

## Information about Acupuncture

Please read this information carefully, and ask the physiotherapist if there is anything you do not understand.

### What is acupuncture?

Acupuncture is a form of therapy in which fine needles are inserted into specific points on the body. The needles may be stimulated manually or by passing a small electrical current through them.

### Why do I need acupuncture?

Research has been able to show that acupuncture stimulates the brain to produce natural pain relieving chemicals. These assist the body to heal and gain pain relief.

### Is acupuncture safe?

Acupuncture is generally very safe. Serious side effects are very rare, that is, less than one per 10,000 treatments.

### Does acupuncture have side effects?

You need to be aware that:

- Drowsiness can occur after treatment in a small number of patients. If affected, you are advised not to drive or leave the department until fully recovered.
- Minor bleeding or bruising can occur after acupuncture in about 3% of treatments.
- Pain during treatment can occur in about 1% of treatments.
- Existing symptoms can get worse after treatment (less than 3% of patients). You should tell your physiotherapist about this, but it is usually a good sign.
- Fainting may occur.

In addition, if there are particular risks that may apply to you, the physiotherapist will discuss these with you.

### Is there anything your physiotherapist needs to know?

Apart from the usual medical details, it is important that you let the physiotherapist know:

- If you have ever experienced a fit, faint or funny turn.
- If you have a pacemaker or any other electrical implants.
- If you have a bleeding disorder.
- If you are taking anti-coagulants e.g. warfarin, or any other medication.
- If you have damaged heart valves or have any other particular risk of infection.
- If you think you may be pregnant.
- If there are any changes to your medical status, you should inform your physiotherapist.

**Single-use, sterile, disposable needles are used by the physiotherapist.**

### Reference:

White. A, et al. (2001) Informed Consent for Acupuncture – An Information Leaflet Developed by Consensus. *Acupuncture in Medicine*. Vol.19(2):123-129.

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