

## ACUPUNCTURE

The most commonly treated species are dogs, cats and horses, but smaller pets including rabbits and guinea pigs can also be safely treated.

Your pet's first acupuncture session will take about 20-30 minutes and in that time we will ask a thorough and detailed history, examine the patient and discuss a treatment plan.

The acupuncture points used in our pets are generally transposed from the human acupuncture meridians. In addition any painful points or "trigger points" noted on examination may also be needled. It should be noted that the points needled may not be located directly over the site of illness or injury. Once the needles have been applied they will be left in place for a few minutes – the length of time varying depending on the condition being treated. The number of needles placed will also vary with the animal and the condition being treated. At following sessions, the needles may be applied differently according to the animal's response to treatment. After the first session most owners will notice an improvement in their pet's condition. The most obvious being an immediate relief of pain or reduction in spasm and stiffness in a muscle. With older pets and more chronic conditions repeat sessions will be necessary before lasting improvement is evident. As with any treatment each patient will respond differently and effects may last longer in some than others. The number of

treatments an animal requires depends on the animal, the progression, and the condition being treated. This will be discussed at the first session, once your pet has been examined but is generally performed weekly for 4-6 weeks. Some animals may then need no further treatment although older pets and those with more chronic pathological changes may require ongoing sessions at intervals to keep them comfortable.

If you are interested in finding out if your pet might benefit from acupuncture, please enquire with the veterinary team who would be happy to advise. Further information regarding treatment costs is available from reception. Treatment costs are covered by most vet fees insurance policies (may vary depending on individual policy terms & conditions).

All acupuncture sessions are strictly by appointment only. Under UK law animal acupuncture may only be administered by appropriately qualified veterinary surgeons.



Conventional & Holistic Veterinary Care

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*"We care because you care"*

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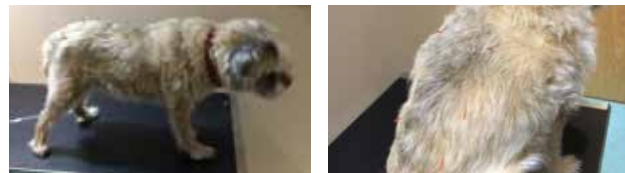
Acupuncture is the use of needles applied to the body to stimulate healing. This technique was first discovered in ancient China nearly 3000 years ago and has been used in both human and veterinary medicine to treat many ailments. The Chinese discovered that stimulating certain points along the body (acupuncture points) could promote healing even at sites distant to where the needles were applied. The Traditional Chinese Medicine approach (TCM) has been adapted for use in Western medicine and is now gaining increasing recognition as a useful adjunct to modern medicine in animals as well as humans.



The exact mechanisms are still not completely understood. According to ancient Chinese medical philosophy, disease is the result of an imbalance of energy in the body. This energy is called “Qi” or “Chi”. Acupuncture is believed to balance this energy and, thereby, assist the body

to heal disease. Modern Western research has revealed that acupuncture points are located in areas where there is a high density of free nerve endings, mast cells, small arterioles, and lymphatic vessels. Studies indicate that the stimulation of acupuncture points induces release of healing factors, beta-endorphin (the body’s “happy hormones”), serotonin, and other pain-relieving neurotransmitter agents. In TCM, the pain relief in some cases has been found to be so profound as to allow minor surgery to be performed.

A special needle is used for acupuncture – they come individually sterilised and are extremely fine (no bigger than the width of a human hair), although different lengths are used depending on the condition, the site, and the species being treated. The majority of animals show no signs of discomfort during an acupuncture session. Many in fact do not appear to notice the needles being applied. Occasionally an animal may have a point that is so sore they find it too painful to be needled in which case the needle is simply removed. Acupuncture is extremely safe; there are virtually no negative side-effects. Some animals appear to be pleasantly drowsy during a session, likely due to endorphin release. Most owners report their pet goes home and has a deep and restful sleep after a session.



Acupuncture is unique in that it not only has an effect on the local site being needled but also along a cascade of enhanced healing to distant sites, therefore it has been found to help in a variety of conditions.

Osteoarthritis causing stiffness and lameness, back pain, disc disease, soft tissue and joint injuries, nerve pain, bladder problems including urinary incontinence, bowel problems, epilepsy, reproductive cycling.

Acupuncture has also been shown to be useful in behavioural therapy and chronic skin disease. It is also an excellent option for the older patient who may not be able to tolerate conventional arthritis treatments or as a complementary therapy to help reduce the current dose of medications which may have undesirable side effects.

