

Frequently Asked Questions

What is acupuncture anyway?

Acupuncture is a medicine that has been a part of Chinese culture for thousands of years. It is now taught and practiced all over the world. The other branches of Traditional Chinese Medicine are herbal medicine, cupping, moxibustion, tui na (a type of massage), and gua sha. At Ottawa Community Acupuncture we just do acupuncture.

In an acupuncture treatment, small needles are inserted into specific points on the body to bring about symptom relief. Each acupuncture point lies on a channel of energy flow called a meridian. This energy is called qi, and when qi isn't flowing right, it creates negative symptoms in our bodies. Headaches, bad moods, knee pain, hay fever, digestive bloating, you name it. It is through these acupuncture points that qi gets recalibrated so healing can occur.

What is community acupuncture?

Community acupuncture is a term used in the western world to indicate that treatments are given in a group room space (as opposed to getting acupuncture in your own private room which is the norm). Community acupuncturists offer these kind of shared room treatments to make the cost of the treatment more affordable.

How long are the treatments?

Treatments are 30-45 minutes in length - the ending is flexible. And staying the full 45 minutes doesn't cost more. Just listen to what the body wants in the moment if the time is there for you to take. When factoring in the intake/chat time, it's best to leave about an hour for your visit.

Does acupuncture hurt?

Acupuncture needles don't always feel the same, so there is no consistent answer to this one. Sometimes the needles aren't felt at all. Sometimes you may feel a tiny prick with insertion that goes away quickly. Other times, you might feel a little ache that fades within seconds. Sensations felt within 5 seconds of needle insertion are considered normal.

If a needle isn't okay for you, and the sensation isn't fading, please let Rachel know and the needle will be removed or adjusted to clear the sensation. And, of course, if you don't like the sensation at any point, just say the word and out it comes!

What should I wear for my treatment?

Loose and comfortable clothing that can be rolled up to the knee and elbow (or whatever length is comfortable for you) is suggested. Having a shirt that can roll past the shoulder can be useful for shoulder/upper arm needling if that's your tender area!

Do you reuse your acupuncture needles?

Absolutely not! Rachel uses single-use needles that get disposed of in a biohazard waste container after your session.

Do you treat kids or babies?

Rachel is happy to treat humans over 14-years of age who give independent consent to receiving care. Those under 16 years old do require a guardian/parent to sign their consent form.

Do you do direct billing to insurance companies?

No. Treatment receipts are sent by email after every appointment for you to submit. You can also ask for a year-end receipt in December to submit everything in one go.

My low back hurts. Can you put a needle in my back?

Because OCA uses reclining chairs in a group room space, needles aren't used on the back of the body. There are many famous acupuncture points for the back that aren't in the back area. Sounds crazy, we know, but this is the cool magic of acupuncture theory - it's a whole different take on how the body works.

If you are very keen for needles in the back, Rachel thinks it's great you know what kind of healing experience you want! Ask her for a private practitioner referral anytime.

What the parking situation around there?

Ottawa Community Acupuncture is located on the bottom floor of a residential apartment building. Parking spot #27 in the lot just south of the building is OCA's dedicated spot. The visitor parking spots can also be used if they're available.

There is 3-hour free street parking along Booth Street and the neighbouring residential streets (Primrose Avenue, Rochester Street, Elm Street, and Spruce Street).

What happens if I'm running late?

Rachel will try to see those arriving late as soon as possible. The intake portion of the treatment may also need to be shortened based on the flow of the day. Latecomers may have their treatments capped at 30 minutes.

If you book the last appointment of the shift, your treatment time will be shortened if you arrive late. Thanks for your understanding!

Please reach out to Rachel with any additional questions