



ACUPUNCTURE

Acupuncture is one aspect of Traditional Chinese Medicine. It involves the insertion of very thin needles into various points in the body to facilitate the movement of energy or “qi”. Traditional Chinese Medicine has been developed over thousands of years and recognizes a system of meridians (channels) throughout the body where Qi (pronounced *chee*) or energy flows. Many symptoms and health conditions can be diagnosed and treated according to the flow of energy along these meridians.

How are the points chosen?

Acupuncture points exist all along the various meridians of the body, and the majority of points chosen will be along these meridians. The points may be on any part of the body, and may not necessarily be on the same part of the body as the area being treated. For example, a needle may be inserted into the hand to relieve low back pain. They can also be inserted directly into a painful area.

Will it hurt?

Acupuncture usually does not hurt. Most people feel only a tiny prick as the needle is first inserted through the skin. After the needle is inserted you may experience a deep ache, tingling, and temperature (hot/cold) changes. These are normal sensations and are part of the acupuncture treatment. It is important to inform the Doctor of any and all sensations experienced during the acupuncture treatment, as well as when the sensation ceases.

Will it bleed?

No. The acupuncture needles are inserted into muscle tissue – not into blood vessels. However, if the needle is being inserted into an area that is rich in small blood vessels, a tiny amount of blood may be expressed as the needle is removed. The Doctor is prepared for this, however a bruise may develop over a site that has bled. A needle will not be inserted into a bruise or area where the skin is compromised.

What do you need to know, BEFORE your acupuncture treatment:

1. Wear loose fitting clothing. You may be asked to wear a gown during the treatment.
2. Eat before coming for your appointment. Acupuncture on an empty stomach is not recommended.
3. For the remainder of the day after the treatment, it is advised that you do not receive or do any of the following: chiropractic adjustments, apply ice or heat, massage therapy or any other body treatments like Reiki or any other energy therapy. These therapies could prevent the treatment from having its full effect.
4. After the needles are inserted, they are left in place for 15-20 minutes. The needles will be periodically stimulated throughout this time. This is done by turning or adjusting the needles.
5. At the first session, the doctor will only insert a few needles to assess your response to acupuncture, and to gently introduce the experience.

Please note: We ONLY use sterile, single use needles. Needles are discarded immediately after use. As Naturopathic doctors, we are required to follow strict procedures to ensure your safety. We NEVER re-use acupuncture needles.