

Statement of Inclusivity and Ethics

Hemma Community Acupuncture strives to create a safe and comfortable environment for all members of our community. We welcome people of all genders, sexes, races, colours, incomes, national origins, ages, abilities or disabilities, marital statuses, familial situations, religions, sizes and shapes, sexual orientations, and political beliefs. Your level of care will never be based on any of these factors.

We acknowledge that systemic barriers can impact a person's ability to access our services. We strive to anticipate and address these barriers, and also welcome your feedback – we are committed to continually adapting our offerings and practices so that they are as accessible as possible.



COMMUNITY ACUPUNCTURE



the home
of yoga
and acupuncture

A USER GUIDE

1274 May Street

250.294.0434

hemma.ca

What is Community Acupuncture?

- **We treat in a community setting**

Most acupuncturists in North America treat patients on tables in individual rooms. This is not traditional in Asia, where most acupuncture usually occurs in a community setting. In our clinic we use recliner chairs, arranged in groups in a large, quiet, soothing space. Treating patients in a community setting has many benefits: it is easy for friends and family members to come in for treatment together; many patients find it comforting; and a collective energetic field becomes established which actually makes individual treatments more powerful. The style of acupuncture we practice allows for more flexibility in determining length of treatment. Instead of a fixed period of time, your length of treatment may vary, depending upon your personal needs. Many people fall asleep, and wake feeling refreshed.

- **We have a sliding scale**

Our treatment fees are on a sliding scale from \$20-40 per treatment. You decide what you can pay, no questions asked. We want you to be able to receive acupuncture as often as you need it, in order to get the results you need. The way we are able to make acupuncture more affordable and still make a living, is to see multiple patients in an hour, so we have returned to the traditional approach; instead of engaging in a lengthy dialogue, we rely more on pulse diagnosis to decide how to treat you. This is exactly how acupuncture is practiced traditionally in Asia – many patients per hour and very little talking.

Our Commitment to You

We want to make it possible for you to receive acupuncture regularly enough and long enough to get better and stay better. We want our community to be welcoming to everyone. We want to give you the tools to take care of your own health care so that you can have a primary role in your personal health and well-being. We will provide a safe environment with registered acupuncturists (R.Ac.).

What We Need From You

- **Responsibility**

hemmā does not provide primary care medicine. Acupuncture is a wonderful complement to Western medicine, but it is not a substitute for it. If you have a problem that is not “garden variety” (meaning, you are worried that you might have a serious infection, a malignant growth, an unusual sudden change in your health, or an injury that won’t heal), you need to see a primary care physician (M.D., N.D., D.O.). We can provide some excellent referrals if needed. But you cannot expect us to diagnose and treat something really serious. We *can* provide complementary care for conditions, which require a physician’s attention – for example: chemotherapy, post surgery, stroke recovery, etc. But we need you to take responsibility for your own health.

hemmā does not currently receive grants, provincial or federal money, or insurance reimbursement. **hemmā** exists because patients pay for their treatments – it is a sustainable community business model.

- **Flexibility**

The community setting requires some flexibility from you. For instance, many patients have a favorite recliner. When we are busy, someone may be sitting in yours. Similarly, we have a few patients who snore. Other patients who dislike snoring bring earplugs to their treatment. We are grateful for this! You may also wish to bring a favorite pillow or blanket from home. That’s fine with us. Basically, we need you to participate in making yourself comfortable in the community room before we arrive to treat you.

In terms of how long you want to stay – if you need to leave at a specific time, tell your practitioner. We’ll make sure you’re out on time. In general, if you feel done, open your eyes and give us a meaningful look – if your eyes are closed, we think you’re asleep or resting peacefully and we won’t disturb you.

- **Community Mindedness**

The soothing atmosphere in our clinic exists because all of our patients create it by relaxing together. We appreciate everyone’s presence! This kind of collective stillness is a rare and precious thing in our rushed and busy society. Maintaining this reservoir of calm requires no one talk very much in the clinic space. If you would like to speak to a practitioner one-on-one at any length, please let us know. If you want to have a sustained conversation, we will probably need to schedule that separately and might need to do it by phone.

If you have questions about acupuncture we're happy to answer your questions, and to guide you to appropriate resources. Unfortunately, we can't explain what every point does, or how acupuncture works, while we are treating you – these are very large topics!

Once you begin to learn the “routines” of our clinic, we want you to feel at home here, and take on the responsibility for your appointments and care. Rescheduling and making payment happens at the front desk BEFORE each treatment, so you can relax and enjoy treatment. Please take all personal belongings with you back into the treatment room. And of course, please turn off your cell phone.

• **Commitment**

Acupuncture is a PROCESS. It is very rare for any acupuncturist to be able to resolve a problem with one treatment. In China, a typical treatment protocol for a chronic condition could be acupuncture every other day for three months! Most of our patients don't need that much acupuncture, but virtually every patient requires a course of treatment, rather than a single treatment, in order to get what they want from acupuncture.

