



Acupuncture consent form

Name

Date of
birth

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Contact details

Address

Home
tel.

Mobile
tel.

Work
tel.

email

Practitioner's
name

BARBARA PICKETT

BAC mem
no.

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Medical information

Do you (Does the patient, if completing for an under-16) currently suffer from, or have you (they) ever suffered from any of the following?

	Y	N	
Heart condition/angina	☐	☐	
Blood pressure problems	☐	☐	
Epilepsy/seizures	☐	☐	
Haemophilia/blood clotting disorders	☐	☐	
Blood borne virus, e.g. Hepatitis B/C or HIV	☐	☐	
Skin complaints, e.g. psoriasis, eczema	☐	☐	
Diabetes	☐	☐	
Allergic response, e.g. anaesthetics, jewellery	☐	☐	
Do you regularly take any blood-thinning medicines, e.g. aspirin?	☐	☐	
Do you take any regularly prescribed medication?	☐	☐	
Details of any associated problems with treatment			

At the start of your appointment, please let me know if you could be pregnant now, or at any point during your treatments. Tick the box to acknowledge this request.

☐

Introduction

You have the right, as the patient, to be informed about your condition as diagnosed by your practitioner. This includes their assessment of the likelihood of success and the number of treatments that may be required. You also have a right to understand the nature of an acupuncture treatment and any adjunctive techniques that will be used: such as moxibustion, cupping, guasha and tuina. In addition to the potential benefits, you should be aware of the risks of having treatment. This form provides information on each of these issues. Please ask your acupuncturist further questions if necessary. You should also feel free to seek advice from other healthcare professionals, such as your GP. It is important that you understand what is involved in treatment, the risks, and benefits, prior to making the decision whether to have acupuncture.

Please note, consent is an ongoing process, and you have the right to withdraw your consent to treatment at any point.

Acupuncture and moxibustion

Acupuncture involves insertion of fine needles at acupuncture points¹. There are hundreds of acupuncture points all over the body. The most commonly used are on the arms, below the elbow, and on the legs, below the knee. It is best to wear loose fitting clothing but on occasions it may be necessary to remove items of clothing.

Moxibustion involves the burning of the herb Chinese mugwort (*Artemisia argyi*), commonly known as moxa, to warm acupuncture points and areas of the body. There are different techniques such as placing the moxa on the handle of a needle, a moxa stick, placing moxa directly on the skin.

Commonly used adjunctive techniques **please tick those you consent to receive** (all therapies used to be added by practitioner):

Cupping: A partial vacuum is created within cups which are placed on the skin

☐

This produces a suction effect. The vacuum is produced either by fire (traditional method) or by a pump.

Guasha: The use of a smooth edge tool to repeated stroke the skin.

☐

Tuina/massage: traditional Chinese massage and bodywork massage

☐

Patent herbs: prepared Chinese Herbal Formulae in tablet form

☐

Risks

There have been a number of scientific papers published on the safety of acupuncture¹⁻⁴. These have concluded that acupuncture is safe so long as it is delivered by a properly trained individual. Therefore, we recommend that you ensure your acupuncturist belongs to a professional organisation such as the British Acupuncture Council.

As acupuncture involves the insertion of needles there will sometimes be a small bruise or bleeding. Approximately 6% of people who have ten acupuncture sessions will report a bruise or minor bleeding.

¹ Some styles of acupuncture do not require the needles to be inserted

Occasionally, people can feel dizzy or nauseous during or after treatment and, on very rare occasions, may lose consciousness. Approximately 0.2% of people who have a course of 10 sessions of acupuncture will feel dizzy. Approximately 0.14% of people who have a course of 10 sessions of acupuncture will feel nauseous. In extremely rare cases (0.03%), people lose consciousness. Sometimes people feel tired after a treatment or experience headache, local muscle pain or strong pain during needling. These side effects are classed as 'uncommon', affecting up to 10 of every 1,000 people treated.

The above effects are to some extent an unavoidable part of acupuncture. However, the risks can still be minimised. Please let your acupuncturist know if you feel hot, or the room is stuffy, or you are hungry/thirsty, or you are especially nervous. This should help reduce the chances of dizziness and nausea. Please also let them know any medications that you are taking, such as anti-coagulants.

