



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

About Acupuncture

This information explains the health benefits of acupuncture and how to get acupuncture treatments at Memorial Sloan Kettering (MSK).

Acupuncture is a form of treatment in traditional Chinese medicine. It's performed by applying very thin needles to certain points on your body. Research has shown that acupuncture can reduce some side effects of cancer and cancer treatment.

How Acupuncture Is Performed

Acupuncture is performed by a licensed acupuncturist, who is a person with special training in this field. During your treatment, you will lie on a padded table while your acupuncturist inserts thin needles into your skin at specific points on your body. Where the needles are placed depends on the problem that's being treated. Although needles are used, most people feel little or no pain.

Once the needles are in place, you will rest for about 30 minutes. Your acupuncturist will remove the needles at the end of your session and dispose of them.

People have different experiences with acupuncture. Some people feel relaxed after their treatment, while others have more energy.

Benefits of Acupuncture

Acupuncture can reduce the following symptoms:

- Nausea or vomiting
- Hot flashes
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue (feeling more tired or weak than usual)
- Pain
- Anxiety
- Nerve problems
- Joint disorders, such as osteoarthritis
- Dry mouth

Acupuncture treatments are available at MSK. Inpatients can receive acupuncture in their rooms at no cost. Outpatients can receive acupuncture in private sessions or small group sessions.

To learn about other complementary therapies available at MSK or to make an appointment, call the Integrative Medicine Service at 646-888-0800 or visit our website: www.mskcc.org/IntegrativeMedicine.

If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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