

# MEDICAL ACUPUNCTURE

**Dr Ruth McCracken offers Medical Acupuncture. Dr Ruth McCracken is a GP with over 30 years experience, trained in Acupuncture. As a Medical Acupuncturist Dr Ruth practices both western medicine and acupuncture to effectively treat medical conditions.**

**An Acupuncture Treatment Plan will be developed with Dr Ruth performing a thorough assessment to ensure the medical diagnosis for the treating conditions before the initial acupuncture treatment.**

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## **WHAT IS ACUPUNCTURE?**

Acupuncture is a system of treatment that was developed in China and has spread throughout SE Asia in various different styles.

There is a comprehensive traditional philosophy behind acupuncture. More recently, modern scientific research has demonstrated the neurophysiology involved in acupuncture, and its effectiveness for a wide range of conditions.

## **WHAT IS MEDICAL ACUPUNCTURE?**

Medical Acupuncture is performed by a Western Medical Doctor who has also qualified in acupuncture. Medicare recognises Doctors who have taken this specialist training and gives a rebate for their services. Medicare sees acupuncture in this setting as complementing western medicine and requires that any condition treated by a medical acupuncturist has been fully investigated prior to acupuncture.

## **DOES IT REPLACE MY USUAL GP?**

**NO!** A Medical Acupuncturist focuses on acupuncture. You will keep seeing your usual GP for you ongoing medical advice, scripts, tests, referrals etc. Your Medical Acupuncturist does not need a referral, but it is always helpful to have a letter from your usual GP outlining the nature of the problem for which you are seeking acupuncture. Your Medical Acupuncturist will be happy to correspond with your usual GP if they wish.

## **DOES IT HAVE TO BE NEEDLES?**

Not at all! There is a range of other modalities that can be used in acupuncture, such as laser. These can be used in children, and in adults who are not keen on needles, or who have medical contraindications to needle treatment.

## **DOES IT HURT?**

When needles are used, they are very fine, much finer than the ones used for injections or taking blood. The patient might feel slight discomfort, but needles are generally not painful.

## **IS IT SAFE?**

Acupuncture treatment from a qualified practitioner has been shown to be very safe, with serious side effects occurring only 1 in every 10,000 treatments. With careful management such complications can generally be avoided.

Most side effects are minor: slight bleeding or bruising is the most common. Pain is less common. Fainting occurs rarely. Occasionally symptoms get temporarily worse after treatment, but usually gradually improve as the sessions continue.

Only single-use, sterile, disposable needles are used. As with any GP consultation, normal hygiene procedures are followed and the treatment couch is sanitised between patients.

## **IF I AM UNWELL?**

Due to COVID regulations it is not possible for patients showing any signs of infection, fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat to have acupuncture. You will be required to show a negative COVID test to be able to receive treatment.

## **WHO CAN HAVE ACUPUNCTURE?**

People of all ages can have acupuncture. Children of course need their parent's consent. Any contraindications or medical conditions that might require special handling will be discussed at the first appointment.

## **WHAT HAPPENS AT THE FIRST APPOINTMENT**

It's important to have a medical history and an accurate diagnosis of your condition before acupuncture is started, so your medical acupuncturist will ask about this at your first appointment and discuss whether acupuncture is likely to be of help to you. If it is likely to help, an acupuncture treatment plan will be drawn up, including how many sessions at what time intervals are suggested.

You can ask any questions you might have about acupuncture. Usually the first acupuncture treatment will be given during this appointment, if you wish.

### **DO I HAVE TO DO ANYTHING TO PREPARE FOR AN ACUPUNCTURE APPOINTMENT?**

- Do not wear any perfumes or creams to appointment.
- Avoid hot baths, long showers and physical exertion before your treatment
- Do not eat a large meal before or drink any alcohol
- Avoid wearing tightfitting clothes to appointment, wear something loose
- Acupuncture often focuses on your lower legs, arms, lower back and abdomen, so ensure clothing worn allows easy access to these areas.
- Treatment time can be 30-60mins or longer depending on severity of the issue your being treated for
- You will be either lying down or sitting during the treatment, which usually lasts about 20 minutes or more. Please bring your own clean light blanket to cover yourself (as due to COVID regulations we are not able to provide blankets).
- People generally find acupuncture treatment very relaxing and may feel slightly drowsy or 'spaced out' immediately afterwards. This usually passes quickly, but it is important that you **DO NOT DRIVE** until it has settled! It is often helpful to bring a drink and/or small snack with you to have after treatment, as this helps ground people quickly.
- After treatment rest or relaxation is recommended to enhance your response, please try not to be in a hurry to rush off somewhere else.

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