

## Acupuncture Frequently Asked Questions

### Does acupuncture hurt my pet?

Patients may feel a brief sensation when an acupuncture needle is inserted but often relax shortly after. Acupuncture causes an increase of  $\beta$ -endorphins (the body's natural pain reliever), serotonin and other neurotransmitters which often allow the patient to relax and even sleep during the acupuncture session. Typically, over 95% of patients are comfortable with acupuncture therapy. In general, cats and highly energetic patients tend to be more "sensitive" to needling. This may be addressed by using smaller gauge and fewer needles. If, however, a patient cannot tolerate "dry" needling, other techniques such as acupressure, aquapuncture or laser acupuncture may be tried.

### How many treatments are needed?

Most of the conditions treated by acupuncture are chronic and for these conditions, an initial course of 3-6 treatments is recommended. Benefits may not be seen until an animal has received 3 or more treatments. In general, the longer the animal has suffered from the condition, the longer it will take to improve. However, for more minor or acute conditions, only 1-2 treatments may be required. After the initial course of treatments (either weekly or every other week for most conditions), the frequency of treatment is tapered down as appropriate in order to maintain the animal's condition. For example, after the initial course of treatment, arthritic animals may be maintained with a single acupuncture session every 1-3 months.

### How long does each treatment take?

Treatment time varies depending on the disease process being treated. Typical sessions range from 30-60 minutes.

### How safe is acupuncture therapy?

Acupuncture is a very safe medical therapy when performed by a qualified veterinary practitioner. The most common side effects reported include a transient sedative effect (patients may sleep for the majority of the day following a session).

Information modified based off of the information offered by the Chi Institute at <http://www.tcvn.com>.