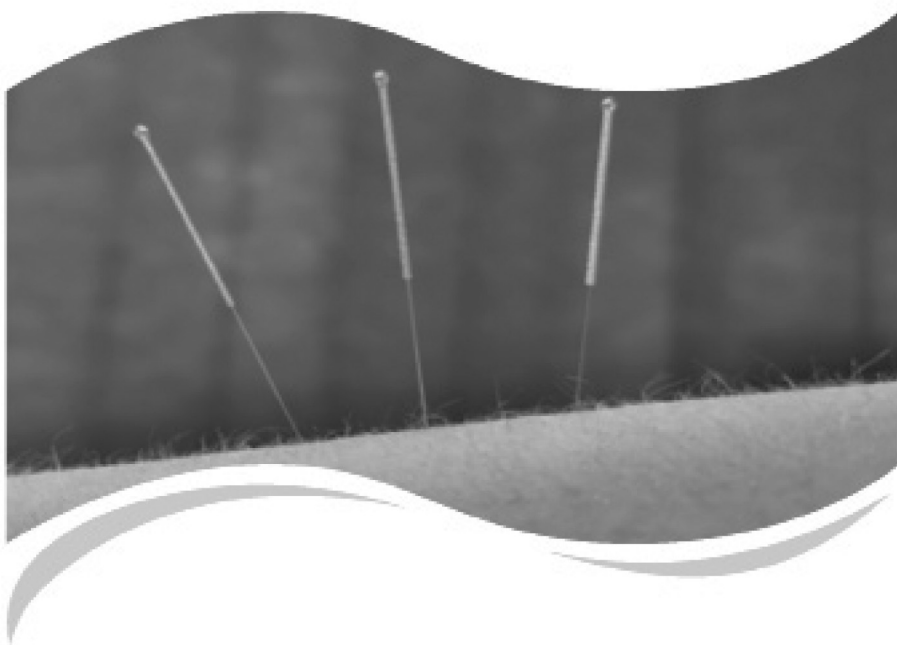




# Acupuncture

Information for patients  
Physiotherapy Department



Acupuncture has been used for thousands of years to relieve pain. In recent years it has become available as part of a physiotherapy treatment programme and is used along with treatments such as exercise, joint mobilisations and general rehabilitation. It is a type of therapy in which fine needles are inserted into specific parts of the body.

## **HOW DOES ACUPUNCTURE WORK?**

Acupuncture stimulates the body to help produce its own pain-relieving and stress-relieving chemicals. It also stimulates nerve fibres to help block out pain signals.

Although acupuncture can help to reduce pain, it does not work for everyone.

Your physiotherapist's assessment and your condition will determine the number of treatments you need. Most patients will receive up to six treatments, although one or two may be enough. It is generally clear after two or three treatments whether or not acupuncture will be of benefit and if the treatment should continue.

## **PRIOR TO TREATMENT**

You will be asked to fill in a questionnaire/consent form.

You should ensure that you have eaten within two hours before your Acupuncture treatment. This will keep your blood sugar level up and reduce the risk of you feeling faint.

## DURING TREATMENT

The area to be treated will be uncovered and the needles will be inserted which is usually painless. The needles may then be gently turned until you experience a reaction in the area such as an ache, tingling or a feeling of warmth. At the end of the treatment time the needles are removed.

## AFTER TREATMENT

Take note of any effects that you experience and report these to your physiotherapist at your next appointment.

## ACUPUNCTURE SIDE EFFECTS

Acupuncture is generally very safe and serious side effects are very unusual.

Any side effects tend to be mild and short-lived.

Occasionally the following may be experienced:

- ❖ Feeling drowsy after treatment, if so you are advised not to drive or operate machinery.
- ❖ Minor bleeding or bruising may occur.
- ❖ Redness of the skin around the needle sites.
- ❖ Pain during treatment.
- ❖ Light headedness. On rare occasions fainting can occur, particularly at the first treatment, in which case the needles will be immediately removed.

**Existing symptoms can get worse for a short time after treatment. This can be a good sign.**

# CONFIDENTIALITY AND THE USE OF PATIENT INFORMATION

NHS Lanarkshire take care to ensure your personal information is only accessible to authorised people. Our staff have a legal and contractual duty to keep personal health information secure, and confidential. In order to find out more about current data protection legislation and how we process your information, please visit the Data Protection Notice on our website at [www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk) or ask a member of staff for a copy of our Data Protection Notice.

**NHS Lanarkshire** - for local services and the latest health news visit [www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk)  
NHS Lanarkshire General  
Enquiry Line: 0300 30 30 243

**NHS inform** - The national health information service for Scotland.  
[www.nhsinform.co.uk](http://www.nhsinform.co.uk)  
Tel No: 0800 22 44 88

If you need this information in another language or format, please e-mail: Translation.  
[Services@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Services@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk)



[www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk)

Pub. date:	August 2022
Review date:	August 2023
Issue No:	02
Department:	Physiotherapy
Clinical Lead:	

PIL.ACUPUN.20\_18152.L  
21\_15602