**Acupuncture Information**

Acupuncture & dry needling is a practice that involves inserting thin needles into specific points on the body. It is commonly used for pain relief and the treatment of various health conditions. Here is some information about the risks and benefits associated with acupuncture and dry needling:

**Benefits of Acupuncture:**

1. Pain management:

One of the most well-known benefits of acupuncture and dry needling is its ability to provide pain relief. It can be effective in treating conditions such as back pain, migraines, osteoarthritis, and menstrual cramps.

1. Reduction of inflammation: Acupuncture and dry needling has been shown to have anti-inflammatory effects, which can help alleviate symptoms associated with inflammatory conditions like rheumatoid arthritis and asthma.
2. Stress reduction: Acupuncture is known to promote relaxation and reduce stress. It can help regulate the body's stress response by stimulating the release of endorphins, which are natural painkillers and mood enhancers.
3. Improved mental health: Acupuncture has been found to be beneficial for conditions such as anxiety, depression, and insomnia. It can help regulate neurotransmitters in the brain and promote a sense of well-being.
4. Enhanced fertility: Some studies suggest that acupuncture may improve fertility in both men and women. It can help regulate hormonal imbalances, increase blood flow to the reproductive organs, and reduce stress that may affect fertility.

**Risks and Side Effects of Acupuncture and dry needling:**

1. Soreness and bruising: It is common to experience mild soreness or bruising at the site where the needles were inserted. These effects are usually temporary and resolve on their own.
2. Drowsiness: A common side effect of needling, this will usually pass quickly, but can lead to a deeper sleep on the evening of receiving treatment.
3. Infection: If the needles are not properly sterilized there is a risk of infection. At this clinic, we follow national standards of hygiene, which includes single use, sterile needles and thorough hand sanitisation prior to and immediately after needle insertion.
4. Organ injury: Although rare, there have been cases of organ puncture or injury during acupuncture or dry needling treatments. This risk is higher when needling is performed by an inexperienced or untrained practitioner. At this clinic, we have completed in-depth training which includes safe insertion of needles.
5. Bleeding and hematoma: In some cases, acupuncture and dry needling may cause bleeding or the formation of a hematoma (a localized collection of blood) at the needle insertion site. This is more likely to occur in individuals with a bleeding disorder or those taking blood-thinning medications.
6. Dizziness and fainting: Some people may experience dizziness, light-headedness, or fainting during or after treatment. It is recommended to inform your practitioner if you have a history of these symptoms or if you are prone to fainting.
7. Nausea and/or vomiting: Some people may experience these symptoms, either during or immediately after their acupuncture and dry needling treatment.
8. Interaction with medications: Acupuncture and dry needling may interact with certain medications, such as blood thinners. It is essential to inform your practitioner about any medications you are taking to avoid potential complications.
9. Seizure: Needling may invoke a vasovagal response, which can cause blood pressure or heart rate to reduce. This appears to be associated with fear / anxiety, and usually the person has a history of fainting especially when being needled (e.g. injection, ear piercing). This is a very rare event.