

**Northampton Community Acupuncture**  
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**nohocommunityacupuncture.com**

## **Welcome to our community!**

Please take a minute to read this introduction to our community clinic. We are happy that you are interested in joining us!

### **What is different about the NCA clinic?**

#### **We treat in a community setting –**

This is more like how it's done in Asia, and while different than the way conventional acupuncture is done in the US, we have found that this style of treatment has many benefits:

- Many patients find it comforting to be with other people
- It's easy for friends and family members to come in together for treatment
- A collective energy field is established which actually makes individual treatments more powerful
- People have found that relaxing in a recliner is also much more comfortable than lying on a treatment table; many fall asleep, and awake feeling refreshed. During the transitional phase of our clinic, we will keep some massage tables, but we will eventually be converting the treatment room to all recliners.

#### **We have a sliding scale –**

In the US, most acupuncturists see one patient per hour and charge \$65 to \$175 per treatment. They tend to spend a long time talking with each patient, going over medical records, asking many questions. We don't. The only way that we can make acupuncture affordable and still make a living ourselves is to streamline our treatments and see multiple patients in an hour, so we have returned to the traditional approach; instead of asking you lots of questions, we rely on traditional means of diagnosis, i.e., observation, pulse and tongue diagnosis, to decide how to treat you. This is exactly how acupuncture is practiced traditionally in Asia -- many patients per hour and very little talking.

Please see the attached form that explains our sliding scale. Because we have a sliding scale, we cannot do insurance billing (that's the insurance companies' rule). If you have insurance that covers acupuncture, we'll be happy to give you a payment receipt, and you can submit it; that's OK with the insurance companies.

## ***Our Commitment to You***

We will provide a safe environment with highly skilled practitioners. We want to make it possible for you to receive acupuncture regularly enough and long enough to get better and stay better. We want to give you the tools to take care of your own health so that you will not need to rely on insurance companies for costly, high-tech interventions.

We are committed to creating a clinic that is welcoming to all different kinds of people.

## ***What We Need From You***

### **Responsibility**

NCA does not provide primary care medicine! Acupuncture is a wonderful complement to Western medicine, but it is not a substitute for it. If you think you have a problem that is not "garden variety" (meaning, you are worried that you might have a serious infection, a malignant growth, or an injury that won't heal), or if you want someone knowledgeable to go over the details of your medical history with you, you need to see a primary care physician (ND, MD, or DO). You cannot expect us to diagnose and treat something really serious. We *can* provide complimentary care for conditions that require a physician's attention -- for instance, we often treat patients for the side effects of chemotherapy. But we need you to take responsibility for your own health.

**NCA does not receive grants, state or federal money, or insurance reimbursement. NCA exists because patients pay for their treatments – it a *sustainable community business model*.**

### **Flexibility**

The community setting requires some flexibility from you. For instance, many patients have gotten used to lying on a table for treatment, or may have a favorite recliner. The recliners are comfortable; trust us! Some have even come to prefer them. So when

we are busy, someone may be in your spot. Similarly, we have a few patients who snore. Other patients who dislike snoring bring earplugs to their treatments. We are grateful for this! Some of our patients even bring favorite pillows or blankets from home with them, because they prefer theirs to ours. That's fine with us. Basically, we need you to participate in making yourself comfortable in the community room before we arrive to treat you.

Currently, treatments last from 30-45 minutes, but if you want to be unpinned at a specific time, let us know. We'll make sure you're out on time. Eventually, as the clinic grows and more recliners are added, you will be able to rest as long as you wish, and let the practitioner know when you feel "done" –many feel done at 30-45 minutes, but some may like to rest for a few hours!

### **Community-Mindedness**

The soothing atmosphere in our clinic exists because all of our patients create it by relaxing together. We appreciate everyone's presence! This kind of collective stillness is a rare and precious thing in our rushed and busy society. Maintaining this reservoir of calm requires that no one talk very much in the clinic space. If you would like to speak to the practitioner one-on-one at any length, please let us know. If you want to have a substantial conversation, we will probably need to schedule that separately and might need to do it by phone. If you have questions about acupuncture and how it works – there are references available. Unfortunately, we can't explain what every point does, or how acupuncture works, while we are treating you -- these are very large topics! If you have questions, we'll happily give you recommendations – there is plenty to read!

Part of our success is that our patients learn the "routine" and take on a lot of responsibility for the appointments. Re-scheduling and making payment happens at the table just inside the treatment room, preferably BEFORE each treatment, so you can relax and enjoy your treatment. Please take personal belongings with you into the treatment room and put them beside your chair or under your table. And of course, please turn off your cell phone.

### **Commitment**

Acupuncture is a PROCESS. It is very rare for any acupuncturist to be able to resolve a problem with one treatment. In China, a typical treatment protocol for a chronic condition could be acupuncture every other day for three months! Most of our patients don't need that much acupuncture, but virtually every patient requires a course of treatment, rather than a single treatment, in order to get what they

want from acupuncture.

One big reason that we are able to keep our prices so low is because of the extraordinary amount of marketing our patients do on our behalf -- we don't have to advertise. We cannot express how grateful we are for this. Our patients are such effective marketers because they have first-hand experience of how well acupuncture works. All of our satisfied patients basically made a commitment to a course of treatment.

On your first visit, your acupuncturist will suggest a course of treatment, which can be anything from "we'd like to see you twice a week for four weeks" to "we'd really like to see you every day for the next four days". This suggestion is based on our experience with treating different kinds of conditions. If you don't come in often enough or long enough, acupuncture probably won't work for you. The purpose of our sliding scale is to help you make that commitment. If you have questions about how long it will take to see results, please ask us, or if you think you need to adjust your treatment plan, please let us know. We need you to commit to the process of treatment in order to get good results.

And, last, but not least... enjoy the space. We do, and hope that Northampton Community Acupuncture can be an important part of your community.

## **COMMUNITY FEE STRUCTURE**

**NORTHAMPTON COMMUNITY ACUPUNCTURE** provides high quality acupuncture treatment at affordable rates in a supportive community setting. We practice a style of acupuncture which mostly uses "distal" points in the hands, feet and head to treat problems anywhere in the body – meaning we will probably treat pain in your back by placing tiny needles in your hands. Research in the United States (as well as thousands of years of tradition in Asia) has shown that acupuncture is most effective when it is done frequently and regularly – once a week is usually the minimum required to make progress on any kind of health problem.

**There is a one-time \$10 paperwork fee with the first appointment. Acupuncture appointments are on a sliding scale of \$15 - \$35 per treatment.**

***You decide what you can afford.***

The purpose of our sliding scale is to separate the issues of money and

The table below contains suggested guidelines for what you might pay depending on your income; HOWEVER, we understand that everyone's situation is different, and our primary goal is to make acupuncture available to you as often as you need it.

Income	First appointment paperwork fee	Acupuncture treatments	Additional treatments within a week
Under \$20,000	\$10	\$15	+ \$15 each
\$20,000-25,000	\$10	\$20	+ \$15 each
\$25,000-30,000	\$10	\$25	+ \$20 each
\$30,000-50,000	\$10	\$30	+ \$20 each
\$50,000 +	\$10	\$35	+ \$25 each