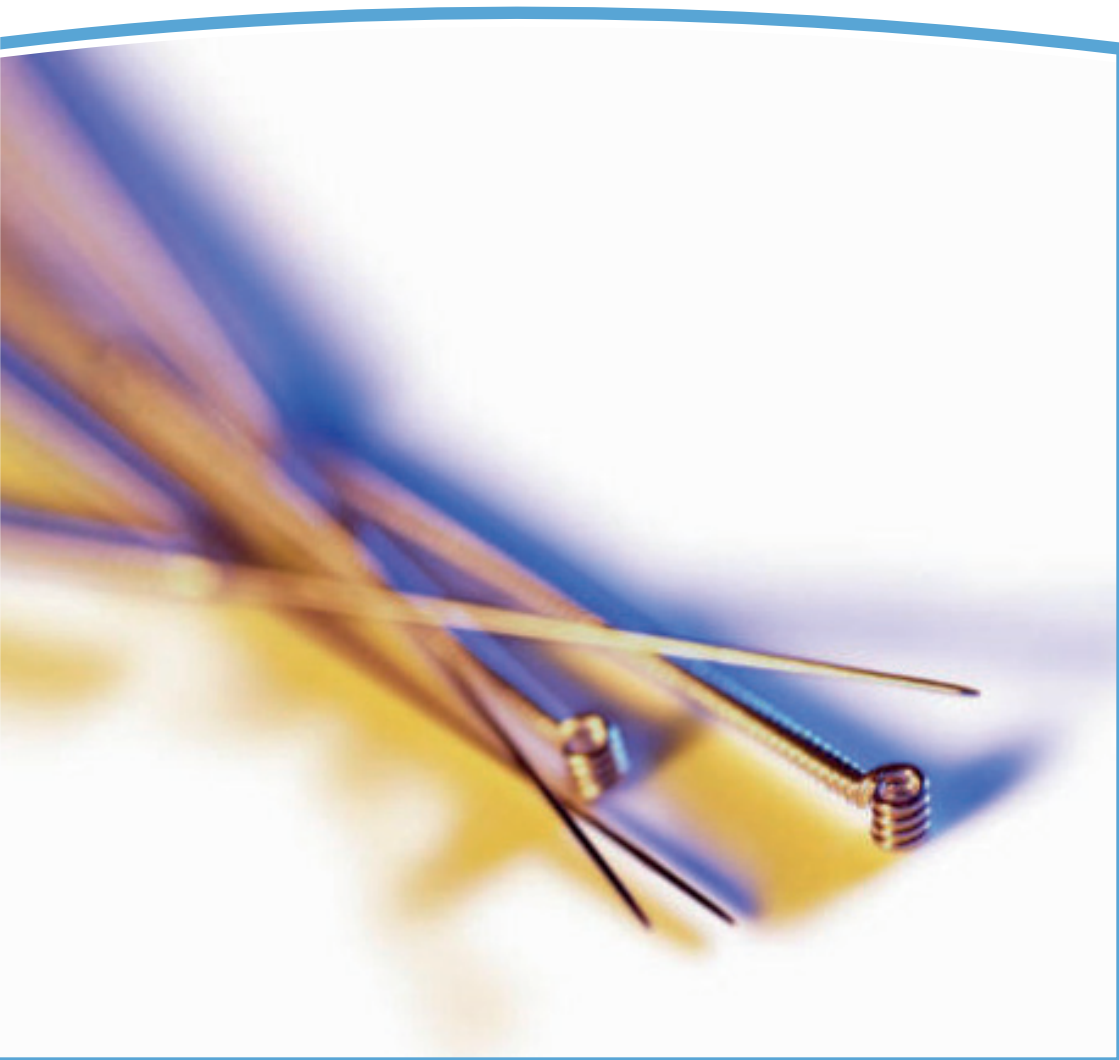


St Margaret's
Hospice Care

Acupuncture Treatment

Information for patients, families and carers



Please read this information carefully before treatment and ask for more information if there is anything you do not understand.

What is Acupuncture?

Western Medical Acupuncture is the process of inserting small needles which stimulate the nerves in the skin, muscle, and other tissues, and can produce a variety of effects. We know that it increases the release of the body's natural painkillers, including endorphin and serotonin. This modifies the way pain signals are received by the brain. Acupuncture can do more than simply reduce pain however: it seems to have a beneficial effect on the health of some individuals. Patients often notice an improved sense of wellbeing after treatment. The response to acupuncture is very individual and your treatment will be tailored to your needs.

Is Acupuncture safe?

Acupuncture is perfectly safe when practiced by someone with appropriate training. The needles used in St Margaret's Hospice Care are pre-sterilised and disposable.

Are there any side effects?

There are minimal possible side effects from acupuncture. However, you need to be aware that:

- Drowsiness occurs after treatment in a small number of patients and, if affected, you are advised not to drive
- Minor bleeding or bruising may occur following treatment
- Minimal pain may be noticed during treatment
- Symptoms can get worse after treatment. You should tell your acupuncturist about this, but can be a sign of treatment response
- Fainting can occur in certain patients, particularly at the first treatment
- In addition, if there are particular risks that apply in your case, your acupuncturist will discuss these with you

In the hospice there may be occasions when we use semi - permanent studs, spheres, electrical stimulation of needles or a stimplus machine (acupuncture without needles). Any of these would be explained in more detail if their use was considered appropriate.

Will it work for me?

Research has shown that many people gain a positive response to acupuncture treatment. It does not work for everybody and every condition, but it offers a non-pharmacological treatment adjunct to many conditions. There is nothing spiritual about it and you don't need to believe in acupuncture for it to work for you. Some people are particularly good responders, while others may see little benefit until they have had a few treatments; this is more likely with a chronic condition. Many conditions, both recent and long-standing, could respond well to acupuncture. These could include, back and neck pain, headaches, respiratory problems, gynaecology and stress-related problems, as well as some bladder, bowel and skin conditions. In the hospice, as well as pain relief, acupuncture may be used to help alleviate the symptoms of breathlessness, nausea and vomiting and anxiety.

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Is there anything your acupuncturist needs to know?

Apart from the usual medical details, it is important that you let your acupuncturist know:

- If you have ever experienced a fit, faint or funny turn
- If you have a pacemaker or any other electrical implants
- If you have a bleeding disorder
- If you are taking anti-coagulants or any other medication
- If you have damaged heart valves or have any infection

It is important that you have read and understand this information.

Before beginning a course of acupuncture treatment, your acupuncturist is obliged to have your verbal consent to this method of treatment. Your consent will be recorded in your clinical notes.

cont.

Feedback - we welcome your compliments and complaints

We are keen to develop and improve our services and welcome positive and negative feedback, including any concerns you may have. You can:

- Speak to any member of the team either in person or over the phone by calling our 24-hour adviceline on **01823 333822** or **01935 709480**
- Email us at **feedback@st-margarets-hospice.org.uk** or through our website
- Formal complaints should be addressed to the Chief Executive

St Margaret's Hospice Care Taunton Hospice,

Heron Drive, Bishops Hull, Taunton, TA1 5HA

 01823 333822

St Margaret's Hospice Care Yeovil Hospice,

Little Tarrat Lane, Yeovil, BA20 2HU

 01935 709480

 CRC@st-margarets-hospice.org.uk

St Margaret's Hospice Care is committed to taking your privacy seriously and protecting your personal information. If you want to know more about how we use your data go on the 'privacy statement' on our website or ask for a copy of this information via info@st-margarets-hospice.org.uk

Please note all incoming and outgoing calls may be recorded for training and quality purposes.

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