

What is acupuncture?

Acupuncture is a form of Chinese medicine used to treat certain health problems and symptoms.

Acupuncture:

- Involves a trained medical acupuncturist placing needles as thin as hair in the skin.
- Helps restore energy balance by unblocking the flow of “Qi” (or energy) on “meridians” (or energy pathways). This happens by stimulation at various acupoints (or strong acupuncture points) on the body.



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What problems can it help?

Acupuncture, along with other medical treatments, may help improve:

- Nausea
- Anxiety
- Trouble sleeping
- Some side effects from cancer treatment
- Chronic (long-term) pain problems
- Pain from certain orthopedic injuries
- Some emotional and digestive problems

Does it hurt?

Your child may feel little to no pain since the needles are so thin (not much thicker than a hair).

What if my child is scared of needles?

It is OK if your child is scared of needles. This is common in children. Our acupuncturists are trained to care for children and can help ease your fears by:

- Spending time with you and your child to walk you through what to expect.
- Showing you the needles and process, giving you a chance to ask questions and calming any concerns.
- Talking about other techniques that can be used, such as acupressure or acubeads.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

Acupuncture, continued

What happens during an acupuncture treatment?

- The acupuncturist will talk with you and your child about your child's health concerns and what to expect with treatment.
- They will do a short exam of your child. This may include feeling pulses on the wrist and looking at the tongue.
- Your child will lay on a padded table in a comfortable position with calming music playing.
- The acupuncturist will:
 - Clean certain acupuncture points on the body with alcohol wipes.
 - Place sterile, disposable (throwaway), stainless steel needles into the skin.
- The needles will be left in place for about 20 to 30 minutes. Most often, your child will not feel the needles at this time. They may feel relaxed or even fall asleep.

How many treatments will my child need?

The number of treatments depends on your child's specific needs. Some treatment guidelines include:

- The longer a symptom or problem has been going on, the more time and treatments will be needed. Most often, it is advised to have 3 treatments before deciding if acupuncture is helping.
- As your child's symptoms improve, their treatments will be spaced out. For more acute (short-term) problems, only a few treatments may be needed.

Does my insurance cover medical acupuncture?

Your insurance may or may not cover medical acupuncture. Talk with your insurance company to see what it covers.

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

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