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Acupuncture Policy

Hutt Maternity Policies provide guidance for the midwives and medical staff working in Hutt Maternity Services. Please discuss policies relevant to your care with your Lead Maternity Carer.

Scope

All persons who administer acupuncture or arrange acupuncture within HVDHB maternity unit. This policy is not intended to limit professions, as midwives, nurses, doctors, acupuncturists and physiotherapists can all practice acupuncture if they have appropriate qualifications.

Purpose

To ensure safe and effective administration of acupuncture within the HVDHB.

Definition

Acupuncture is the application of fine sterile needles into the body, to enhance the bodies healing, enhance the prospects of an efficient labour and help with pain relief.

Personnel

- Appropriately trained health professionals who have completed the post graduate acupuncture course offered by the physiotherapy acupuncture association of New Zealand Inc (PAANZ) or actively working towards the appropriate course (and under supervision by qualified acupuncturist).
- Employees of HVDHB who have documented evidence of an acupuncture qualification i.e. National Diploma of Acupuncture, Certificate in Midwifery Acupuncture hold equivalent international qualifications or are actively working towards the appropriate courses (and under supervision by qualified acupuncturist).
- NB: Midwives:
“Midwives with formal knowledge and experience can incorporate acupuncture into their midwifery practice provided the woman is fully informed and has given her consent. Midwives who bring this additional expertise to their midwifery care must be competent in the practice of acupuncture and are accountable for it as part of their midwifery practice. Midwives must ensure they do not hold themselves out to have knowledge and skills they do not possess.Midwives with qualifications in acupuncture may be providing acupuncture for women in the care of other midwives. These midwives are practising acupuncture, not midwifery. This form of acupuncture practice is not within the Midwifery Scope of Practice and it is not regulated by the Midwifery Council. Midwives performing such services must make it clear to women that they are not practising midwifery. They are advised to belong to

a professional association for acupuncture and to ensure that they have indemnity insurance to cover this work” Calvert and Pairman (2011)

- All HVDHB staff intending to practice acupuncture as the course of their work must have prior authority from their manager.

Indications

Some conditions and areas that acupuncture may be recommended during pregnancy and child birth as for conditions indicated below:

- Pain management including musculo- skeletal conditions i.e. Sciatica and symphysis pubis pain, leg cramps
- Malpresentations for example, breech or transverse lie, baby lying in a posterior position
- Nausea & vomiting
- Varicose veins
- Pre birth acupuncture (usually from 37 weeks)
- Pain relief during labour

Contraindications

Acupuncture should not be carried out under the following conditions:

- Intoxicated patients
- Infected area

Precautions apply to

- Pregnant women- certain acu-points are contraindicated during pregnancy (see Appendix 2 prohibited dangerous or vulnerable points).
- Special care should be taken when needling pregnant women.

Administering Acupuncture

Before commencing the procedure

- Give the woman the information leaflet to read – *Acupuncture and Pregnancy*.
- Take appropriate history.
- Explain treatment and expected outcome.
- Confirm verbal consent and sign informed consent form MATYP 1002 (Appendix 1).

Preparation

- Hands and nails must be washed with soap and water or appropriate hand sanitising solution before and after every acupuncture treatment.
- Cuts/breaks in the skin of operator should be covered with a waterproof dressing or disposable gloves worn.
- The woman’s skin in areas to be needled must be cleaned if appropriate.
- Only single-use, sterile, disposable acupuncture needles are used (PAANZ and NZRA policy).
- The treatment area should be private and have hand-washing facilities available.
- It is recommended that a fresh cover is used on the plinth or treatment table for each woman.
- Standard precautions should be upheld.

Equipment

- Pre sterilised, individually wrapped, disposable acupuncture needles
- Cotton wool
- Gloves
- Tweezers
- Sharps pack
- Disposable rubbish bag

Procedure

- Select acupuncture points.
- Check skin and/or clean as necessary.
- Administer needles using tube insertion and appropriate technique. This may include the use of electro-acupuncture, cupping or moxibustion.
- Account for all needles and tubes.
- Removal of needles into sharps container.
- Advise women they may have some drowsiness/feelings of relaxation and if driving to take care.

Adverse effects of acupuncture

- Pneumothorax (if specific point is used), bruising, infection, fainting
- Broken Needle:
Management: Remove with forceps if possible. If this is not possible the needle must be removed by surgery. Mark the exact area with a radio-opaque object, e.g. paper clip stuck to the skin. Immobilise area if possible.
- File a HVDHB event report for any adverse reactions, and complete a NZSP adverse reaction form.



