

Acupuncture

Topics of discussion

- Brief history of acupuncture
- Theories behind acupuncture
- The acupuncture service available in our physiotherapy department and how acupuncture is provided

History

- Generally believed to have originated in China
- 100 BC – first definitive documentation of acupuncture '*The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine*'
- Between 1368-1644 '*The Great Compendium of Acupuncture and Moxibustion*' was published

- Acupuncture fell out of favour from around the 17th century.
- 1822 acupuncture was excluded from the Imperial Medical Institute by the emperor
- 1929 acupuncture outlawed, along with other forms of TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine)

Communism

- 1949 - instillation of the new Communist government, in China, lead to the reinstatement of acupuncture and other forms of TCM
- 1950's - acupuncture research institutes were set up and acupuncture became available within Western-style hospitals

Spread to the West

- 1st brought to France in the 16th century
- Britain's interest began in the early 19th century
- Interest died by the mid 19th century until the latter 3rd of the 20th century
- Over the last 30 years acupuncture has gained increasing popularity as a treatment available within the NHS

Acupuncture Theory

- In China it is traditionally believed to be a method of improving the flow and balance of one's Qi
- Current *western medicine* theory would seem to explain it better

Western theory

- Mid-late 20th century saw a more scientific explanation
- Acupuncture has been shown to have effects upon the nervous system, in particular releasing pain relieving chemicals

Hillingdon Hospital Physiotherapy

- Acupuncture has been a treatment option within our department for over 25 years

- To practice acupuncture we require the physiotherapist to be a member of the Acupuncture Association of Chartered Physiotherapists (AACCP)
- This requires that they remain up to date with current practice, completing 10 hours of additional training every 2 years

- Currently there are 9 AACP registered physiotherapists within our out-patients team that are able to provide acupuncture to patients

Uses of acupuncture within our physiotherapy department

PAIN syndromes examples including:

- Osteoarthritis/ Rheumatoid arthritis
- LBP (NICE guidelines) and sciatica
- Neck and arm pain
- Jaw pain
- Headaches and migraine
- Myofascial pain

- Bell's palsy
- Pain from Shingles
- Symptoms of menopause
 - hot flushes
 - anxiety

Patient experience

At the 1st appointment the therapist will check any precautions or contra-indications to treatment, eg:

- Pregnancy
- Allergies to metals
- Use of systemic steroids
- Use of anticoagulants/ blood clotting disorders

- History of fits or seizures
- Diabetes
- Low blood pressure
- Swelling/ tumours/ infections
- Pacemaker
- Needle phobia
- Uncontrolled movement or confusion

Patients are given a full explanation of

- what to expect during the course of their treatment
- potential side effects