

Acupuncture for pain management

Pain Management Department

Information for Patients

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What is acupuncture?

You have been prescribed a course of acupuncture for your pain. This means you will have 4 treatments at the acupuncture clinic.

Acupuncture began in China. It has been practiced around the world for many years. It is based on the belief that your life force, or energy, runs through some channels in your body. Also, that pain and disease throw off your positive and negative balance of energy. Needles used in acupuncture are said to bring that balance back.

How acupuncture works

- It seems that inserting needles into various body parts may trigger sensory nerves beneath the skin. This may release endorphins which are natural pain relieving substances. The body triggers your body's natural pain killers.

What are the benefits?

Acupuncture is not a cure for your pain. It can help to ease the pain. The effect of acupuncture is different for each person. Below are some of the benefits:

- **Pain relief:** This can happen after 1 or after 3 or 4 treatments. The effect can last from days to months.
- **Improvement in sleep:** Some people notice they sleep better and for longer.
- **Relaxation:** Acupuncture can help you to feel more relaxed. This will help you to cope with your pain.
- **Greater sense of well-being:** Acupuncture can help you feel better physically and mentally. It can also make you feel you have more energy.

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or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

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Treatment

Your pain consultant or nurse specialist will see you in our outpatient's clinic. This is to;

- assess your condition,
- explain the treatment and
- confirm that you fit the criteria.

If you are suitable, you will then go on the waiting list for a course of 4 treatments.

At your first acupuncture treatment the nurse will check your pain. This is to decide where the acupuncture needles need to go. How many needles will depend on which area the consultant has recommended treatment. You will only be treated for the pain that you have been referred for. If you feel new pain whilst waiting for treatment, please see your GP.

Side effects can be:

- pain during treatment
 - **bruising or bleeding at the site of the needle** - this is more common if you are taking drugs to thin the blood such as warfarin or aspirin.
- **drowsiness** - you may feel sleepy or very happy during or for a few hours after the treatment. This should not affect your ability to drive or operate machinery.
- **dizziness, fainting or feeling sick (nausea)** - this is rare but can happen during treatment. If this is very bad, treatment will be stopped.
- **more pain** - your pain may feel worse after the first treatment. This is quite common and can be a positive sign that your body is having a reaction to the treatment. If your pain is worse after 3 treatments the acupuncture will be stopped.

What happens after the first 4 treatments?

You will have 4 treatments on a weekly basis. **On the 4th treatment** the nurse will talk to you about whether or not you think the treatment has helped your pain. You will be asked to rate your pain score again. If you have less pain and would like to get more treatment, you will go back on the waiting list for a 2nd round of 4 treatments. If you need more treatment after the 2nd course, the nurse will send a letter to your GP asking them to refer you for another course of treatment. You will also get a copy of the letter. Please contact your GP to confirm that the referral has been sent to us. Your pain consultant cannot refer you for more treatment. This has to come from your GP.

If you have any urgent problems **please contact your GP or contact**

Acupuncture clinic: 0116 258 8841 for non-urgent questions

Pain management voicemail: 0116 258 8253 (response within 7 days)

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على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل
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