

ACUPUNCTURE POCKET GUIDE

FAST FACTS

- In 2012, about 3.5 million US adults used acupuncture, a 50 percent increase in five years
- Leading medical centers Johns Hopkins, Duke, Cleveland Clinic and those in the military and Veterans Health Administration integrate acupuncture into their care plans
- The World Health Organization endorses the use of acupuncture for more than two dozen medical conditions
- Patients with chronic pain appear to receive the most benefits from acupuncture
- Sessions typically cost between \$65-\$125 per treatment; some of which might be covered or discounted by health insurance

WHAT IS ACUPUNCTURE?

Acupuncture is a practice in which a trained specialist called an acupuncturist stimulates, usually with a needle, a specific point on the skin called acupoints. Acupoints spark the brain and nervous system causing chemicals like endorphins to be released in the body. These chemicals may directly impact how a person experiences pain, and therefore helps the body and its internal organs to reset. The purpose of acupuncture is to rebalance or correct the body's energy flow, relieve pain and stimulate the body to heal itself.

WHAT DOES ACUPUNCTURE TREAT?

In the last 20 years, patients increasingly seek complementary medicine practices to integrate into their healthcare. Research shows that acupuncture is effective for treating certain conditions including:

- Low back pain
- Stress urinary incontinence
- Chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting
- Headaches

For the research on acupuncture's effect on a particular health concern, visit the [National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health](#), U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) for an in-depth analysis.

Are there precautions, side effects or safety concerns I should be aware of before I start acupuncture?

Acupuncture is widely considered a safe practice when using sterile, disposable needles. Nevertheless, there is potential risk involved as there is with all medicine practices. Talk to your doctor and acupuncturist about the following:

Precautions

- **Pregnancy**—Acupuncture can cause contractions which can induce labor
- **Emergencies**—If you are experiencing a condition requiring urgent medical attention, do not seek acupuncture, call 911
- **Surgical Intervention**—Acupuncture is not a substitute for any surgical intervention

- **Malignant Tumors**—Acupuncture should not be used to treat a malignant tumor and the site of the tumor should never be needled
- **Bleeding Disorders**—Individuals who suffer from bleeding disorders or who take blood-thinning medications should check with their doctor before receiving acupuncture treatment

Side Effects

- Slight bleeding and bruising at the acupoint site
- **Fainting**—Patients may feel faint during acupuncture so it is recommended for the first treatment the patient lie down; If this occurs needles should be removed immediately
- **Convulsions**—Patients who have previously experienced convulsions, please inform your practitioner; If this occurs needles should be removed immediately

- **Pain**—It is unlikely, but some patients may experience pain during the treatment

What training/certifications do acupuncturists have?

- Most states require that acupuncturist have received a diploma from a program accredited by the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine. Acupuncturists usually obtain a master's degree (2-3 years) specifically in acupuncture.
- In addition to licensed acupuncturists, other practitioners perform acupuncture including medical doctors, chiropractors, naturopaths and detox techs. Be sure to understand your practitioner's training and whether it suits your needs and condition.
- Visit <http://www.nccaom.org/state-licensure/> for your state's requirements.

How can I find an acupuncturist located near me?

Ask about training and what conditions he/she treats. The following information can help you locate an acupuncturist in your area:

American Academy of Medical Acupuncture

310-379-8261

<http://www.medicalacupuncture.org/Find-an-Acupuncturist>

National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine

904-598-1005

<http://www.nccaom.org/find-a-practitioner-directory/>

Acufinder

877-630-3600

<https://www.acufinder.com/>

Acupuncture Now Foundation

<https://acupuncturenowfoundation.org/find-qualified-acupuncturist-usa/>

How much will an acupuncture session cost?

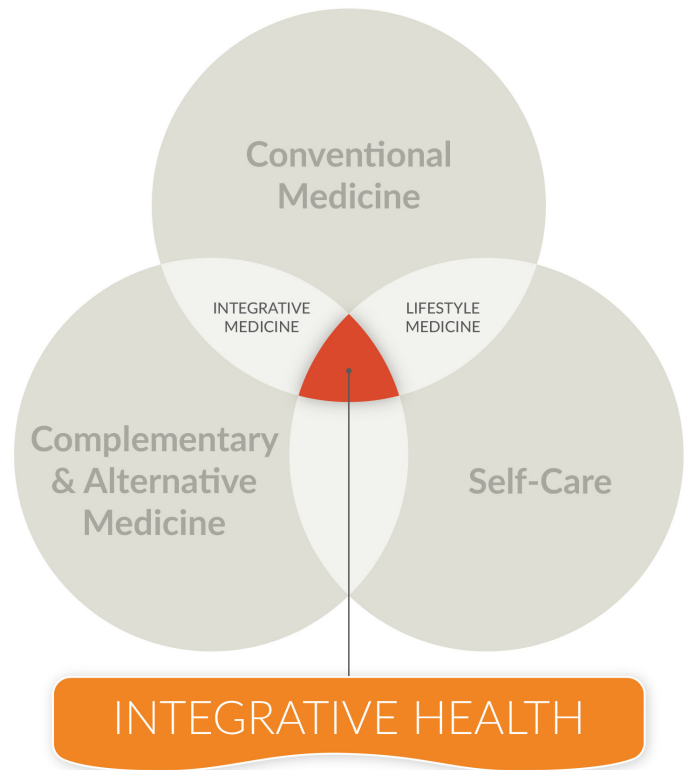
The cost of acupuncture treatments will vary based on location, provider, and extent of services needed. Generally, acupuncture treatments range from \$65 to \$125 per treatment session. Some conditions may be covered or discounted by insurance.

Talk to your Doctor

Let your medical providers know that you would like to include acupuncture in the tools you are using to improve your health.

What is integrative health?

Integrative health is the pursuit of personal health and wellbeing foremost, while addressing disease as needed, with the support of a health team dedicated to all proven approaches – conventional, complementary and self-care.



Sources:

Briggs JP, Shurtleff D. Acupuncture and the Complex Connections Between the Mind and the Body. *JAMA*. 2017;317(24):2489-2490. doi:10.1001/jama.2017.7214

Jonas Wayne B., Bellanti Dawn M., Paat Charmagne F., Boyd Courtney C., Duncan Elaine, Price Ashley, Zhang Weimin, French Louis M., and Chae Heechin. Medical Acupuncture. June 2016, 28(3): 113-130. doi.org/10.1089/acu.2016.1183

Liu Z, Liu Y, Xu H, et al. Effect of electroacupuncture on urinary leakage among women with stress urinary incontinence: a randomized clinical trial. *JAMA*. doi:10.1001/jama.2017.7220

Qaseem A, Wilt TJ, McLean RM, Forciea MA; Clinical Guidelines Committee of the American College of Physicians. Noninvasive treatments for acute, subacute, and chronic low back pain: a clinical practice guideline from the American College of Physicians. *Ann Intern Med*. 2017;166(7):514-530.

Vickers AJ, Linde K. Acupuncture for chronic pain. *JAMA*. 2014;311(9):955-956.