

# Iffley Acupuncture Clinic



Website Content

Your First Visit

## Your First Visit

### What will happen on my first visit and what can I expect?

Your first consultation will normally last one to one and a half hours and will include a thorough and in-depth evaluation and diagnosis, followed by your first full treatment. The diagnosis will undertaken by way of the four methods of Traditional Chinese Medicine, followed by an evaluation of any relevant western diagnoses, records or information and a physical examination when and if it is deemed appropriate.

The first diagnostic method will be undertaken though the process of **questioning or enquiry** \* and will involve an evaluation of your primary disharmony or concern, as well as an overall assessment of health and function in body and mind. This process is developed through the approximately twelve areas of defined questioning. (see below) and will be adapted according to your and circumstances and needs. Whilst questioning may be quite comprehensive, priority will be given to those questions that relate to your given circumstances.



Diagnosis will also be developed through the process of **observation**. This will initially take place through an evaluation of the your face and body, including shape, demeanour, posture and colour, and more specifically, an inspection of your tongue. Sometimes this process will be obvious, for example when using tongue diagnosis, whilst at other times, I will be making unobtrusive observations whilst other evaluations are underway. Patients are asked not wear make-up at least on their first visit.



The third and perhaps most famous of the diagnostic methods is **palpation**; in which I will evaluate the relative strength, rate and depth of the radial pulse on each wrist, and in some cases on other areas of the body. I may also palpate areas of the body to assess tenderness at acupuncture points, and also the quality of pain and relative temperatures of different parts of the body.



Finally the last diagnostic method is **hearing and smelling**; the former perhaps being more significant in modern practice. As with **observation**, I may in the midst of other investigations listen to the quality of your voice; it's volume and relative strength and I might also listen to underlying tone. In so doing I will be attempting to correlate this qualities with other presenting information.

*\*(traditionally called interrogation but I feel this term is somewhat severe).*

**Please download the TCM Diagnosis PDF and guidance notes for use prior to your first visit. Either from this link..... Or from the questionnaire download in the main PDF Download page.**

**What happens next: Your first treatment?**



At the end of this first consultation I will inform you on the primary diagnosis according to TCM and try to provide an intelligible interpretation of it's meaning. In turn, I will suggest the best route for addressing your particular problem and where possible, how long it will take before results are achieved (please see below). Whilst my primary discipline is acupuncture but I may also suggest a course of Tui Na massage and or, a course of Chinese patent herbal medicine to complement the acupuncture or massage. Patients may of course wish to utilise only one of

these, although they are advised that herbs can only be administered in conjunction with acupuncture. Tui Na can be undertaken with or without acupuncture.

Acupuncture will normally be undertaken slowly and gently, and in consideration that there may be some patients who will be experiencing fear and apprehension. A



combination of points will be used according to the most pressing pattern or symptom, with other combinations added when and if a patient feels sufficiently confident. The needles will be retained for approximately 10 to 25 minutes, although in some instances they may be in for longer. In younger children the needles are not retained. In

some instances the session will start or finish with Tui Na but this will depend on a your condition, time available and the expectation and requests that you might make. Please be advised that when Tui Na is combined with acupuncture then more time will be allocated to subsequent appointments and will be subject to an additional fee.



### **After the first session.**

### **How many times will I need to attend the clinic?**

It must be borne in mind that whilst a person will experience wellbeing and some improvement in any given session, alleviation of a condition is better achieved through a course of treatment. Indeed, in more chronic and difficult cases, a person may need a number of courses to achieve maximum benefit. In my own experience, conditions that have resulted in a serious breakdown of body structure, may require ongoing and long-term treatment. In such circumstances, conditions may be successfully managed with acupuncture or otherwise, and cure may not always be assumed.

Similarly, results are far better obtained when a person commits to regular treatments; profoundly acute and distressing conditions might require more than one treatment per week, whilst more common patterns may better circum to weekly sessions. However prospective patients can be assured that the frequency of treatment will be reduced when the signs and symptoms of a given pattern begin to consistently ameliorate. In certain situations, for example in the treatment of infertility, a woman may be asked to coincide her treatments to specific phases in the menstrual cycle, in order that acupuncture can enhance cyclical biological functions.

Patients frequently ask **how many treatments** they will need. I find this a difficult question to answer because not only does each person present with a unique combination of symptoms, but also because people are subject to a physiology that is dependent upon age, lifestyle, previous illnesses and their severity and, a genetic or biological predisposition.

- Younger people in general, recover from illness quicker than older ones and similarly, they seem to respond more quickly to acupuncture; although this is definitely not always the rule. A significant number my patients are over the age of thirty-five, many of them in middle age or older, however acupuncture has still proved invaluable in addressing their given circumstances.
- If a person's lifestyle is the root cause of their condition, or at least significantly affecting it, then this will definitely slow the process of recovery.\* However the knowledge and wisdom accumulated by Traditional Chinese Medicine frequently offers an additional means of adjusting lifestyle so that equanimity can once more prevail.

\* Conversely, if a patient takes steps toward an appropriate and healthy lifestyle, the opposite is more readily achieved.

- When a condition has progressed to the point where there is severe physiological breakdown, then results will undoubtedly be slower than a condition that has arisen relatively recently.

- Similarly when a combination of patterns co-exist, then acupuncture over a longer time period will often be necessary.
- Whilst genetic disease or predisposition is not formally or traditionally included in TCM theory, it is included to some extent in the concept of Jing or essence. A person's Jing is determined by the health and wellbeing of their parent's at the point of conception and therefore, their parent's Jing. Some will present with weak Jing, others with a seemingly inherent robustness.

### **Arrival and Departure:**

Prospective patients are advised that they should consider arriving at the clinic at least ten minutes before the start of their appointment, to ensure that that can gain the benefit five minutes rest and quiet. Not only will this support their acupuncture treatment, but also allow for a more representative pulse diagnosis to take place. Similarly patients should also consider taking time to rest in the waiting area before leaving the clinic, thereby securing greater opportunity for acupuncture to establish it's benefits and ensuring that they can acclimatise before returning to a busy world.