

# **WELCOME TO Agoura Hills/Calabasas** **COMMUNITY ACUPUNCTURE!**

This packet contains our Welcome Letter with information on what to expect at your first appointment, our Financial Policy, and our Intake Form. Please take some time to read through this introduction to our clinic and to our community, and complete the intake forms before your first appointment.

---

\*\*\*PLEASE READ BEFORE MAKING AN APPOINTMENT\*\*\*

---

## *1. Arriving on Time:*

We can provide this service at an affordable price because we are able to perform multiple treatments an hour (with a minimum of two per hour). We schedule appointments every 20 minutes, which is enough time to discuss your needs and concerns and to administer a treatment. In order to stay on schedule, we ask that you arrive on time or, for new patients, 15 minutes early.

\*Please see Contact page for location/driving information.

*Late Arrival:* We will do our best to accommodate you if you arrive late for your appointment, however, if you arrive more than 15 minutes late and we are unable to accommodate you, we will consider it a missed appointment and enforce our financial policy.

*Financial Policy:* Initial treatment is approximately \$50 (\$35 treatment plus \$15 one-time, new patient administrative fee). Follow-up treatments are \$35  
In respect for our intention to offer high quality health care at affordable prices, we kindly ask for 24-hour notice if it is necessary to cancel or reschedule an appointment. All appointments that are rescheduled or cancelled with less than 24 hours advance notice, or appointments that are missed, will be charged the regular appointment fee of \$35.

## *2. Download Patient form*

After reviewing our policies, please download, print and complete the New Patient Forms before arriving for your first visit. Otherwise, please arrive 15 minutes early in order to fill out the forms (which we will provide).

## *3. Schedule an appointment on line*

We highly recommend that you make your appointments with us by using our on-line scheduling system. It is the best way to secure the day and time that works for you.

---

\*\*\*BY SCHEDULING AN APPOINTMENT, YOU ACKNOWLEDGE THAT YOU HAVE  
READ AND UNDERSTOOD OUR POLICIES\*\*\*

## *What is different about AHCCA?*

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. 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. Most people learn after a few treatments when they feel "done"; this can take from twenty minutes to an hour! Many people fall asleep, and wake feeling refreshed.

Most US acupuncturists also see only one patient per hour and charge \$65 to \$195 per treatment. They tend to spend a long time talking with each patient, going over medical records, and asking many questions, in a private setting - this personal "private style" is also available at AHCCA upon request. But the only way that we at AHCCA can make acupuncture affordable and bring acupuncture to everyone and still make a living we have to streamline our treatments and see multiple patients in an hour. So we have returned to the traditional approach; We rely on tongue and pulse diagnosis to decide how to treat you, and your chief complaint is what we focus on. This is exactly how acupuncture is practiced traditionally in Asia – many patients per hour and very little talking.

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 want to make it possible for you to receive acupuncture regularly enough and long enough to get better and stay better. Our community will be welcoming to all different kinds of people. We want to give you the tools to take care of your own health.

### *What We Need From You*

\* Responsibility \*

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 or you may schedule a private session with Dr. Rachel Russell. 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.

*Part of our success is that our patients learn the "routine" and take responsibility for their appointments. Re-scheduling and making payments happens at the front desk BEFORE each treatment, so you can relax and enjoy your treatment.*

### *Last note:*

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

---

## ***Our Sliding Scale***

---

Agoura Hills/Calabasas Community Acupuncture provides high quality acupuncture treatments at affordable rates in a supportive community setting. Research has shown that acupuncture is most effective when treatments are administered frequently and on a regular basis – once to three times a week is usually the minimum required to make progress on any kind of health problem.

The purpose of our sliding scale is to separate the issues of money and treatment; we want you to come in as often as you need to get better and to 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. Please note income verification is not necessary. No questions asked.

| <b>Income</b>        | <b>First Appointment Paperwork</b> | <b>Acupuncture Treatment</b> |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| *Under \$25,000      | \$15                               | \$25                         |
| \$25,000 - \$45,000  | \$15                               | \$35                         |
| \$45,000 - \$65,000+ | \$15                               | \$40                         |

\*Seniors only and those in regular / continued treatment for longer than 12 weeks

### ***Most Frequent Question:***

The number of treatments needed varies from person to person. Important factors include the duration and severity of your health condition as well as consistency of treatment.

Acupuncture, like any other form of therapy, is cumulative and generally requires a series of treatments to bring a condition under control.

2-3 treatments may be sufficient to treat an acute minor conditions and a series of 8-15 may be needed to resolve a more chronic condition.

---

## **On the day of your first appointment:**

Please fill out your paperwork before your appointment and bring it with you.

Please do not wear any perfume, cologne or scented lotions. Many of our patients are sensitive to smells.

Please turn your cell phone off before entering the community room.

Plan to be at the clinic for about 60-90 minutes. Follow up treatments will not take as long.

Wear loose, comfortable clothing with sleeves that can be rolled up to the elbows and pants that can be rolled up to the knees. Once seated, please remove your shoes and socks and any jewelry on your arms, and place them in the basket next to your chair.

Please do not speak to anyone that is in the room community during treatment.

The treatment room has soft, soothing music playing, but you may bring earplugs or headphones if you prefer. If you bring your own music, please choose relaxing music or guided meditation to listen to.

Please eat a little something beforehand. Acupuncture is not recommended on an empty stomach.

Don't plan to engage in any strenuous activity on the days when you receive acupuncture.

Gentle exercise, such as tai chi, gentle yoga or walking, is best.

Please be prepared to pay for your treatment, before you lay down. This allows for a smooth departure.

---