As the acupuncture involves piercing the skin there is a risk of infection at the needle site. The estimated risk is 1 to 10 of every 10,000 people treated. BAAC acupuncturists are trained, and bound by our Professional Codes, to provide acupuncture hygienically. Serious adverse events such as pneumothorax (piercing the lung/perforation of the lung lining) and nerve injury can occur. However, these are very rare, and the risk is reduced by seeing a well-trained acupuncturist. In 2.2 million treatments pneumothorax occurred twice and nerve injury 31 times. One of the people who had a pneumothorax needed hospital treatment, the other required observation only. The longest duration of any side-effect was 180 days (nerve injury). No permanent injuries or deaths were associated with the acupuncture treatments².

Both cupping and guasha can lead to dark/purple patches on the skin. This is often an expected part of treatment. You may have seen dark rings from cupping on elite athletes such as swimmers. These marks disappear after a few days.

Cupping and moxibustion both carry a risk of accidental burns. Burns from moxibustion are estimated to occur once in 1000 to 5000 treatments¹.

Aftercare

Try to keep the needle, cupping, moxa and guasha sites clean immediately after treatment. It is generally best to avoid strenuous activity after treatment. You may feel that you want to rest after treatment. Sometimes people feel a dull ache at the needle sites after treatment. This is normal and nothing to worry about.

If you experience any effects after treatment that you are concerned about, please contact your practitioner and/or seek medical attention. For example, if a needle site becomes red or inflamed. If you received acupuncture on the upper back or shoulder and then experience any severe, gradual or sudden onset of pain over the chest, potentially combined with difficulty in breathing please seek immediate medical attention. These are the signs of pneumothorax. Although a pneumothorax from acupuncture is extremely rare, it is a serious condition. Prompt medical treatment can ensure a full recovery and prevent any long-term consequences.

If you choose to take Chinese Herbs, I will give you directions on the appropriate dosage. You are required to let me know if you think you experience any unwanted side effects (such as diarrhoea) or if you're unsure how to take them safely. I will check in with you regularly to ensure that the herbs are having the desired effect.

Confidentiality & safeguarding

Your notes and all information about you will always remain confidential except in exceptional situations. This is usually where the practitioner's duty to society overrides their duty of confidentiality. For example, if criminal or safeguarding issues arise, disclosure may be necessary. Every effort will be made to discuss this with you.

I have read this form and had the opportunity to ask questions. I have also discussed what the treatment is likely to involve, the benefits and risks of any available alternative treatments (including no treatment). I will be clear to my practitioner if there is something I am uncomfortable with.

I understand by signing this form I am giving written consent to treatment. I also understand that I am free to withdraw my consent at any time.

I understand that I must disclose my medical history, illnesses and medication to my practitioner, and update this as and when it changes. I understand that not doing this could increase the likelihood of adverse reactions.

The information regarding my symptoms and lifestyle I have given is an honest and true reflection.

Signature of
patient

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te

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Please print

Contact details (If patient wishes to discuss options later)

Email

Mobile

General Practitioner's details (I give permission to the practitioner above to contact my GP if it is deemed necessary for my wellbeing)

GP's name

Address

Tel.

Signature of patient

Please print

1. Bäumler P, Zhang W, Stübinger T, et al. Acupuncture-related adverse events: systematic review and meta-analyses of prospective clinical studies. *BMJ Open* 2021;11(9):e045961. doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2020-045961
2. Witt CM, Pach D, Brinkhaus B, et al. Safety of acupuncture: results of a prospective observational study with 229,230 patients and introduction of a medical information and consent form. *Forschende Komplementärmedizin* 2009;16(2):91-97. doi: 10.1159/000209315
3. White A. A cumulative review of the range and incidence of significant adverse events associated with acupuncture. *Acupuncture In Medicine: Journal Of The British Medical Acupuncture Society* 2004;22(3):122-33.
4. MacPherson H, Thomas K, Walters S, et al. The York acupuncture safety study: prospective survey of 34 000 treatments by traditional acupuncturists. *BMJ Clinical research* 2001;323(7311):486-87.

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