

## **Runner's Technique**

### **By John Howard, L.Ac., Dipl. Ac.**

Auricular therapy has been used for the past 60 years to treat many ailments, from pain to infertility, just to name a few. The system of auricular therapy was first introduced by Dr. Paul Nogier a French physician. Dr. Nogier went on to develop this system into what it is today, and it is used by thousands of physicians and acupuncturists around the world. With my knowledge of the Nogier three phase system I have successfully treated many of my patients who sought me out. It was from my understanding on how this system worked along with my background as a runner that led me to this technique.

Over the years as I was treating my patients with auricular therapy for their ailments I noticed a pattern. This struck me as odd, because it is the same pattern of symptoms that a runner might notice when they are about to have a good race or workout. Even though I would be treating my patients for back pain or neck pain, they would communicate the same feelings a runner would notice just before they ran a good race. As the pain was decreasing my patients would tell me their knees feel like they have air in them, their shoulders were relaxed and they felt like they were moving/walking faster and felt lighter. This went on for some time before I thought maybe I can use auricular therapy to make people run faster.

Over the next few years I developed and tested many points (auricular points) on fellow runners and friends. These were runners looking to run a personal record (PR) or qualify for races like the NYC or Boston marathon. In 2009 I found a combination of points that will make you run faster over a given distance. In some cases these runners ran PR's by several minutes and others qualified for races they could never qualify for in the past such as the Boston and New York City Marathons. Some outright won races and set course records by up to 29 minutes. My combination of points not only worked in just races but in workouts too. Runners who used this technique in long training runs (18+ miles) reported that they had to hold back, they could have run much faster without much extra effort. The most surprising feedback I received was that many runners had no soreness or pain after their run that day or the next day. This was great news but it could have also created a problem. After a race or a long training run your body needs rest. The older you get the more rest an individual needs. Without proper coaching or guidance these runners could have done what we runners call "gone to the well" too many times. Meaning just because you feel good doesn't mean you should press your luck and run back to back hard runs. All of the runners who I tested this technique on had professional coaching and met with their coaches a few times per week.

The last modification I made to the Runner's Technique was the use of electric stimulation before inserting the needles. I have found that stimulating Point Zero with 10Hz for two minutes on each ear activates the ear. I have written an article on this called Point Zero to the Rescue. It explains this technique in detail.

### **The Needles**

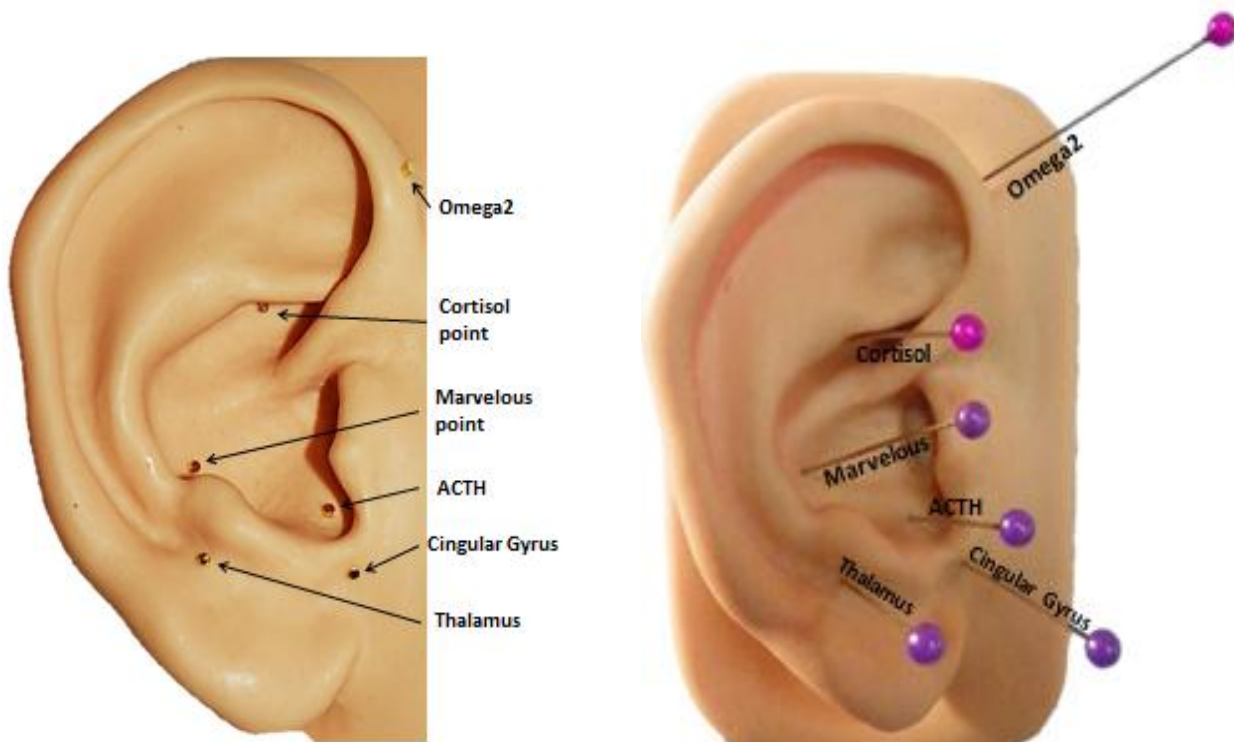
I use gold ASP® ear needles (Sedatelec, Chemin des Muriers F-68540 Irigny, France, they can be obtained from [www.lhasaoms.com](http://www.lhasaoms.com)) these needles are semi-permanent and can stay in the ear for 3-4 days. I have also used other needles besides the gold ASPs®. I used Seirin Pyonex 1.5mm (they too can be obtained from [www.lhasaoms.com](http://www.lhasaoms.com)) They worked well but you are limited to when you can place them in and how long they stay in the ear. You should place them in the ear 10 minutes before the start of the race or workout. I've found

