the external ear.

Classical body acupuncture is thought to have been originally discovered in China over 5000 years ago; ear acupuncture was also thought to have been discovered in China around the same time, however it has been, until fairly recently, a poor relation of classical body acupuncture. It was the French Physician from Lyon in France, the late Dr Paul Nogier, in the 1950's after seeing one of his patients cured of sciatic back pain with the use of ear acupuncture, who then began to research and develop modern ear acupuncture, and carried on researching and refining the therapy for over 40 years until his recent death in the late 1990's. In fact his work is so well regarded that the Chinese refer to him as the Father of modern Ear Acupuncture.

Dr Nogier's research indicated that there are over 100 or so separate acupuncture points on the external ear and that when these points are stimulated they are believed to influence the various organs and systems in the body. Nogier discovered that the position of the ear points and zones were approximately in the position of an upside down fetus, super-imposed on the external ear, with the head located around the lobe of the ear. His research also indicated that every part of the body has its own representative acupuncture point on the external ear, and that stimulation one of these points can influence the corresponding organ linked to that particular ear point.

The Chinese version of ear acupuncture is still based on the traditional Chinese medicine model, whereas the western Nogier version is based more on a western scientific format.