

**SOME GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT
ACUPUNCTURE**

from

**THE CIVIC GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND)
ACT 1982 (LICENSING OF SKIN PIERCING
AND TATTOOING) ORDER 2006**

and

THE BRITISH ACUPUNCTURE COUNCIL

a. The process of skin piercing acupuncture:

Acupuncture involves the insertion of ultra-fine, sterile disposable needles into living tissue for remedial or therapeutic purposes. Scientists suggest that carefully selected acupuncture points stimulates the nervous system to influence the production of hormones and neurotransmitters resulting in biochemical changes that activate the body's natural healing ability.

Patients are lying down or sitting up, on a washable bench with disposable paper sheet.

Acupuncture needles are so fine that most people don't feel them being inserted. It is normal to feel a mild tingle or dull ache as the acupuncturist adjusts the needle.

b. The risks of the procedure:

When practiced by a fully qualified acupuncturist, acupuncture is one of the safest medical treatments on offer in the UK. Two surveys conducted independently of each other and published in the British Medical Journal in 2001 concluded that the risk of a serious adverse reaction to acupuncture is less than 1 in 10,000. A 2003 survey of 6,000 patients of acupuncture produced almost identical figures.

Occasionally a small bruise can appear at a needle site. Sometimes people can experience drowsiness after a treatment but this passes quickly. You may want to sit or lie-down for a few minutes after the procedure. You can have a warm tea or an energy drink to restore your energy quickly.

c. The contra-indications to skin piercing acupuncture

Skin piercing acupuncture will not be carried out on any person under the influence of alcohol or recreational drugs.

Skin piercing will not be carried out on any child under the age of 16 unless accompanied by a person who has parental rights and responsibilities in respect of that child and who has also given their consent in writing to the skin piercing.

BACc registered acupuncturists are trained to recognise in their patients warning signs known as 'red flags'. Red flags may indicate the presence of a life-threatening condition and such patients are immediately referred on to other healthcare practitioners for tests and treatment where appropriate.

d. The after care requirements of the procedure.

In most cases, acupuncture does not require any specific after care. Occasionally some patients may experience drowsiness following acupuncture. If affected you are advised not to drive or operate machinery.

In the rare case of a minor bleeding that may occur after acupuncture, you should ensure needle sites are kept clean, and if blood is drawn, the site should be covered with a plaster.

In case of a small bruise, you may cool the area with a cold compress (a flannel or cloth soaked in cold water) or an ice pack wrapped in a towel. To make an ice pack, place ice cubes or a packet of frozen vegetables in a plastic bag and wrap them in a towel.

If you experience any unusual swelling, pain, bleeding or trauma around a needle site it is recommended you seek medical advice. In an emergency, you should always seek medical attention either at your GP surgery or at a hospital Accident and Emergency (A&E) Department.

If you have any problems or questions regarding your acupuncture treatment you should contact your acupuncturist to ask their advice. Contact details are provided below:

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