

# Acupuncture therapy

Easing symptoms and increasing  
wellbeing



*because  
you matter*

**St Nicholas  
Hospice Care**

A Registered Charity No. 287773



**Need to talk?**

01284 766133

[stnicholashospicecare.org.uk](http://stnicholashospicecare.org.uk)

# Information about acupuncture treatment

## What is acupuncture?

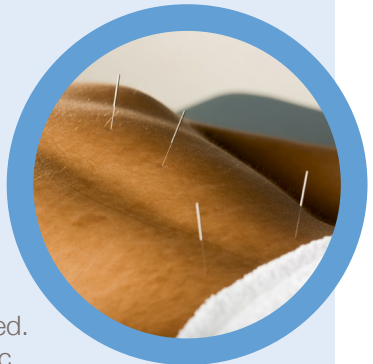
Acupuncture is one of the many skills used by clinicians in order to manage pain, inflammation, ease nausea and abdominal discomfort, and help promote sleep. Acupuncture within western medicine is used against a background of clinical and research evidence. Acupuncture given by the team at St Nicholas Hospice Care uses the western medical approach when placing needles, although there is basic background knowledge of the traditional Chinese medicine approach.

## What will happen during the treatment?

Conventional acupuncture involves inserting fine, disposable needles into the skin at various relevant acupuncture points. The reason for these points will be discussed prior to your treatment. The needles are generally left in for 20-30 minutes, during which time the therapist will stay with you.

There may be a pinprick sensation as the needle pierces the skin. After this you should feel a sensation, known as DeQi, at the acupuncture point. This is done by the therapist moving the needle into the correct position and can be felt as an ache, warmth, numbness, heaviness or tingle.

Trigger point acupuncture may also be used. This is where needles are placed in specific muscles to enable them to relax and is much quicker than conventional treatment (it may only take three-four minutes per muscle).



It may take three-four sessions before you notice any changes with acupuncture, although for some people it may have an immediate effect. Acupuncture does not always work for everyone.

### **Where does it take place?**

Acupuncture sessions usually take place in The Orchard Centre at the Hospice. However, the treatment can be given on the Hospice's ward or out in the community.

### **Who can have acupuncture?**

Most people are suitable to have acupuncture but extra care is required if you have any of the following: Diabetes, a bleeding disorder, needle phobia, Epilepsy, are taking anti-coagulants, nickel allergy, pacemaker, any infection, or are pregnant. If you have any of these conditions please inform the therapist at your first appointment.

### **Are there any side effects to acupuncture?**

These will be discussed before any treatment is given. It is important to inform the therapist of any other medical conditions you may have.

Occasionally people can feel light headed during or straight after treatment. It is a good idea to have something to eat and drink in the hour or two prior to your treatment to minimise this risk. You will always have your treatment in a suitable posture in case this occurs.

People can feel quite tired for an hour or two after the session and often sleep well that night. If this occurs, do not drive or operate heavy machinery.

Other side effects can include bleeding and/or bruising over the needle sites. There is a very small risk of infection even though the needles are single use, sterile needles. Occasionally people experience a slight increase in pain after acupuncture but this is temporary.

On very rare occasions acupuncture has caused other serious side effects, however the therapist at St Nicholas Hospice Care providing your acupuncture has been fully trained and will ensure your treatment is carried out as safely as possible.

# Get in touch

If you have any further questions regarding acupuncture, please contact us:

**01284 766133**

**[enquiries@stnh.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@stnh.org.uk)**

**[www.stnicholashospicecare.org.uk](http://www.stnicholashospicecare.org.uk)**

St Nicholas Hospice Care, Hardwick Lane,  
Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 2QY

For more information you can also visit the  
Acupuncture Association of Chartered Physiotherapists website:

**[www.aacp.org.uk](http://www.aacp.org.uk)**



*Acupuncture is an alternative medicine to help manage symptoms*

*because  
you matter*

This leaflet is available in different formats upon request.  
Please contact the Marketing and Communications  
Department for further information on 01284 766133.

Date produced: September 2016

**St Nicholas  
Hospice Care**

A Registered Charity No. 287773

**St Nicholas Hospice Care**  
Hardwick Lane, Bury St Edmunds IP33 2QY

01284 766133  
[enquiries@stnh.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@stnh.org.uk)  
[stnicholashospicecare.org.uk](http://stnicholashospicecare.org.uk)