

Inner Court Acupuncture ***Kate Pagliasotti, MS, LAc***

Welcome to my acupuncture practice - I am glad you chose acupuncture as part of your self care, and look forward to our work together. The following is some basic information about acupuncture and related techniques, how a treatment might progress and a few guidelines for patients. Please take the time to read it before your first session and don't hesitate to ask any questions that come up for you after reading this information.

Acupuncture treatment involves the evaluation of a patient according to the theories of Asian Medicine. This might include questions about medical history and lifestyle, palpation of the pulse and the abdomen, a look at the tongue, and palpation of tight, tender or symptomatic areas of the body in order to devise a treatment strategy. The treatment may involve needles, gua sha, moxibustion, static or massage cupping, infra-red heat lamp, massage, stretching, and aromatic oils. The patient always has the option to agree to the therapeutic suggestion, or not.

Needles: Acupuncture needles are thin and sterile and are for single use only. They are discarded as medical waste. If you are apprehensive about needles, we will work together to make you feel as comfortable as possible. If you ever feel dizzy, light-headed or sweaty, please let me know immediately so I can take corrective action. Occasionally, a needle can cause slight bleeding or a small bruise at the site, which will fade in a few days. Arnica gel or Traumeel can be an excellent aid in bruise healing. Very rarely, there can be numbness or tingling around the insertion area, which should fade in 24-48 hours. If we do trigger-point acupuncture, the body will release lactic acid in the muscles that twitch, which will cause some post-workout-like soreness. This will fade within 24 hours. A hot bath or shower can help, and a generous cup of Epsom salts in the bath can be very helpful.

Gua Sha: Used with cases of common cold/fever, muscular pain, anxiety and many other conditions, gua sha involves the rubbing of the smooth edge of a lid or spoon over an area of the body to help speed recovery. Petechiae will surface on the skin, which ranges in color from light to dark red, brown or purplish red. The discoloration will lighten and disappear over the next several days. It is very important to keep the area protected from drafts, cold or direct sun during that time, and increase your water intake after treatment.

Cupping: Used for similar reasons as gua sha, cups help bring stagnation and toxins to the surface. Because the skin is drawn up into the cup, it puts the tissue on a stretch and begins to break up adhesions on the skin surface and below. The cups can create a round red mark on the skin, and can also bring petechiae to the surface, which will fade over the next several days. As with gua sha, it is very important to keep the area that has been cupped protected from extremes of temperature during that time. Steam baths or sauna are excellent following cupping therapy, as long as you wait 4 - 6 hours after treatment. Be sure to drink extra water following treatment, as the lymphatic system is working to flush out toxins and stagnation that were dredged to the surface.

Moxabustion: Used in cases of cold or deficiency, or to provide extra stimulation to an acupuncture point, moxa is made from the Mugwort plant. It can be used in the form of a moxa pole held over a point, burning it on the head of the needle, or in rice-grain sized pieces burned directly on the skin over a salve. Rarely, a small burn can develop from the direct form of moxa, and a simple burn cream or Calendula gel can help with healing. If a patient has reduced sensation in an area, they will be monitored closely and given a very gentle application of heat.

Electrical Stimulation: I use E-Stim to enhance the efficacy of the needling, often in cases of pain, disc issues, cartilage degeneration or tissue inflammation. Alligator clips are attached to several needles and a gentle frequency is applied. The patient will feel an irregularly timed buzz or pulse at the site, which should not be uncomfortable. The E-stim is usually applied for 10 - 30 minutes.

Heat Lamp: The heat lamp gives off infrared heat which is used to warm and nourish areas of the body. It is everyone's best friend in the dead of winter! The amount of warmth will always be adjusted to your comfort level.

Aromatic Oils: Oils are used in this practice while doing massage, gua sha or cupping, or on clay discs to bring an aroma into the space and enhance the effect of treatment. If you are sensitive or allergic to certain smells or oils, please let me know.

Regarding Treatment: It is not possible to guarantee the outcome of a treatment, but in general, some patients will feel a marked improvement following treatment, others will notice a gradual change in their symptoms over a period of days, and occasionally there can be an exacerbation of the symptoms. This flaring of symptoms can be like a healing crisis - often things will start to resolve within a few days or with the next treatment. **Please feel free to call or email me if you have any questions about your response to treatment.**

After Treatment: I always like to remind patients that the treatment is a lot of information for your body to integrate. It is best to be mindful of that and take it easy for the rest of the day as best you can. I encourage you to schedule treatments for after your workout if possible, and not before. After treatment, an easy walk in nature is great; baths, saunas and steams are also excellent if you wait 4 - 6 hours. Eat a warm, cooked meal, minimize alcohol, drink a goodly amount of water, and go to bed a little earlier than usual. Pay attention to the internal shifts that might happen over the next several days; it is all good information for me for the next session.

Please be advised that I appreciate as much notice as possible if you need to cancel or re-schedule your appointment. I require 24 hours notice or I will have to charge you a half-fee for that missed appointment. If you are late for a session, I may be unable to give you a full treatment due to scheduling constraints.

I am now currently a pay-at-time-of-service only practice. I am no longer billing insurance companies on your behalf, but can easily provide you with a superbill for you to submit directly to your insurance company, for reimbursement, if you have out-of-network acupuncture coverage. I accept cash, checks, HSA and FSA cards, Visa, MC, Amex and Discover, Apple Pay, or you can Venmo me payment during the pandemic, if you prefer non-contact payment, at @Kate-Pagliasotti.