



# AcuRelief

## Electro-acupuncture



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# What is Acupuncture?

Acupuncture treatment involves fine needles being inserted at certain sites in the body and briefly left in position, sometimes with manual or electrical stimulation. The number of needles inserted varies and the therapy might require once a week treatment sessions to begin with, then at longer intervals as the condition responds. A typical course of treatment requires five to eight sessions. Each patient's case requires an individual assessment and treatment tailored to the individual.

Acupuncture stimulates the nerves in 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. It's likely that these naturally released substances are responsible for the beneficial effects experienced with acupuncture.

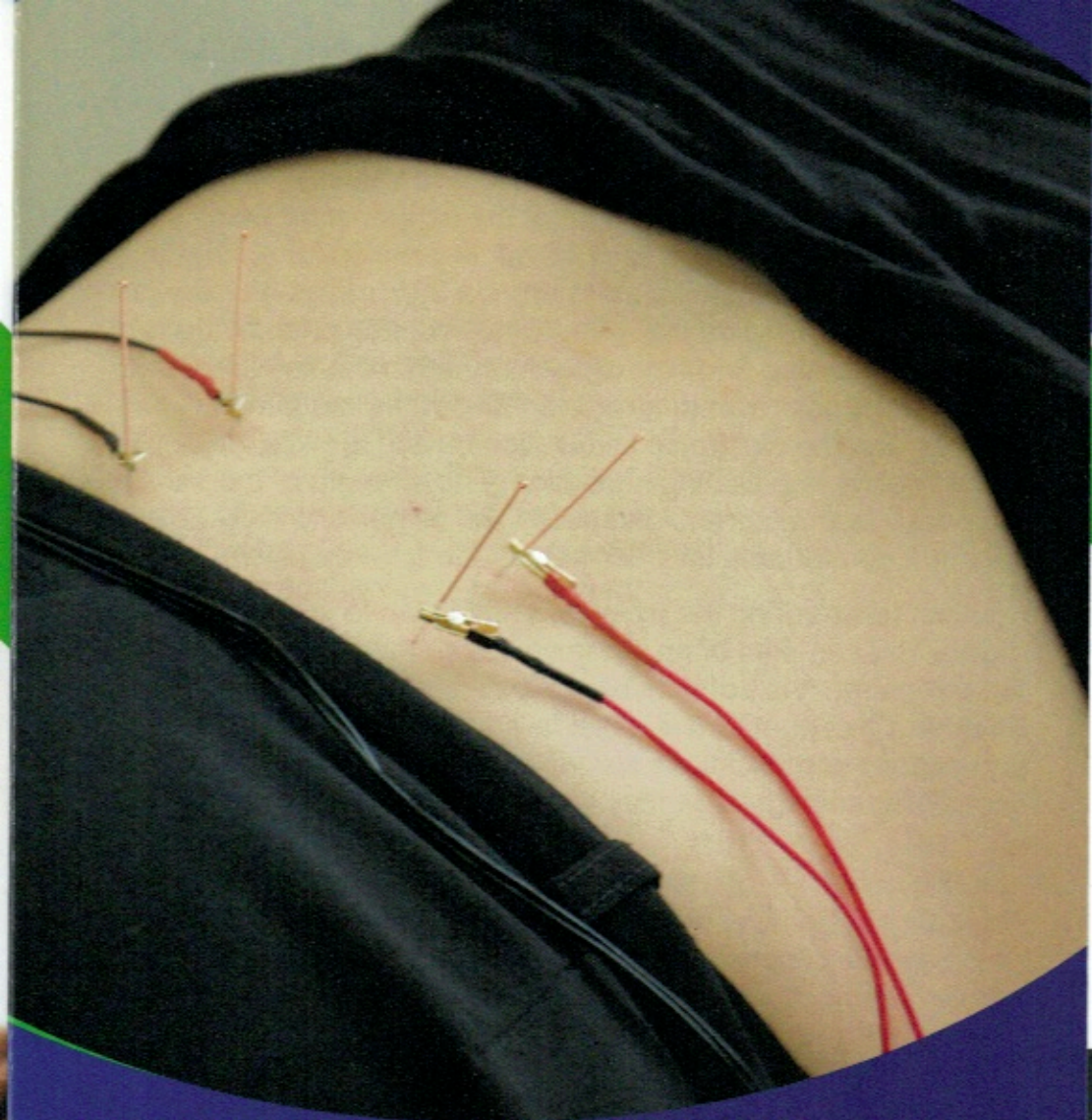


Acupuncture often helps with more than just reducing your pain. Patients often notice an improved sense of wellbeing after their treatment. Current research shows that acupuncture can have an effect on many of the body's systems – the nervous system, muscle tone, sleep, hormone production, circulation and allergic responses, as well as the respiratory, digestive, urinary and reproductive systems.

## **What sort of conditions respond to acupuncture?**

Acupuncture is proven to be effective in a wide range of painful conditions and is commonly used in short term relief of musculoskeletal pain, including chronic low back and neck pain, knee osteoarthritis pain, migraine and tension-type headache, temporomandibular (jaw joint) disorders and pelvic pain. Some other situations where acupuncture has been found to be beneficial are: improvement in the symptoms of overactive bladder syndrome and vulvodynia.





## Is there scientific evidence for acupuncture?

A considerable amount of scientific research has been carried out over the last thirty or forty years. We now know much more about how acupuncture works and some of the myths about it can be laid to rest.

Modern imaging techniques have demonstrated changes in brain activity – particularly those areas responsible for the processing of pain and suffering and as we learn more about it, the possibilities of using acupuncture alongside orthodox medicine increase.

## What to expect during a treatment session?

After the initial assessment you'll be asked to lie down on a couch and expose the treatment area for an antiseptic clean. The needles are very fine, single-use, pre-sterilised and disposable after use. These are inserted one at a time at the acupuncture points. Once the needles are in place, they may be left in position for a length of time lasting from a few minutes up to around 30 minutes. For dry needling technique, the needles are manually stimulated once every few minutes by turning and bouncing them within the tissues. For electroacupuncture technique, sterilized wires are attached to the needles and the electronic stimulation device is switched on. You will feel a tingling to pulsating sensation. The strength of the sensation increases as the current increases. The stimulating current will be kept at a comfortable level for the duration of treatment.

You can relax during the treatment and listen to soothing background music. You can also bring along your own music to listen to during the treatment. It is not unusual for patients to feel drowsy during treatment. Acupuncture is considered a safe complimentary medicine and serious complications are very rare (1:10,000 patients). On rare occasions, some people may experience mild, short-term side effects such as:

- pain in about 1% of treatments, where the needles puncture the skin;
- bleeding or bruising, which occurs in about 3% of treatments, where the needles puncture the skin;
- drowsiness occurs after treatment in a small number of patients, and if affected, you are advised not to drive;
- feeling sick, dizzy or faint;
- worsening of pre-existing symptoms can happen in less than 3% of patients.

If you have a bleeding disorder, such as haemophilia, or are taking anticoagulants, please let me know before you have acupuncture.

Acupuncture is also not advisable if you have a metal allergy or an infection in the area where needles may be inserted.

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