

## Acupuncture

### What is acupuncture?

Acupuncture involves the insertion of fine needles into the body. Generally, these will be into the head and neck area (masticatory muscles mainly). These needles are stimulated by hand. The treatment session is generally 15 - 25 minutes long.

For some patients, the insertion of the needles can be painful, but many say it is uncomfortable without being painful. In most cases there is virtually no sensation or even patients report that a feeling of general relaxation is experienced.

Research supports the effectiveness of trigger point acupuncture for pain relief and so it can be a comprehensive treatment for temporomandibular disorders (TMD).

### Why would I need acupuncture?

Your clinician has offered this treatment as trigger point acupuncture can provide effective pain relief in TMD.

### What is trigger point?

Trigger point is the term we use for the relaxation of specific muscles

### What are the potential risks and side effects?

Acupuncture is generally considered a safe treatment, and actually has few significant risks. The most common is a temporary exacerbation of symptoms - which is often considered a good sign - and occasionally some bruising can appear around the affected area.

### What are the expected benefits of treatment?

It is expected that you will obtain relief from pain and so improve your condition.

### Will I have an anaesthetic?

No

### How will I feel afterwards?

Some patients feel pain relief immediately. Other patients feel a warm sensation.

You may feel a little tired after a treatment session.

### How long will I be in hospital?

You will not need to stay in hospital all acupuncture treatment is done in the outpatient clinics.

### How soon will I be able to resume normal activities?

You will be able to return to normal activities straight away.

## Will I have to come back to hospital?

You will need to come to the department usually every 2 weeks for further acupuncture sessions. Please discuss with your clinician as this varies from patient to patient.

## When can I return to work?

You will not need to take away from work.

## Consent

**Although you consent for this treatment, you may at any time withdraw such consent.**

## What are the alternatives?

Acupuncture unfortunately sometimes cannot improve your ongoing pain, in some cases it might be necessary to consider other conservative options such as: constructing a night time mouth splint, infiltration of botulinum toxin type A (Botox) in some masticatory muscles, etc.

Occasionally, a referral to a Consultant Maxillofacial with special interest in TMJ or even to a chronic pain team by your local GP might be necessary.

## Sources of information

You can gain more information from:

[www.csp.org.uk](http://www.csp.org.uk), [The British Dental Acupuncture Society - Home \(dental-acupuncture.org\)](http://The British Dental Acupuncture Society - Home (dental-acupuncture.org)) and [www.aacp.uk.com](http://www.aacp.uk.com)

if you have any further questions who can contact the Maxillofacial department the extension telephone number for the department is Conquest 773207, EDGH 771756.

## Important information

Please remember that this leaflet is intended as general information only. It is not definitive. We aim to make the information as up to date and accurate as possible, but please be warned that it is always subject to change. Please, therefore, always check specific advice on a procedure or any other concerns you may have with your doctor.

## Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the patient experience team on 0300 131 4784 or [esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net).

## Hand hygiene

We are committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

## Other formats

**If you require any of our leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department on 0300 131 4434 or [esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net)**

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

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## Reference

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:

Dr F Akinleye MFU specialty doctor OMFS

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The directorate group that have agreed this patient information leaflet:

Diagnostic, Anaesthetics and Surgery - Outpatients.

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