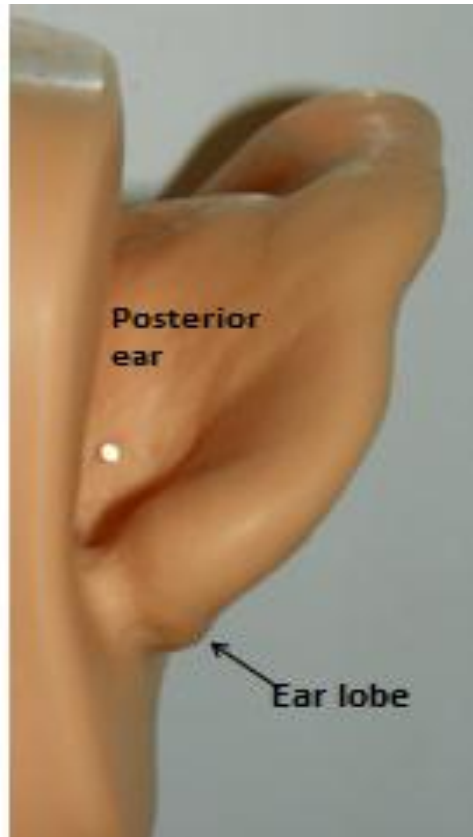
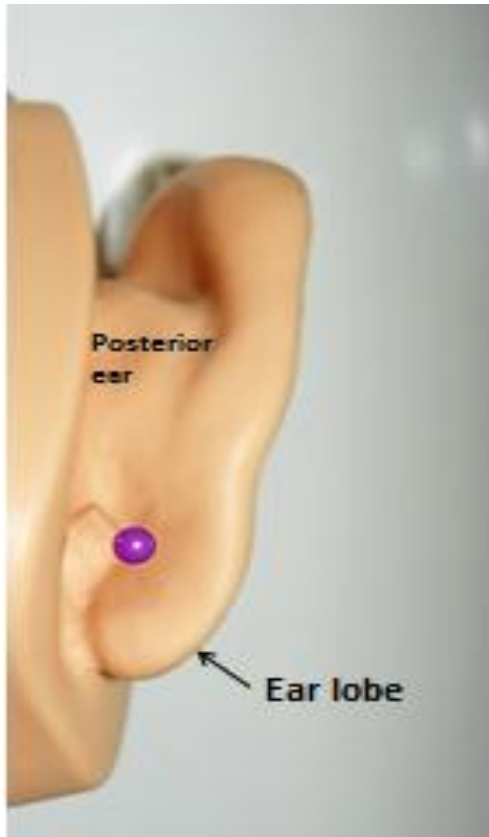
that if you are running more than 5 miles the Pyonex needles will start to fall out. It's not always possible to be at the start of the race or workout. When using the ASP® ear needles they can be placed in the ear 24 hours before the start. I have placed the ASP® ear needles in as far out as 48 hours before a race and had good results. I also have my runners keep the needles in for a minimum of 24 hours after their race or workout to help with recovery.

### The Points

First ask the patient if they are right or left handed, this makes a difference in the number of points you use on each and the ear you needle first. Once they tell you their dominate hand (let's say they are right handed), I use 10Hz of stimulation on the right ear for two minutes and then do the same to the left ear. Now you are ready to insert the needles.

On a right handed runner they would receive 7 needles (6 in the front of the ear and 1 in the posterior ear) in the right ear. For the left ear they would receive 6 needles (only the ones in the front). The difference is that the dominate side receives the posterior ear point that is represented in the cerebellum region of the ear lobe. Since this patient is right handed, start with the right ear and insert the needles in this order: posterior point first (cerebellum region), then Cingular Gyrus, ACTH, Thalamus, Marvelous Point, Cortisol, Omega2. Points on the front of the ear are sensory points, points on the back are motor.





### The Results

Over the past three years I have treated many runners with this technique, all with different abilities and goals. I've treated one runner who is looking to make the Olympic team and others that are just looking to run a little faster over a given distance. One of the runners I treated this year placed in the top 10 at the World Championship. I have even treated a top exertive of a major acupuncture supply company. He ran a PR by 4:04 over 5k. He was totally amazed and couldn't believe how well it worked.

Along with my anecdotal evidence there is also scientific data showing that some of the points I use significantly decrease lactic acid levels in the blood. Volunteers had their blood drawn before and after physical exercise on a treadmill. The subjects who had ear seeds in had a significantly lower lactic acid levels then the ones without ear seeds. Jaung-Geng et al (1995).

I currently have two videos about the Runner's Technique. One that shows some results from the technique and the other is a step by step instruction on how to do the technique.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U0ifoQDprbw>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g5PwCYloA0>

"If you can believe it, you can achieve it." – John Howard, L.Ac.

"To give anything less than your best is to sacrifice the gift." – Steve Prefontaine (better known as Pre) set 15 American running records; made the 1972 Olympic team at 5000 meters, won 6 NCAA titles at the University of Oregon. He did all this in less than 5 years. Steve Prefontaine died in 1975 at the age of 25. At the time of his death Pre held every American record from 2000 meters to 10,000 meters, a total of 5.