

Getting to the point... What is Acupuncture?

Acupuncture is a form of traditional Chinese medicine which falls within the scope of physiotherapy. It involves the insertion of a very fine, single use, sterile needle into the skin at various known points around the body. Chinese Medicine believes that the insertion of the needles into these points stimulates the flow of energy (qi) around channels (meridians) in the body. It therefore works towards helping to heal ailments and injuries and provide relief from pain.

Western medicine, and through its use in physiotherapy, have shown acupuncture to have an effect on pain and inflammation in the body. The insertion of a needle produces a local effect around the needle site, causing the release of the body's natural pain killing chemicals. It also has effect on the areas of the brain and spinal cord which deal with pain. The stimulating effect of the needle is believed to help disrupt the pain signals coming from the brain and spinal cord, thereby providing pain relief.

Overleaf we talked about the various factors that contribute to pain and an individual's experience of pain. The use of acupuncture aims to address some of those factors that contribute to that persistent pain, where non-threatening but painful sensations still exist. It is commonly used within pain management programmes and in the management of persistent pain, including conditions like fibromyalgia, low back pain, arthritis and osteoporosis. It can also be used for specific conditions of the knee, hip, elbow, shoulder and neck.

It's often asked, does acupuncture hurt? You may feel some mild discomfort on the insertion of the needles and a heavy ache type feeling but this is normal and a good thing! We call this the 'qi' sensation, where the sensation from the needle overrides the pain signals to the brain. When combined with gaining an understanding of your pain, acupuncture can help you to manage your pain, getting you back moving normally and participating in your rehabilitation.

All our physiotherapists are Acupuncture Association of Chartered Physiotherapists (AACP) trained and adhere to their strict standards and code of practice. If you would like to know if acupuncture would be suitable for you, then book in to see one of our physiotherapists who can assess you and answer any questions you might have. Just contact our reception team who will give you any further information you need to make an appointment on 01428 647647 or email therapy@holycross.org.uk.



Exercise Rehab Classes

Our Exercise Rehab classes run twice weekly on Mondays 9.30am to 10.30am and Thursdays 4pm till 5pm. The classes allow you to carry out your rehab exercises in a safe environment, utilising our gym equipment to allow you to work towards your goal. Our friendly team of therapists are always on hand to help you complete your programme which suits your rehab needs and is individually tailored to accomplish your goals and restore function. Classes are supervised so if you need any help with your exercises or if you have any questions we are there to assist you.



Pilates one-to-one sessions and small classes

Due to high demand of our Pilates class, we are now offering individual Pilates sessions or small classes for up to 3 people. These are perfect if you are new to Pilates, or would like to improve upon your technique and gain further benefits. These can be booked at a time to suit you with our senior physiotherapists and Pilates instructors Mel Wilks and Ed Carroll. Just contact us on 01428 647647 or email therapy@holycross.org.uk for further information.

The Physiotherapy Centre

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In this issue...

We discuss the causes of ongoing pain and how to manage it, as well as looking at acupuncture as a treatment option.



Newsletter Spring 2017

The


physiotherapy centre

At Holy Cross Hospital

The Physiotherapy Centre Updates

One-to-one Physiotherapy

Our Physiotherapists Mel and Ed continue to provide comprehensive physiotherapy assessments and treatments in the gym here at The Physiotherapy Centre. They will work with you to set goals for your rehabilitation and use their experience and clinical expertise to tailor your treatment to your individual needs. So if you have any pain or injury which is limiting your function why not call us today to book an appointment? Just contact our helpful reception team who will give you any further information you need on 01428 647647 or email therapy@holycross.org.uk.

Pain can be frightening, confusing and very frustrating!

Here we will try to explain what causes it, why it lasts and how we can manage and overcome pain to return to normal life

Firstly, pain is normal. It protects you, alerts you to danger often before you are injured, and is an essential part of life. Pain is an excellent, though unpleasant, response to what your brain judges to be a threatening situation. However, the amount of pain you experience does not always necessarily relate to the amount of tissue damage. Your pain experience will depend on not only the tissues involved but also on how much your brain perceives the pain as a 'threat'. For example, if you have had pain in that area before and it interfered with your job or your sport, or if you are worried or have stressful events going on, then your nerves may send increased pain or 'danger' signals to your brain, which can cause it to produce more pain.

No-one really wants pain, and once you have it you want to get rid of it. When pain persists and feels like it is ruining your life, it is difficult to see how it can be serving any useful purpose. Pain is a complex experience, and involves many thoughts and emotional contributors. When areas of your body still hurt after a long time, they hurt because the brain has somehow concluded, often completely subconsciously, that you are threatened or in danger. The trick is to find out why the brain has come to this conclusion.

Understanding why we are getting pain, and what factors, individual to you, may be contributing towards it, is essential in 'turning down the volume' of our pain experience. The key is to understand why your hurts won't harm you and that your nervous system is now using pain to protect you at all costs, not to inform you about damage. This will allow you to move more comfortably and with less worry. Here at The Physiotherapy Centre, we can work with you to help you address your pain, and use activities and exercises to help you return to normal life.

