



Acupuncture aftercare guidance

Try to keep the needle, cupping, moxa and guasha sites clean immediately after treatment.

It is generally best to avoid strenuous activity after treatment. You may feel that you want to rest after treatment. Sometimes people feel a dull ache at the needle sites after treatment. This is normal and nothing to worry about.

If you experience any effects after treatment that you are concerned about, please contact your practitioner and/or seek medical attention. See signs of infection below.

Acupuncture on your upper body

If you received acupuncture on the upper back or shoulder and then experience any severe, gradual or sudden onset of pain over the chest, potentially combined with difficulty in breathing please seek immediate medical attention. These are the signs of pneumothorax. Although a pneumothorax from acupuncture is extremely rare, it is a serious condition.

Prompt medical treatment can ensure a full recovery and prevent any long-term consequences.

Signs of infection

If appropriate aftercare is not followed infection may occur.

The signs of infection are:

- Swelling and redness that increases around the wound.
- A severe burning and throbbing sensation round the site.
- Increased tenderness and increasingly painful to touch.
- An unusual discharge (yellow or green) with an offensive smell.

Speak to your practitioner or seek medical attention immediately if you suffer from any of the above or have any concerns regarding infection in your piercing or if there are any signs of an allergic reaction to any of the products used. You can also call NHS 111 out of hours if you need help or advice.

If you have further concerns, we recommend either contacting the [Safe Practice Manager](#) at the [British Acupuncture Council](#) on [020 8735 0400](tel:02087350400) or arranging to discuss these with your GP.