



acupuncture

This leaflet provides general information about acupuncture and how it is used to provide pain relief.

Websites for further information:

- Acupuncture Association of Chartered Physiotherapists:
www.aacp.uk.com

- British Medical Acupuncture Society:
www.medical-acupuncture.co.uk

Acupuncture is available at selected practices. Please contact Premier for further details.

For the appointments please contact

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Introduction

This leaflet is designed to assist your understanding of why you may be offered acupuncture as part of physiotherapy treatment. It will explain what will happen when acupuncture is given and will answer some commonly asked questions.

What is Acupuncture?

Acupuncture is one of the oldest recorded forms of medicine having been used for over 3,000 years in China. There are several theories as to how the effects are produced. However, research shows that acupuncture stimulates the brain to produce natural pain relieving chemicals – endorphins. It does not work for everybody and every condition, but frequently good results are achieved. The effects of acupuncture often increase as treatment progresses. Initially, the condition may worsen slightly before you feel any benefit.

Physiotherapists providing acupuncture will have completed a recognised post graduate training course and be a member of the Acupuncture Association of Chartered Physiotherapists.

How is it done?

You will be put in a comfortable, well supported position on a treatment bed. The physiotherapist will talk you through where the needles will be placed. Points will be selected that are suitable for your condition; this may not always be at the site of pain. It is a well-controlled hygienic procedure, and single use sterile needles will be used. The needles are left in place for between 10 and 30 minutes.

The physiotherapist may 'stimulate' the needles through the treatment; this involves twisting the needles gently.

What should I expect?

When inserted, the fine needles give rise to a temporary mild discomfort; occasionally a more intense sensation is experienced. If you feel light headed, nauseous, clammy or faint during treatment inform the physiotherapist straight away.

What are the risks?

The physiotherapist will go through an extensive 'check list' to ensure you are medically fit to receive acupuncture. You will be made aware of any risks involved and asked to sign a consent form.

Occasionally a little bruising may occur where the needle has been inserted

As acupuncture involves a needle piercing the skin, there is a very small risk of localised infection. If this occurs you would see one or more of the following:

- Heat
- Swelling
- Excessive tenderness
- Redness

If this occurs contact your physiotherapist or seek medical advice. If you do not you may start to feel unwell.

What can I expect afterwards?

Most people are able to carry on 'as normal'. You may feel a little tired after acupuncture so it is wise not to exert yourself. Occasionally some people feel slightly worse after treatment but this is often short lived.

Will I be able to drive home afterwards?

Most people are fine to drive after acupuncture. However, if you feel tired it is wise not to travel long distances.

Do I need to do anything before treatment?

It is important to have eaten before treatment so try and eat breakfast or lunch on days of treatment.

Can I take my usual tablets?

Yes, take your usual medication as prescribed.

What happens next?

Your physiotherapist may want to see you for up to five treatments to assess your response to acupuncture. If your pain and symptoms have not significantly improved in this time, acupuncture is unlikely to help your condition.

You have the right to stop treatment at any time.