

Acupuncture Information

An Introduction to acupuncture:

Acupuncture is a well-established Chinese method of treating some medical conditions. It is acknowledged by many doctors trained in Western medicine as an extra therapeutic tool to be used – as a complementary rather than an alternative treatment for many ailments.

How Acupuncture works:

According to traditional Chinese medicine, which has been continuously practised since 2,700BC for over 4,000 years (which included the Yellow Emperor's reign), treatment of an illness by acupuncture relies on the balancing of the individual's vital energy or Qi (pronounced Chee) between two opposite phases called Yin and Yang. Acupuncture facilitates the flow of Qi along several well-defined energetic channels in the body to help it heal itself and restore the person to normal health.

Modern research has shown there is a sound scientific basis to acupuncture. Reports from World Health Organisation and the National Health & Medical Research Council in 1988, as well as several recent reviews published since, do support this view.

Acupuncture is most effective when used as early as possible in the course of the medical problem after the appropriate medical assessment.

General Information about acupuncture:

Acupuncture is suitable for people of all ages, and can be offered via two modalities here – fine filiform needles and laser. The laser used in acupuncture is a low power beam and very safe. Acupuncture is not a one session treatment. The average patient with a chronic disease requires 6-12 treatments to achieve the greatest relief possible. Mild or acute conditions may need fewer treatments.

Is it painful?

The patient's condition must be accurately diagnosed before treatment is started. The patient may feel a slight discomfort or a minimally painful sensation during treatment, which often indicates the treatment is working.

The skilled therapist is aware of (and be able to cope with) any rare complications that may arise during treatment. Acupuncture should be administered by registered qualified medical practitioners/ doctors well-versed in

anatomy, physiology, pathology & standard diagnostic techniques.

There are no risks to a patient of being infected by bacteria or viruses as single-use disposable needles or equipment which has been properly sterilised (as are all surgical instruments) are used.

Although doctors' charges may differ according to the custom for each practice, acupuncture from a registered doctor is eligible for a Medicare rebate under the Medicare Benefits Scheme.

Advice to patients undergoing acupuncture treatment:

Treatment is given only if relevant after a medical review. Before attending an appointment for treatment, the patient should avoid rushing around and/or having a large meal. Most importantly, alcohol or excessive coffee intake before or after treatment is to be avoided. A short period of rest or relaxation after the treatment enhances the response to acupuncture.

Occasionally, symptoms experienced by the patient may appear to worsen after a treatment. However, progressive improvement usually follows after each treatment thereafter.

After a successful response to a treatment course, an occasional booster(s) may be needed to maintain the patient in good health. The doctor will advise if that is necessary.

In a very small percentage of patients, especially when acupuncture has been used as a last resort treatment, there may be no improvement. The reasons for this will vary from person to person and if asked, your doctor will be happy to explain or address your concerns further.

The Scope of Acupuncture:

Acupuncture is a complete system of medicine with a wide range of applications. A doctor who combines Western scientific medicine with acupuncture can therefore select the most appropriate treatment in any particular case. Below are some conditions which can be treated by acupuncture, and are listed according to the different systems.

General health and wellbeing:

Immune boosting, pre and post-operative, post infection fatigue, smoking cessation.

Musculoskeletal conditions:

Acute: Sprains and strains, torn muscles, tendonitis, plantar fasciitis, wry neck, tennis elbow.

Chronic: Fibromyalgia, Sciatica, Tension headache, back pain, cramps, osteoarthritis, frozen shoulder, repetitive strain injury (RSI).

Gastrointestinal:

Reflux, gastritis, indigestion, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, irritable bowel.

Respiratory:

Mild asthma, hay fever, sinusitis, rhinitis, post viral cough.

Genitourinary & Reproductive system:

Overactive bladder, pelvic pain, period pain, heavy periods, peri menopausal symptoms, bladder irritation and spasms.

Skin & face:

Excess sweating, itch, eczema, post herpetic neuralgia, trigeminal.

Nervous system & psychiatric factors:

Anxiety, fears, obsessions, poor sleep, mild depression or in conjunction with antidepressant.

To book an acupuncture consult:

Call headspace Hawthorn on 9006 6500.

For more information:

Your doctor should be able to answer any further questions that you may have. You may also access more information about acupuncture by visiting the Australian Medical Acupuncture College website: www.amac.org.au

