



Acupuncture / Acupressure

- Acupuncture is a Chinese therapy in which energy channels (meridians) are believed to transport your internal energy, or life force, linking one part of your body to another. When you are healthy, this energy flows unhindered, but when your health is compromised – for example, by pregnancy - it becomes blocked, or too strong or too weak at certain points. Fine disposable needles (acupuncture), or finger or thumb pressure (acupressure), are used to unblock, stimulate or sedate the energy flow.
- During pregnancy, acupuncture is beneficial for “morning sickness” and pain relief in labour, but there is conflicting evidence about its effectiveness in treating backache, headache and pelvic pain during pregnancy
- Acupuncture can be used to induce labour, but for this reason, certain points should not be stimulated during pregnancy as it may start labour prematurely
- Acupuncture should be used with caution if you have high blood pressure, and is best avoided if you have a blood clotting disorder.
- Sometimes mild side effects occur after treatment eg nausea, fainting or a temporary increase in pain. Serious complications are rare, but if you experience any unusual symptoms after treatment tell your acupuncturist
- **Always tell your midwife if you have acupuncture / acupressure in pregnancy, labour or when breastfeeding**

For more information on acupuncture in pregnancy and childbirth, telephone **0906 400 6227** (calls charged at £1.50 per minute, from a BT landline; calls from mobiles and other networks may vary).

