Client: British Acupuncture Council

Source: Peterborough Evening Telegraph (Main)

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A treatment with pinpoint accuracy

STEOARTHRITIS, menstrual problems, chronic fatigue syndrome, neck and shoulder pain, pregnancy gripes such as morning sickness, stress, irritable bowel and endometriosis are

just some of the health problems Marianne Killick has used acupuncture to treat.

Marianne became interested in the Chinese practice of inserting fine needles through the skin at specific points to cure illness or pain, when she had some women's health problems and had the treatment herself.

"It was beneficial and I was interested in how it was working and at that point in my previous career when I wanted to change direction" she said.

Marianne (35) had been working with refugees and torture victims and had developed an interest in the mental and emotional aspect of health and well-being.

"I was interested in the psychological affects on clients and how this manifests as ill health in a person," she said.

Becoming an acupuncturist involves three years of study covering physiology, western medical conditions and the theory of Chinese medicine as well as learning the practical skills of acupuncture itself.

Marianne studied at the Northern College of Acupuncture in York, continuing to work full-time initially and then reducing her hours.

In 2008 she qualified in acupressure massage, received her post graduate diploma in acupuncture two years later and is now a member of the British Council of Acupuncture.

Just back at work at Prestons Physiotherapy and Health Clinic in Alexandra Road, Peterborough, after the birth of her first child, Marianne has been practising what she preaches during her absence.

She had acupuncture when she was pregnant with her daughter Meredith, who is now four months old.

"I had it all through my pregnancy to keep me relaxed and to deal with minor niggles and nausea and to support the pregnancy," she said.

Then she taught her husband Russell some acupressure techniques to act as pain relief during labour.

Marianne's clients come to her with a myriad of conditions and complaints.

"I sometimes get people who say, 'I just don't feel right or people who are under a lot of pressure or have been through a major family event such as a bereavement," she said.

"The reason acupuncture is able to deal with so many different conditions is that we don't just treat the named condition, we treat the whole person.

"I ask about sleep and bowel problems and I'm looking for patterns of disharmony. "The named condition is of secondary

"The named condition is of secondary importance and people with the same condition would not be treated in the same way.

"Acupuncture rebalances the flow of chi and helps the body to help itself."

The number of visits needed also depends on the client and the condition.

"Someone came with chronic back pain and only needed a couple of treatments, a migraine sufferer might need six to eight sessions and I have someone with chronic fatigue who has been coming for a year," she said.

Marianne also considers lifestyle factors and gives patients dietary advice.

"Patients that do best also follow that advice," she said.

She takes a history, looks at the patients tongue, checks their pulse and chooses the acupuncture points depending on these.

This week's first Acupuncture Awareness Week, organised by the British Acupuncture Council, following research conducted at the end of 2011, aims to banish the myths and give the facts about the treatment.

They discovered that 21 per cent of people believed acupuncture needles to be the



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same size as needles used for injections and 26 per cent thought they were the same size as sewing needles.

Acupuncture needles are actually about the width of a human hair and the experience isn't painful.

"You don't get the sensation you would feel having an injection, sometimes people feel a small nip and sometimes they don't even feel the needle going in," said Mari-

anne.
"Once the needles are in people find it quite relaxing and often go to sleep."

There are no set number of needles used

on a client, anything from just a few to 13 or 14, and some people are more sensitive to the treatment than others.

"When a patient is pregnant we use a lot less because the treatment has to be more gentle and subtle," said Marianne. The needles are inserted and then left in

for a standard time of about 20 minutes.
"Clients can lie there and go to sleep or

chat, listen to music or stay quiet."

"With something like sciatica you can feel 70 per cent better after your treatment while with menstrual problems the changes are more

subtle each month, it depends on the person." She added: "I remember when I was training and remember the first few times when I saw people get better and I thought, 'It really does work. It's the best thing about doing it, particularly when someone has had a problem for a long time. It is a very, very rewarding profession."

But not everyone responds well to acupuncture.

"People don't always find it satisfactory and some do carry on doing the thing that agrivates the problem but I get a positive response from most cases," said Marianne. "So many more people could benefit from

it than already do."

To book an appointment with Marianne, call Prestons Physiotherapy and Health Clinic on 01733 565911.

■ For more information, visit www.mariannekillick.co.uk



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"GREAT RESULTS"

GEORGINA Bull describes herself as a "desperate needle phobic" but this hasn't stopped her from having acupuncture for more than a year now.

"I really, really hate needles but it's nothing like going to a GP's surgery and having injections or blood tests," she said.

"I was quite apprehensive the first time but I was pleasantly surprised, it was not as bad as I thought it was going to be." The 27-year-old, who suffers

from the incurable condition fibromyalgia, which affects the central nervous system, used to be plagued with constant pain, muscle weakness, fatique and continually felt like she had PATIENT: Georgina Bull. a cold.

She was eventually diagnosed by a consult-ant rheumatologist two years ago. As an oesteopath Georgina was perhaps more open to the idea of treating her condition with acupuncture.

"I've had great results," she said.

"It really helps with the fatigue and takes away the constant headaches and the stiffness but there is no cure for my condition it's just a case of having maintainance treatments. "At the last session with Marianne she

asked me what was bothering me and I said I just felt out of balance, it was something I couldn't put my finger on but she said she could do something about it.

"It's an alternative to anti-depressants and has reduced the amount of pain killers I have to take by half."

Georgina, who lives nearThrapston, near Oundle, and runs her own clinic Nene Valley Osteopathy said: "Marianne has been an inspiration to me to go off and do acupuncture myself.

"We're aiming to get to a level where I can handle the symptoms and happily go about my life and work, which

can be quite physical.

"I am having one session a week at the moment because I had a bit of a relapse over Christmas, because I wasn't following the diet and exercise advice I should be, but ideally we should get to a stage where I'm just coming back every month or six weeks."







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SARAH Botfield has never felt the same since she was laid low with a bout of swine flu just over two years ago.

The 46-year-old mother-of-three was eventually diagnosed with Myalgic Encephalomyelitis, more commonly known as ME,
"I had swine flu in January 2010 and by April

"I had swine flu in January 2010 and by April I could hardly walk," she said.

"I would go two steps and have to stand, my legs didn't feel like they were my own. The ME was attacking my system."

Sarah works as an archaeologist and before her illness she had been healthy, had never had any major medical problems and didn't drink or smoke.

Eventually she turned to acupuncture last summer and has been impressed with the

improvements in her condition.

"I became more coherent because I do get very muddled with the words I am saying, I get a little bit confused and have achey muscles, swollen ankles and heavy legs," she said. "Before Marianne left for maternity leave I

"Before Marianne left for maternity leave I really had progressed so much, that's how I know it was working because I went downhill quite rapidly after that. I didn't want to go to anyone else.

"She helps me with my diet as well."
Sarah, who lives in a village just outside
Peterborough, added: "You forget where you
had problems just before because acupuncture
just sorts you out so quickly.

"I did feel I had benefits from it straight away. "I think it should be available on the NHS."



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