Acupuncture Clinic Brochure

What is acupuncture?

- An ancient art of therapy that originated in China 5,000 years ago and has been used by nearly one-third of the world (countries throughout Asia, Europe and South America) as a primary care system and in many more countries as non-conventional therapy for 200 years.
- A type of complementary and alternative medicine introduced in the U.S. in the 70’s and endorsed by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH).
- A therapeutic method that treats the person as a whole by rebalancing the body by primarily using needles as stimulations with minimal invasiveness.

What conditions can acupuncture help?

Acupuncture can help with the following common conditions and more:

- Chemotherapy-related nausea and vomiting
- Digestive problems (constipation, irritable bowel syndrome and GERD)
- Facial nerve paralysis rehabilitation
- Headache and migraine
- Insomnia and stress
- Muscle & joint pain (back pain, neck pain and shoulder pain and etc.)
- Sinusitis
- Smoking cessation
- Stroke rehabilitation
- Women’s health issues, such as:
  - Menstrual irregularity and pain
  - PMS/PMDD
  - Menopausal symptoms

How does acupuncture work?

- Acupuncture works based on the theory of meridians where Qi (pronounced like Chee and meaning vital energy) and blood circulate in the body through a system of channels (the meridians) which connect the internal organs with external organs and tissues.
• By stimulating certain points (called acupoints) of the body surface where meridians reach, the flow of Qi and blood can be regulated and diseases treated with very few side-effects.
• The primary stimulation method uses needles, but acupuncturist may also use other methods such as moxibustion, cupping device, heat lamp and electrical devices to enhance therapeutic effects.

What should I do before my acupuncture visit?

• Bring a list of all medications and supplements you are taking.
• If possible, avoid applying make-up, especially on your first visit, so that the acupuncturist may observe the skin on your face.
• Refrain from wearing perfume on the day of your first visit.
• Wear loose clothing, but please be prepared to undress if the acupoints are difficult to access.
• Do not consume colored food or beverages at least 4 hours prior to your visit so the acupuncturist can observe your tongue’s true color.
• Do not drink caffeinated or alcoholic beverages 4 hours prior to your visit so the acupuncturist may have a more accurate evaluation of your pulse.
• Have a light meal or snack before the visit. Heavy meals can cause nausea, but an empty stomach can be the cause of dizziness after the treatment.
• Drink an adequate amount of water on the day of the treatment.

What can I expect during the acupuncture treatment?

• During the initial visit,
  o Information about your medical and family history, lifestyle, and your physical and mental conditions will be obtained by the acupuncturist using the Tradition Chinese Medicine Diagnosis methods including observing your tongue and feeling your pulse.
  o A treatment plan (e.g. acupoints, manipulation and a timeline) will be developed for you specifically based on the holistic evaluation of your situation.
• During return visits, if applicable:
  o Information about your conditions will be updated and compared with your previous visit.
  o Adjustment of acupoints and manipulation will be made according to the change of your conditions.

What do the needles feel like?

• You may feel a small prick as the sterile disposable needle passes through the skin. However, the needles are as fine as a human hair and many patients do not feel any pain at all.
- There may be a sensation of heaviness, numbness, a slight dull ache or a twitch which mostly indicates that the Qi has arrived at the acupoint called De Qi (/Der Chee/). Very rarely will you feel sharp pain, but if you do, you need to inform your acupuncturist so that an adjustment can be made.

**How soon will I notice an improvement?**

- Some patients notice partial or even complete relief as soon as the needle is inserted but this is rare. Most find that improvement takes longer to appear - sometimes later the same day, or perhaps up to two or three days.
- If you notice no improvement, you may not be responsive to this particular form of treatment and adjustment may be necessary.
- You may find that the effects of treatment vary from time to time. You may notice more improvement in some visits compared to others.

**How many treatments do I need?**

- Just as therapies you receive from your regular doctor, the number of treatments depends on your conditions, health, age, responsiveness to the treatment and many other factors. Most people require a course of 3 to 6 treatments within weeks following the initial visit.

**What are the most common potential risks associated with Acupuncture?**

- Minor bleeding after removal of the needles. Holding a cotton ball for about one minute over the site of puncture is usually sufficient to stop the bleeding.
- Dizziness. Some patients have a conscious or unconscious fear of needles which can produce dizziness and other symptoms of anxiety (sometimes called needle-shock). If you experience dizziness, the acupuncturist will remove the needles and ask you to lay down to reduce the likelihood of fainting.

**What should I do and expect following the acupuncture treatment?**

- You may feel a little light-headed after your treatment. If so, please sit down in the reception room or take a short walk around the building. In a few minutes, you should feel relaxed and clear-headed. However, call a friend or a family member to drive you home if you do not feel alert enough to drive safely.
- Occasionally you may get a small hematoma (a little bruise under the skin) after an acupuncture needle is removed. This is not a cause for concern--it will go away after a few days.
- We recommend that you refrain from physical exertion immediately after your treatment.
- Drinking alcohol for the rest of the day is not recommended.