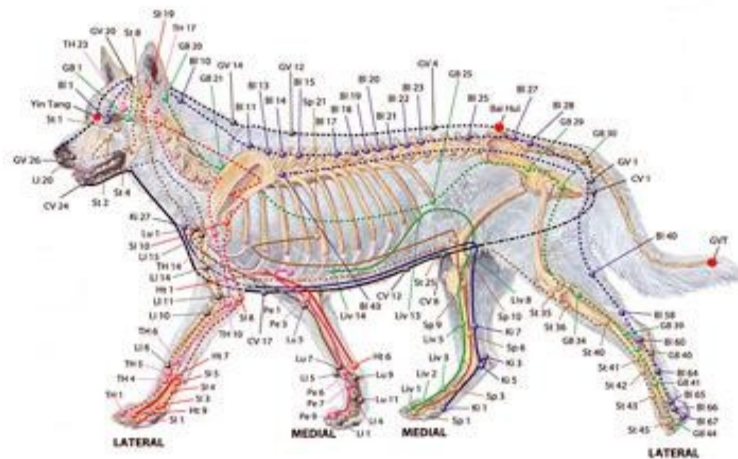


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ACUPUNCTURE IN ANIMALS

Available at our **Hook Norton (01608 730501) & Charlbury (01608 811250)** surgeries



What is acupuncture?

Acupuncture has evolved from the ancient art of placing needles into special locations on the body, in order to alleviate pain and to increase recovery rates and resistance to disease. It is a system of healing which has been practiced by the Chinese and other eastern countries for thousands of years, and may be used to treat a wide variety of illnesses. Acupuncture may be particularly effective in the treatment of chronic disease states, either to complement orthodox treatments, or if conventional medicine fails.

How does acupuncture work?

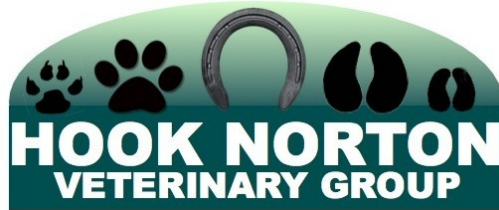
Acupuncture is a treatment which involves stimulation of specific points in the body, usually by insertion of very fine pre-sterilised needles. This, after superficial stimulation, generates many responses within the animal's nervous and endocrine system. It can affect muscles, and the circulatory, reproductive, digestive and urinary systems, as well as antibody production and hormone output. Acupuncture increases the body's release of natural painkillers - endorphin and serotonin, and modifies pain pathways in the brain and spinal cord.



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Often, after treatment, animals can exhibit behavioural changes with improved appetite and demeanour, as well as obvious pain relief. Some individuals are very responsive to acupuncture and will show dramatic improvement after one treatment. Most, however, will respond gradually over a period of time.

On average four - six treatments are required. These are often given weekly initially, with gradually increasing intervals, until the desired effect is achieved. The frequency of treatment depends on the individual pet's needs, but regular top ups are usually required to maintain the therapeutic effect. The needles (which are single use and sterilised) are left in place for 10-20 minutes. Some patients, along with some diseases, will not respond to acupuncture treatment.

How will my pet respond?

In general, animals accept the needling process very well and may become very relaxed. Occasionally, pets may be a little drowsy for up to 24 hours after treatment.

It is quite common for pets to want to lie down during treatment as they start to relax. Veterinary acupuncture may only be performed by a vet with a thorough knowledge of veterinary anatomy and physiology.

Is it covered under pet insurance?

Many Insurance companies do cover acupuncture treatment costs, so do check your policy.

Treatable conditions

Neck and back pain, eg. spondylitis, spondylosis and disc disease.

Acupuncture is particularly effective at alleviating the pain due to "trapped nerves", either from disc disease or muscle tears along the length of the spinal column.

Muscle and ligament pain due to sprains, spasms or muscle tears.

Arthritis, eg. of shoulders, elbows, stifles, hocks and hips from either trauma, or inherited conditions such as hip dysplasia.

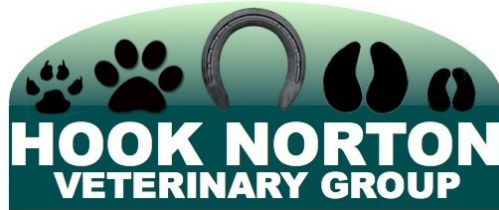
Often pets with arthritis in their limbs, will alter their gait to put more weight and hence more strain, on other parts of their body.

2/3



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It is common to find that a dog with arthritic hips will have a sore back as well, similarly, one with arthritic elbows will tend to throw their weight back onto their lower body, so that several acupuncture points will be necessary.

Paralysis/paresis (muscle weakness) resulting from either trauma (e.g. road accident) or a slipped disc. Acupuncture can help to stimulate damaged nerve fibres.

Some stress related disorders, eg. over grooming, stress urination in cats.

Lick granulomas - which are often caused by over grooming of one area due to soreness elsewhere.

How do I make an appointment?

Acupuncture is performed by **Pauline Tolhurst BVSc MRCVS** and **Jan Guilbride MA VetMB MRCVS**, who have completed the approved veterinary course and are members of the Association of British Veterinary Acupuncture recognised by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.

Acupuncture sessions involve a 20 minute (double) consultation so that the pet can be examined thoroughly, and the needles left in for the appropriate length of time - generally 10-20 minutes. The sessions are run at the **Hook Norton (Jan Guilbride)** and **Charlbury (Pauline Tolhurst)** surgeries.

Please contact reception on 01608 730501 (Hook Norton) or 01608 811250 (Charlbury) to make an appointment.



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