



**Saint Mary's Managed Clinical Service  
Division of Gynaecology**

**PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET**

# **ACUPUNCTURE FOR NAUSEA AND VOMITING IN EARLY PREGNANCY**

Many women suffer from nausea and vomiting in pregnancy, traditionally this has been treated with medication. Our Emergency Gynaecology Departments (EGU at Wythenshawe and GAU at North Manchester) can also offer treatment with acupuncture to reduce nausea and vomiting symptoms.

Acupuncture is a safe and effective management of nausea and vomiting in pregnancy, and this is shown by research studies.

## **WHAT IS ACUPUNCTURE?**

Acupuncture is a 2000-year-old Chinese technique and involves insertion of fine needles into specific points on your body. It has been used to treat many different medical problems. Recent research has shown it to be very effective in preventing and treating nausea and vomiting after surgery. It is thought to work on the part of the brain that causes nausea and vomiting.

## **IS IT AS GOOD AS THE ANTI-SICKNESS MEDICATION?**

Yes, acupuncture has been shown to be as effective as the conventional anti-sickness medication. If you feel the acupuncture is not fully relieving your sickness, let the nurse know and they can give you some anti-sickness medication either alongside, or instead of the acupuncture. It is safe and effective to use both methods at the same time, at any stage of pregnancy.

It is important to not forget that we cannot always completely relieve sickness.

## **WHAT DOES ACUPUNCTURE INVOLVE?**

A very small needle, like a tiny drawing pin, will be placed on the inside of your wrist and held in by a small plaster. When the acupuncture pin is in place you may feel the following sensations:

- Tingling, Itching, Warmth, Aching

Please do not worry as all are normal acupuncture sensations.

## **ARE THERE ANY RISKS INVOLVED IN HAVING ACUPUNCTURE?**

It is safe, simple and shouldn't hurt. However, acupuncture can sometimes cause:

- Pain, Swelling, Redness

If you have any of these, please contact your emergency gynaecology unit, your nurse who will either place the Acupin in a different position or remove it and give you anti-sickness medication.

## DO I HAVE TO DO ANYTHING?

Yes, for the acupuncture to work, you will need to apply a gentle pressure over the needle. Only do this if you actually experience nausea or sickness. There is **no limit** to the number of times that you can apply such pressure.

The acupin can stay in for up to 3 days. After this time, it will need removing and disposing of, you will be provided either a sharps bin or pot to dispose of the Acupin. You will be shown how to replace the Acupin yourself.

You will be given an appointment in 72 hours to return to EGU/GAU following your administration.

Please return the sharps bin or pot to the ward on your appointment.

If you require any further information or clarification of terminology, please do not hesitate to talk to one of the doctors or nurses, who will be happy to discuss your concerns.

## CONTACT DETAILS



### Emergency Gynaecology Unit (EGU)

(0161) 291 2561 (24 hours)

EGU is located at Wythenshawe Hospital (enter via entrance 15)

The department operates a telephone triage service you must call and speak with a specially trained nurse before attending to plan your care

***There are no emergency gynaecology services at Saint Mary's Hospital, Oxford Road***



### Gynaecology Assessment Unit (GAU/F5)

(0161) 720 2010 GAU Reception / (0161) 604 5130 GAU Nurses

Monday to Friday - 07.30 - 20.30

Saturday & Sunday - 08:30 – 16:30

***GAU is located at North Manchester Hospital (Ward F5, via Entrance 1 / main entrance)***

To be seen in GAU a referral from your GP, Midwife, A&E or other health care professional is required. GAU is not a self-referral unit.



<https://mft.nhs.uk/saint-marys/services/gynaecology/emergency-gynaecology/>