

Are there any side effects to the treatment?

Usually not. As energy is redirected in the body, internal chemicals and hormones are stimulated and healing begins to take place. Occasionally the original symptoms worsen for a few days, or other general changes in appetite, sleep, bowel or urination patterns, or emotional state may be triggered. These should not cause concern, as they are simply indications that the acupuncture is starting to work. It is quite common with the first one or two treatments to have a sensation of deep relaxation or even mild disorientation immediately following the treatment. These pass within a short time, and never require anything more than a bit of rest to overcome.

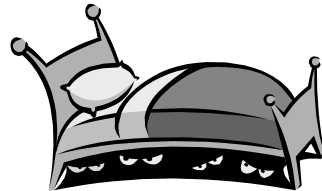
What are the needles like? Do they hurt?

People experience acupuncture needling differently. Most patients feel only minimal pain as the needles are inserted; some feel no pain at all. Once the needles are in place, there is no pain felt. Acupuncture needles are very thin and solid and are made from stainless steel. The point is smooth (not hollow with cutting edges like a hypodermic needle) and insertion through the skin is not as painful as injections or blood sampling. The risk of bruising and skin irritation is less than when using a hollow needle. All needles used by Dr Vaughan are disposable therefore there is no risk of infection from the treatments.

Are there any Do's or Don'ts for me on the day of my treatment?

Yes. To enhance the value of a treatment, the following guidelines are important:

- Do not eat an unusually large meal immediately before or after your treatment.
- Do not over-exercise, engage in sexual activity, or consume alcoholic beverages within 6 hours before or after the treatment.
- Plan your activities so that after the treatment you can get some rest, or at least not have to be working at top performance. This is especially important for the first few visits.
- Continue to take any prescription medicines as directed by your regular doctor. Substance abuse (drugs and alcohol) especially in the week prior to treatment, will seriously interfere with the effectiveness of acupuncture treatments.
- Remember to keep good mental or written notes of what your response is to the treatment. This is important for your doctor to know so that the follow-up treatments can be designed to best help you and your problem.



Acupuncture Clinic

**Acupuncture has helped
people for 2000 years,
could it help you ?**



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Acupuncture - Past, Present and Future

Acupuncture started in China several thousand years ago. It was first introduced into Europe in the 17th Century, but knowledge of this practice, so far removed from anything used in the West, was very patchy until the 1970's.

In the past twenty years, because of the huge public interest in the subject, considerable scientific research on acupuncture has been carried out, although much remains to be done. We now know much more about how acupuncture works and some of the myths can be laid to rest. It is demonstrably untrue to say that the results of acupuncture are *all in the mind*. After all, treatments have been successfully carried out on very small children and animals. It is very unlikely that a cow could be hypnotised into health by a veterinary surgeon! Acupuncture will never replace conventional medical treatment but, as we learn more about it, the possibilities of using acupuncture alongside 'orthodox' medicine increase. Already the sharp distinction between complementary or alternative medicine and conventional medicine is becoming blurred as acupuncture is accepted in medicine. Acupuncture is available in many hospital pain clinics, rheumatology departments, and physiotherapy centres. It is also used in pregnancy (with caution) and childbirth.

What is Acupuncture?

Acupuncture is a medical treatment which can relieve symptoms of some physical and psychological conditions and may encourage the patient's body to heal and repair itself, if it is able to do so.

Acupuncture stimulates the nerves in skin and muscle, and can produce a variety of effects. We know that it increases the body's release of natural painkillers - endorphin and serotonin - in the pain pathways of both the spinal cord and the brain. This modifies the way pain signals are received.

But acupuncture does much more than reduce pain, and has a beneficial effect on health. Patients often notice an improved sense of well-being after treatment. Modern research shows that acupuncture can affect most of the body's systems - the nervous system, muscle tone, hormone outputs, circulation, antibody production and allergic responses, as well as the respiratory, digestive, urinary, and reproductive systems. The classical Chinese explanation is that channels of energy run in regular patterns through the body and over its surface. These energy channels, called meridians, are like rivers flowing through the body to irrigate and nourish the tissues. An obstruction in the movement of these energy rivers is like a dam that backs up in others. The meridians can be influenced by needling the acupuncture points; the acupuncture needles unblock the obstructions at the dams, and re-establish the regular flow through the meridians. Acupuncture treatments can therefore help the body's internal organs to correct imbalances in their digestion, absorption, and energy production activities, and in the circulation of their energy through the meridians.

The improved energy and biochemical balance produced by acupuncture results in stimulating the body's natural healing abilities, and in promoting physical and emotional well-being.



What happens in the clinic?

Each patient's case will be assessed by Dr Vaughan and treatment will be tailored to the individual, so it is impossible to give more than a general idea of what treatment might involve. Typically, fine needles are inserted through the skin and left in position briefly, sometimes with manual or electrical stimulation. The number of needles varies but may be only two or three. Treatment might be once a week or fortnight to begin with, then at longer intervals as the condition responds. The average number of treatments is about five. If after a maximum of three treatments you have had no response, you will be advised that acupuncture will probably be of no help for you. This only occurs in the minority of cases.

Uses for Acupuncture

Taking the above into consideration, here are some of the ways in which acupuncture may be effective:

Pain relief for a wide variety of situations, including migraines, period pains, backache, trapped nerves, frozen shoulder, and other kinds of arthritic and rheumatic pain. It can also be useful in relieving post-operative and post-injury pain, such as following sports injuries.

Sports injuries can be treated and with no risk of any banned substances! It is great for a variety of chronic injuries, such as Achilles tendonitis, plantar fasciitis and many more.

Allergic reactions such as asthma, hayfever.

Sinus problems and chronic catarrh.

Abdominal and Bowel problems such as peptic ulcer, colitis, chronic and intermittent bouts of diarrhoea or constipation, Irritable Bowel Syndrome, irritable bladder, and bed wetting in children.

Stopping smoking

This list is by no means exhaustive, but it does give a rough idea of the wide range of conditions that respond to acupuncture treatment. **Remember** that before starting acupuncture, the practitioner must be sure of the diagnosis and that all the necessary tests have been carried out which might point to any serious or potentially serious condition, perhaps requiring other forms of treatment.



How to make an Appointment

You can leave a message at the surgery reception or you can telephone the surgery. Dr Vaughan will then contact you to discuss your case. This discussion will include assessing your diagnosis and your suitability for acupuncture. This will enable him to partly plan your treatment prior to your first appointment and an examination will take place at the first appointment if applicable. Should he feel that you need more investigations prior to your treatment, he will ask you to contact your GP to do this, or arrange this for you. If he feels that acupuncture is not suitable for you he will try to offer advice as to which other natural therapy or orthodox treatment would be of benefit.