

## Welcome to Our Community!

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

### *What is different about the Healthy Community Acupuncture (HCA) clinic?*

- **We treat in a community setting -**

Most US acupuncturists treat patients on tables in individual cubicles. This is not traditional in Asia, where acupuncture usually occurs in a community setting. In our clinic we primarily use recliners, clustered in groups in an open, quiet and soothing space. Treating patients in a community setting has many benefits: it's easy for friends and family members to come in for treatment together; many patients find it comforting; and a collective energetic field becomes established which actually makes individual treatments more powerful. In some styles of acupuncture, the needles are removed after only a few minutes or after a half hour at most. The style of acupuncture we practice at HCA allows patients to keep their needles in as long as they want, and the "right" amount of time varies from patient to patient. Most people learn after a few treatments when they feel "done;" this can take from twenty minutes to a couple of hours! Many people fall asleep, and wake feeling refreshed.

- **We have a community fee scale -**

Most US acupuncturists also see only 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 and asking many questions. We don't. The only way we at HCA 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 pulse 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 enclosed form that explains our fee scale. Because we have a fee 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 want to make it possible for you to receive acupuncture regularly enough and long enough to get better and stay better. We want our community to be welcoming to all different kinds of people. We want to give you the tools to take care of your own health so that you will not need to rely solely, or heavily, on the insurance and pharmaceutical corporations and industries for costly and high-tech interventions. We will provide a safe environment with skilled practitioners.

### *What We Need From You*

#### ◆ **Responsibility**

HCA 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). We can provide referrals, even if you have no insurance coverage. But you cannot expect us to diagnose and treat something really serious. We *can* provide complimentary care for conditions which 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.

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

### ◆ Flexibility

The community setting requires some flexibility from you. For instance, a patient may have a favorite recliner. When we are busy, someone may be sitting in yours. Similarly, we may have a few patients who snore. We encourage patients who dislike snoring to bring earplugs to their treatments! You may also bring favorite pillows or blankets from home if you wish. 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.

In terms of how long you want to stay -- tell us when you check in if you need to be somewhere at a certain time! If you want to be unpinned at a specific time, tell the acupuncturist. We'll make sure you're out on time. In general, if you feel done, open your eyes and give us a meaningful look -- if your eyes are closed, we think you're asleep and we won't wake you up.

### ◆ 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 a 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 -- please read Working Class Acupuncture for Patients. You can read our clinic copy. Unfortunately, we can't explain what every point does, or how acupuncture works, while we are treating you -- these are very large topics! This is why our Resource Center exists. If you have questions, we'll happily give you 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 front desk BEFORE each treatment, so you can relax and enjoy treatment. Please take all personal belongings, (bags, shoes, etc.) with you back into the treatment room. 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 our prices are so low is because we depend on the marketing our patients do on our behalf -- your success and commitment, in partnership with ours, will be what makes Health Community Acupuncture work. This model was born out of a very strong desire to treat everyone in our community, not just those who could afford the going rate. We've done that. And we cannot express how grateful we are to be serving a much larger community!

On your first visit, your acupuncturist will suggest a course of treatment, which can be anything from "we'd like to see you once a week for six 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 fee 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 we hope Health Community Acupuncture can be an important part of your community. Thank you,

**Healthy Community Acupuncture** provides high quality acupuncture treatment at affordable rates in a supportive community setting. We practice a Japanese 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. The purpose of our fee schedule is to separate the issues of money and treatment; we want you to come in often enough to really get better and stay better! 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	1 <sup>st</sup> Appointment Paperwork Fee	Acupuncture Treatment	Additional Treat- ments in the week	Herbal Consults
Under \$20,000	\$10	\$15	+\$15 each	\$10
\$20,000 \$25,000	\$10	\$20	+\$15 each	\$10
\$25,000 \$30,000	\$10	\$25	+\$20 each	\$10
\$30,000 \$50,000	\$10	\$30	+\$20 each	\$10
\$50,000	\$10	\$35	+\$25 each	\$10

***\*All seniors and students are always \$15.00.***