Appendix 1 **Information for women and Consent**



Please read this information carefully and ask your practitioner if there is anything that you do not understand.

What is acupuncture?

Acupuncture is a form of therapy in which fine needles are inserted into specific points on the body.

Is acupuncture safe?

Acupuncture is generally very safe. Serious side effects are very rare - less than one per 10,000 treatments.

Does acupuncture have side effects?

You need to be aware that:

- Drowsiness occurs after treatment in a small number of patients, and, if affected, you are advised not to drive;
- Minor bleeding or bruising occurs after acupuncture in about 3% of treatments;
- Pain during treatment occurs in about 1% of treatments;
- Symptoms can get worse after treatment (less than 3% of patients). You should tell your acupuncturist about this, but it is usually a good sign;
- Fainting can occur in certain patients, particularly at the first treatment.

In addition, if there are particular risks that apply in your case, your practitioner will discuss these with you.

Is there anything your practitioner needs to know?

Apart from the usual medical details, it is important that you let your practitioner know:

- If you have ever experienced a fit, faint or funny turn;
- If you have a pacemaker or any other electrical implants;
- If you have a bleeding disorder;
- If you are taking anti-coagulants or any other medication;
- If you have damaged heart valves or have any other particular risk of infection.

Single-use, sterile, disposable needles are used in the clinic.

Statement of Consent

I confirm that I have read and understood the above information, and I consent to having acupuncture treatment. I understand that I can refuse treatment at any time.

Signature

Print name in full

Date

Appendix 2

Prohibited, dangerous or vulnerable points requiring due care.

1. Prohibited areas for needling

- a) scalp area of infants before fontanelles have closed
- b) nipples and breast tissue
- c) the umbilicus
- d) external genitalia
- e) any point of a limb affected by lymphodema

2. Dangerous or vulnerable points requiring due care

- a) orbit of the eye
BL 1
ST 1
Ex pt. (qiuhou)
- b) certain neck points
CV 22 front neck
LI 18 side neck over great vessels
SI 17 near baroreceptors – side neck
GV 15 over spinal cord
GV 16 over brain stem – important special insertion
- c) points over lung tissue unprotected by bone or cartilage e.g.
LU 12
GB 21
BL 11
- d) ST 21 – lies over gall bladder on right. Needle may be inserted superficially or horizontally to prevent damage to the gall bladder.
- e) CV 17 – a small percentage of the population may have a hole in the sternum
SI 11 – a small percentage of the population may have a hole in the scalpula
- f) Ah Shi points close to vulnerable structures.
- g) Avoid acupuncture certain pathological sites e.g. varicose veins, inflamed areas, areas of unhealthy skin, infection.

3. Pregnant women

Special care should be taken when needling pregnant women

Avoid the use of the following points unless starting treatment for labour preparation:

- LI 4
- Sp 6
- BL 67

Use the following points with caution and only when term (usually as points for induction of labour)

- BL 31, 32 and 33
- BL 60
- GB 21

Policy adapted from:

CCDHB Professional Leader Physiotherapy CCDHB Acupuncture & Dry Needling (adults) policy. CCDHB Wellington 1. 1719 (2016)

References

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Websites

<https://acupuncture.rhizome.net.nz/>

Related documents

Acupuncture Patient Information and Consent MATP1002 September 2018

CCDHB Acupuncture and Dry Needling (Patient Information) CapDocs ID 1.8195 August 2016

CCDHB 3 DHB Acupuncture and Dry Needling (adults) CCDHB 1.1719 August 2016

HVDHB Infection Control: See Clinical Policies

<http://intranet.huttvalleydhb.org.nz/content/7e20f54f-0fb7-4a94-8967-0c54c31447e4.cmr>

<http://intranet.huttvalleydhb.org.nz/resources/policy-resources/infection-prevention-control/appendix-1-summary-of-hand-hygiene-techniques.pdf>

HVDHB Informed consent:

<http://intranet.huttvalleydhb.org.nz/policies-guidelines/clinical/consent/informed-consent-policy-update-2018.pdf>

HVDHB Reportable Events Policy

<http://intranet.huttvalleydhb.org.nz/content/3b3f08d7-6a84-454e-9727-abe3d4b7627c.cmr>

NZRA Acupuncture in pregnancy, 20xx Wellington

Informed Consent

The right of a consumer to make an informed choice and give informed consent, including the right to refuse medical treatment, is enshrined in law and in the Code of Health and Disability Consumers' Rights in New Zealand. This means that a woman can choose to decline treatment, referral to another practitioner, or transfer of clinical responsibility. If this occurs follow the process map on page 18 of the Referral Guidelines (Ministry of Health, 2012).