



Seated acupuncture

What is seated acupuncture?

Acupuncture is the insertion of very fine needles in specific points on the body, to stimulate or relax.

Seated acupuncture is based on Traditional Chinese Medicine. During the treatment session you will be fully clothed and in a seated position. All needles are single use, sterile and disposable. They are inserted mostly from the elbows and knees down, on the head, and around the ears.

How can seated acupuncture help me?

Research supports the effectiveness of acupuncture for pain relief, releasing natural painkillers which change the way the brain receives information about pain. It is also known to reduce sensitivity to stress, and promote relaxation.

Acupuncture can be used to help with symptoms and side effects of cancer and its treatments, including but not limited to nausea, hot flushes, pain, insomnia and anxiety.

How many sessions will I have?

We offer six weekly treatments, each lasting up to 45 minutes. You will be treated in a quiet room with other patients.

How should I prepare for a treatment session?

You should wear loose fitting clothes so your forearms and lower legs are easily accessible. You should have something light to eat and drink before your treatment session.

Who are the acupuncturists?

We have a dedicated team of practitioners who are qualified in their chosen therapy. All our therapists have experience in working with cancer patients.

Our acupuncturists have a degree in Traditional Chinese Medicine: Acupuncture and are registered with either the British Acupuncture Council, the Acupuncture Association for Chartered Physiotherapists or the British Medical Acupuncture Society.

When should acupuncture not be used?

Even though acupuncture is proven to be an effective tool for pain, it is not suitable for everyone. If you suffer from any condition below then this is not a suitable treatment for you and you should speak to your therapist.

- Metal (specifically stainless steel) allergies
- Needle phobia
- You have a known infection or poor skin condition in the area to be treated.

Please tell your therapist if you are affected by any of the following:

- have haemophilia or are taking anticoagulants (blood thinning medication)
- are pregnant or trying to conceive
- suffer from epilepsy or seizures
- have a heart pacemaker
- have diabetes.

Are there risks in receiving acupuncture?

All treatments and procedures have risks and we will discuss the risks of acupuncture with you before the treatment starts.

During the treatment:

- Some people may feel faint, or actually faint, especially the first time they receive acupuncture.
- Some people may feel momentary discomfort as the needle is inserted.

After the treatment:

- Sometimes a small bruise can appear at a needle site.
- Occasionally, people can feel dizzy or tired after a treatment but this passes quickly. You should not drive or operate machinery immediately after your appointment if you are affected.

Are alternatives available?

Acupuncture is a drug-free treatment. It is safe, and can work alongside existing treatments. If you are referred to the Seated Acupuncture Group, we advise you to complete the course to obtain the maximum benefit.

If you choose to not have acupuncture, or find it does not suit you, other treatments may be offered. This will depend on your choice and what is appropriate.

Can my carer receive treatment?

Yes, depending on availability.

Useful sources of information

British Acupuncture Council

The British Acupuncture Council promotes traditional Chinese acupuncture and provides information for patients and practitioners:

w: www.acupuncture.org.uk

British Medical Acupuncture Society

The British Medical Acupuncture Society provides information for patients and health professionals:

w: www.medical-acupuncture.co.uk

Guy's and St Thomas' cannot accept responsibility for information provided by other organisations.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about acupuncture or any other complementary therapy, please contact Dimbleby Cancer Care on 020 7188 5918 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 4.30pm).

Guy's and St Thomas' hospitals offer a range of cancer-related information leaflets for patients and carers, available at www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/cancer-leaflets.

Dimbleby Cancer Care provides cancer support services for Guy's and St Thomas'. We have a drop-in information area staffed by specialist nurses and offer complementary therapies, psychological support and benefits advice for patients and carers.

Dimbleby Cancer Care is located in the Welcome Village of the Cancer Centre at Guy's **t:** 020 7188 5918
e: DimblebyCancerCare@gstt.nhs.uk

The logo for Dimbleby Cancer Care, featuring the text "Dimbleby Cancer Care" in white on a blue background.

Dimbleby
Cancer
Care

Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

t: 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

t: 020 7188 8801 (PALS)

e: pals@gstt.nhs.uk

t: 020 7188 3514 (complaints)

e: complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk

Language and Accessible Support Services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch:

t: 020 7188 8815

e: languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.

w: www.nhs.uk

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