

Auriculotherapy: The different kinds of points on the ear

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One cannot apply auriculotherapy successfully, if one does not understand the implicated mechanisms.

Today we note a «misunderstanding» regarding the ear points. Many books, publications let us suppose that all ear points are the same, which is not correct.

In fact, the ear presents two types of points with different nature and function.

When Paul Nogier started his research on the ear localizations beginning the 50ies he used a very simply detection method. It was a pencil peak fixed on a spring in order to find painful ear points. The first point he studied was the sciatica point, used by Mrs Barrin from Marseille for cauterisation. Further on, the points of the spine, the upper and the lower limbs, etc. were discovered. Paul Nogier understood that the ear points became painful at pressure in case when certain parts of the body presented a pathology. For example: in case of a knee pain, a point sensitive at pressure will appear at the same time on the ear. This is why the detection of painful ear points was used to find pathologic body parts.

So the first research on ear somatotopy was done in this way.

During approximately fifteen years, until the year about 1965, Paul Nogier proceeded in this way. It is starting the year 1963, when the point detection became objective. Thanks to the works of doctor Jacques Niboyet from Marseille, it became evident that acupuncture points had very particular physical properties and that it was possible to detect them using the detection of lower cutaneous electrical resistance.

Inspired by this new discovery, Paul Nogier took the option of the electrical detection for the ear points. His teaching on ear points was clear: the ear points can be detected either by pain sensitivity or using the lower cutaneous electrical detection. This suggested that the points detected using pain sensitivity and the electrical detection were the same.

In 1977, Paul Nogier published «Practical introduction to auriculotherapy», where he described thirty important ear points: the organ points and the master points. The organ points correspond to precise anatomic areas. The master points correspond to functions. But, the author does not go much further in his reasoning and says regarding the detection that any point can be detected either by pain sensitivity or by electricity.

In 1983, [Odile Auziech](#) from the university of Montpellier published a fascinating book on the histologic structure of ear points. Her work consisted in first line to detect the ear points presenting lower cutaneous electrical resistance in rabbit and second to study these points under microscope after biopsy. She discovered that the points of lower cutaneous electrical resistance correspond to precise histologic entities, which she called «neuro vascular complexes».

The NVC (neuro vascular complexes) present a special activity, which seems to be dependant on the [thermoregulation of the organism](#). It seems that thermic «sensors» are present on the ear which have action on the organ thermoregulation.

Therefore we can say that there are two types of ear points:

1) The [painful points](#) which are linked to the [cerebro-spinal system](#). These points are arranged in a somatotopic way and do not correspond to any particular histologic entity and become painful only by the convergency effect. In case when nociceptive influx are present on the foot, the ear point corresponding to the foot becomes painful to pressure: the by the mechanic stimulation created influx converges at the same area of the nervous system. [Professor Jean Bossy](#) described very well the phenomenon. [These points are active in order to act against pain: They are the organ points.](#)

2) The [points called the «neuro-vascular complexes»](#) are strictly different form the first mentioned. Organised in somatotopy, [they are not necessarily painful and are only detectable using devices of electrical detection](#). These points get «visible» because of their abnormal electrical activity [in case a thermic disorder is present in an organ](#). In fact, [they are the expression of the organ work](#). They are «connected» to the [neuro vegetative system](#) and [have action on the organ function](#): [They are the master points that Paul Nogier described in 1977.](#)

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