

Managing COVID 19 Transmission Risk

Following the advice from the British Acupuncture Council which is based on the Government's guidelines to help stop the spread of the COVID 19 virus:

I have undertaken an infection control risk assessment and implemented changes to my acupuncture treatment environment to ensure infection control and prevention measures are in place for everybody's safety.

Before your appointment

- Pre-booking screening to make sure it is safe for you to have treatment i.e. you are not in the vulnerable group or have been with someone who is infected with COVID 19.
- A COVID consent form will be sent to you before each appointment, also please get the consent from the people you live with, especially those who are in the clinically vulnerable or extremely vulnerable categories (see Appendix 1 at the end of this information) because despite all the infection prevention procedures, the risk of infection cannot be eliminated completely.
- Most if not all consultations will be done via email and phone, reducing the amount of time spent in close proximity, and lessen the amount of talking during treatment, this minimises the risk of infection.
- Where possible please email a photo of your tongue.
- Appointments are spread out to allow time for cleaning, disinfecting and airing of treatment areas.
- The treatment areas will be cleaned and disinfected between patients.
- A further check/pre-attendance screening via email or phone on the day of your appointment.
- During the treatment if possible, I will open the windows, to reduce the risk of infection.
- Single-use disposable face masks will be in use, for your protection and mine, as well as the person I am living with who is shielding.

- i) **You will need to be able to keep the face mask on for the duration of the appointment i.e. for at least 45mins to 1 hour. unless you experience breathing difficulties.**
- ii) If for any reason you remove the mask, you must use a new one.

I will be wearing a face visor and mask.

Payment:

Please have the right amount of cash or write the cheque before you leave home.

On the day of the appointment:

- **I will contact you before you depart** to double check you are still able to have treatment i.e. you or I, do not have COVID 19 symptoms.
- Leave as many items in the car as possible, the less on you, the less chance there is of contamination. Please keep other personal items such as car keys, mobile phone in your personal bag/pockets to avoid cross contamination.
- **Please stay in the car until I come to meet you**, to avoid the need to touch door handles, and please do not touch anything.
- I will look at your tongue through the glass door at the entrance.
- A QR code (Quick Response code) is on display in the porch for you to scan on to your mobile phone. This will enable NHS Test & Trace service to contact you with instructions & advice. Please download the NHS COVID-19 app so that you can scan the QR code.
- Please put the COVID & Acupuncture Consent forms and the correct cash/cheque in the metal box.
- Hand sanitiser will be provided at the entrance for you to disinfect your hands upon arrival.
- Then put on your surgical mask.

- Before you leave, hand sanitiser will be provided for you to disinfect your hands.

After your appointment:

- I will contact you 48 hrs after your treatment to make sure you or I have not developed any Covid symptoms since the treatment.

In case of Covid infection:

- In the event of one of the patients or myself contracting Covid-19 you will be notified immediately. If contacted, you may have to self-isolate for 14 days.
- If you develop Covid symptoms, you should get tested as soon as possible.
- In the eventuality that I (the practitioner) get symptoms of COVID-19 within 48 hours of having close contact with you during the appointment and then later test positive, I am obligated under law to provide your name, phone number or email and the date and time of your visit to the test and trace service. Please note that by attending the appointment you give consent for this.
- The clinic will be closed and will only re-open after a deep clean, and I have self-isolated.

Although lock down restrictions have been eased, we still have to social distance, please consider the potential risk to yourselves and others by coming to the clinic.

The risk of infection cannot be eliminated completely. I am doing everything I can to ensure our safety.

Appendix 1

Information provided by the British Acupuncture Council.

Clinically vulnerable people

People in this category of risk include:

1 anyone aged 70 and older (regardless of medical conditions)

2 anyone under 70 with an underlying health condition (that is, anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds) – such as: a chronic (long-term) mild to moderate respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis

b chronic heart disease, such as heart failure

- c chronic kidney disease
- d chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
- e chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), a learning disability or cerebral palsy
- f diabetes
- g a weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as HIV and AIDS, or medicines (such as steroid tablets)
- h being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)
- i pregnant women

Clinically extremely vulnerable people

People in this category of risk include:

- 1 solid organ transplant recipients.
- 2 people with specific cancers:
 - a people with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy
 - b people with lung cancer who are undergoing radical radiotherapy
 - c people with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
 - d people having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
 - e people having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
 - f people who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs
- 3 people with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- 4 people with rare diseases that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), homozygous sickle cell)
- 5 people on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection
- 6 women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired

7 other people have also been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable, based on clinical judgement and an assessment of their needs. GPs and hospital clinicians have been provided with guidance to support these decisions

More information about who has been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable is available on the NHS Digital website