

# Acupuncture Treatment at Home

## Patient Information

Pain Service

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Acupuncture at home will require you to attend at least 3 appointments at the acupuncture clinic so that you can be taught how to do self-acupuncture, you will be sent 3 appointments so that we can assess if this helps you and further appointments will be given if needed. This involves using only 4 needles, one in each hand and one in each foot. If you cannot reach your feet it is important that you arrange for someone to come with you who will be willing to do this for you. It is important that you try to keep all the appointments.

The main reason for teaching you how to carry out this treatment on yourself or a designated person is to ensure you continue to get pain relief in the home for yourself or the specific person with on-going pain problems.

It is essential that the following information is observed and adhered to carefully, as previously discussed.

- If spectacles are usually required for close up work, please make sure you wear them.
- Before starting treatment, make sure that the areas to be treated are clean and that there are no signs of irritation or infection ( e.g. red or sore areas, fragile skin, white headed spot or pus). Should any of these symptoms be present **do not** proceed with the treatment (contact your registered GP if you are concerned about your skin condition).
- Please ensure good hygiene throughout the treatments; the person performing the procedure should wash their hands before opening the disposable acupuncture needle packs and starting the treatment - wash and dry the areas of needle insertion - use the metal needle handles – **do not** touch the needle points.
- Insert the needles into the allocated places,
  - Feet - two fingers below the space between the big toe and the second toe



- Hand - web space between the thumb and index finger.



- Once the individual needle packet has been opened, the needle must be used or disposed of in the sharps bin. This is because the needle will no longer be sterile.
- Leave the needles in place for 10 minutes initially, then stimulate and leave in for a further 20 minutes, 30 minutes in total. The needles can be gently stimulated by manually rotating them, either by you (the patient) or the person administering the acupuncture, as shown to you previously in the clinic. This treatment can be administered as often as necessary, but usually not more often than once every other day.
- A designated sharps container is to be used to dispose of needles. A purpose-made sharps container will be supplied to you.
- On completing the treatment, the disposable needles should be removed, ensuring that all needles are accounted for and disposed of carefully in the designated sharps container. This is to prevent any potential needle stick injuries.

- Ensure that you are comfortable and that a clean tissues or cotton wool is at hand in case of any minor bleeding following the treatment.
- Unused disposable needles that are still in their sterile wrapping and sharps container must be stored carefully in a clean, dry place, out of reach of children and animals.
- Further supplies of needles may be obtained from the hospital as advised.
- Once the sharps container is full it must be sealed carefully and your clinician will provide you with instructions on how to dispose of it.
- If you have any concerns, complications or other queries regarding the therapy, please contact the Pain nurses or pain secretaries on Telephone 01942 773099 and leave a message with your full name and hospital number and what the query is.

### **What to do if the needle gets stuck or breaks**

Don't panic. This is very rare. If the needle gets stuck, try rotating it in the opposite direction that was used before. Try to relax the muscle it is stuck in and hopefully this will allow you to ease the needle out. In the unlikely event that a needle breaks when you remove it, you may still be able to take the needle remnant out as normal, if there is still a length of needle protruding using a pair of tweezers.

If the needle breaks close to the skin, mark around the entry site where the broken needle is, cover with a dressing and attend A & E. Take with you an unopened sample of the needle.

### **If the person receiving the treatment becomes pregnant or is started on blood thinning drugs like clopidrogel or warfarin**

Please contact the pain nurses or secretaries on Telephone 01942 773099 and leave a message stating your full name and hospital number and letting us know that this has happened. We will then be able to offer you further advice.

It is very important that you attend any appointments made for you with either, the Doctor; Nurse; Physiotherapist; Occupational therapist or the Psychologist. If you cannot attend please cancel the appointment and re-arrange, failure to cancel will result in discharge from the pain service and you will need to be re referred by your GP if you wish to be seen again.

## Contact information

Royal Albert Edward Infirmary, Telephone 01942 244000

Leigh Health Centre, Telephone 01942 483413

Wrightington Hospital, Telephone 01942 256305

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## Comments, Compliments or Complaints

The Patient Relations/Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Department provides confidential on the spot advice, information and support to patients, relatives, friends and carers.

## Contact Us

Tel: 01942 822376 (Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm)

The Patient Relations/PALS Manager  
Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust  
Royal Albert Edward Infirmary  
Wigan Lane  
Wigan WN1 2NN

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## Ask 3 Questions

Become more involved in decisions about your healthcare. You may be asked to make choices about your treatment. To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions:

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?



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## How We Use Your Information

For details on how we collect, use and store the information we hold about you, please take a look at our “how we use your information” leaflet which can be found on the Trust website: [https://www.wwl.nhs.uk/patient\\_information/leaflets](https://www.wwl.nhs.uk/patient_information/leaflets)

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This leaflet is also available in audio, large print, braille and other languages upon request. For more information please ask in department/ward.

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