



Acupuncture

WHAT IS ACUPUNCTURE?

Acupuncture is a type of treatment which involves inserting very fine needles into specific locations of the body. The technique used at the Vet Clinic is known as 'Western Veterinary Acupuncture' which can be performed by a veterinary surgeon (or registered veterinary nurse under the vet's direction) who has undertaken and passed further training to become a qualified veterinary acupuncturist. The Western Veterinary Acupuncture approach involves using knowledge of the body structures, how they function, and things that can go wrong with them.

HOW DOES ACUPUNCTURE WORK?

Using fine needles we stimulate the sensory nerves in certain areas or muscles of your pet, this produces several effects, including:

- Increase blood flow to the area
- Nerve and blood vessel growth
- Reduction of pain sensation
- Release of stress and pain-relieving hormones (endorphins, serotonin, dopamine, oxytocin)

WHAT IS ACUPUNCTURE USED FOR?

Acupuncture has many uses but most commonly in veterinary practice we use it to aid wound healing and relieve areas of pain; this may be a soft tissue injury which has happened acutely or something more chronic like a recurrent injury or arthritis.

There are several techniques we may use depending on the type of issue we are treating and how well your pet tolerates needling. We may insert needles and leave them in place for a certain length of time, we may perform 'in and out' needling where areas are stimulated then the needles immediately removed, we may manipulate the inserted needles by rotation or fanning or 'lift and thrust', or we may use a combination of them all!

WILL MY PET NEED TO BE SEDATED?

Most animals tolerate acupuncture very well conscious, but some may require a mild sedation or anxiolytic; if an animal does not tolerate acupuncture like this then we generally do not recommend continuing with acupuncture as a treatment method as we want it to be as stress free as possible for maximum effect. If your animal is being sedated or having a general anaesthetic for another reason and we believe acupuncture may be beneficial then we may consider performing it at this point.

HOW LONG DOES AN ACUPUNCTURE CONSULT TAKE?

Generally the first session will take between 30 and 45 minutes to allow full assessment of the body and muscles as well as the actual needling. It is likely that in the first session we will only use a few needles and in less painful areas to get your pet used to the sensation. Follow up sessions are normally between 15 and 30 minutes.

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