On your first visit, your acupuncturist will suggest a course of treatment, which can be anything from “we'd like to see you once a week for six weeks” to “we'd like to see you every day for the next four days.” This suggestion is based on our experience with treating different kinds of conditions. If you don't come in often enough or long enough, acupuncture probably won't work for you. The purpose of our sliding scale is to help you make that commitment. If you have a question about how long it will take to see results, please ask us, or if you think you need to adjust your treatment plan, please let us know. We need you to commit to the process of treatment in order to get the best results.

What Can Acupuncture Treat?

The human body is designed to deal with any injury or invasion. All medicine relies on this condition. Acupuncture provides a mechanism to stimulate your body's natural healing instincts; therefore it can treat or support your body through any healing crisis or imbalance. The most common types of conditions that we see in the clinic can be grouped into a few broad categories.

Pain

muscular, joint pain, nerve-related, migraines, PAIN

Emotional/Psychological

anxiety, depression, addictions, trauma, insomnia

Uterine Health

PMS, menopausal transition, infertility, support during pregnancy and childbirth

Gastrointestinal

ulcers, IBS, crohn's, colitis, constipation, anorexia, etc.

Respiratory

asthma, bronchitis, sinusitis, allergies, common colds, emphysema

Others

Stroke recovery and other neurological disorders, autoimmune diseases, support for cancer patients, high blood pressure, thyroid conditions, and more

If your concern is not on the list, ask us about it

How often should I come?

This question gets asked a lot so we wanted to add a few additional thoughts on the subject.

As profound as acupuncture can sometimes be, it is also subtle. Often we are trying to shift patterns that have been in place for a while, so we need to *remind* the body of our intentions frequently and consistently in order to create sustaining change.

We want you to experience maximum relief from your health concerns in the shortest amount of time possible. Often times, you may notice improvement in your condition after just one or two visits; however, it is also common for the condition or symptom to reoccur. For acupuncture to have a lasting affect, it is best to receive it regularly and consistently, in order to create an accumulative effect, that results in a sustainable improvement in your health. Below are some basic guidelines that apply to most conditions.

For an acute condition, such as back strain, sports injury, or common cold, you will experience the most benefit from multiple visits in a short period of time. You should receive two or three treatments in a week for a period of one or two weeks. By this time, your condition should be much better, and you and your practitioner can determine if further treatments are necessary.

For chronic conditions, ones that are more constitutional in nature, we recommend getting treatments on average twice a week depending on the severity of your symptoms. Once the condition has started to improve then the amount of time between treatments can be extended. After that, occasional maintenance visits are often enough to prevent further problems.

If you are seeking relief from stressful life events think of acupuncture as a tool that can help you get through these periods. While acupuncture cannot change reality it can help alleviate the effects of the external pressures which we sometimes experience. During those times, come in once or twice a week, or as often as you need to alleviate your symptoms.

Acupuncture can also be part of a prevention regimen. For example, strengthening your immunity before the fall flu season or spring allergies. If you listen to your body and pay attention to your emotional state, you will have a good understanding of when it is time to come in.

What if I can only manage once a week?

One visit per week can still be of benefit to you. Less frequent acupuncture is better than no acupuncture. If you are coming less often than the suggested recommendation, you will still receive benefits; however it may take longer before you experience the results you desire.



What is a sliding scale?

The purpose of our sliding scale is to separate the issues of money from care; we want you to come in as much as you need in order to get well and stay well! Our goal is to make acupuncture accessible to you based on your needs — the way acupuncture has always been traditionally practiced. Our sliding scale fees for service are between \$20-40, plus a one time first visit fee of \$10. How much you choose to pay is entirely up to you -- what you feel you are able to contribute at any given time, that's it, no questions asked.

Accessibility and Affordability are core principles of our business model. Please free to speak with us directly if you have any other questions regarding our fee structure.

What is your cancellation policy?

In consideration for our intention to offer high quality health care at affordable prices, we ask for 24 hours notice in advance of an appointment if it is necessary to cancel or reschedule an appointment.

All appointments that are rescheduled or cancelled with less than 24 hour advance notice, and appointments missed without notice, will be charged a \$15 fee for the missed appointment.

Can insurance cover my treatments?

If you have insurance that covers acupuncture, we'll be happy to give you a payment receipt, which you can submit to your insurance company. If you are eligible for premium assistance with your MSP coverage you may also be eligible for up to \$230 of reimbursement per year (\$23 per visit). If you want to know more about MSP reimbursement please ask us or call MSP directly.

We Need You!

I know, everyone says that! So why *do* we need you? To be able to offer affordable acupuncture we have to see many patients each day. We need you to tell your friends, family, and co-workers about us. If you believe in what we are doing, if you appreciate what we are able to offer, if community acupuncture has helped you, please tell others! Don't be shy!

Last, but not least...enjoy the space. We do, and hope that **hemmā** can be an important part of your healing community.

