



## **Western Veterinary Acupuncture and Chronic Pain Management – Course syllabus - Modules 1 – 12**

### **Modules 1-4 Foundation Course**

#### **Aims:**

- To provide a grounding in veterinary acupuncture and the ability to start using acupuncture in practice.

#### **Outcomes:**

At the end of this module participants should be able to:

- State the origins of acupuncture, as well as some of the controversies and define some common areas of agreement between the “Western” and the traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) approach
  - Understand the neurophysiological mechanisms involved in the effects of acupuncture
  - Have palpated myofascial trigger points, understood their aetiology as currently understood and their relevance to acupuncture treatments.
  - Define the “Western” approach to acupuncture
  - Be able to apply the principles and safe practice of Western veterinary acupuncture
  - Be able to construct treatment plans, including needling sites and techniques for a variety of different conditions.
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## **Module 1 – foundation course**

### **Introduction to the course**

- Welcome and practical considerations
- Overview of acupuncture, its history, some TCM nomenclature and the introduction of acupuncture to the West
- Safety Brief for needling of fellow participants

### **Needling practice:**

- Experience needling at Li4
- Points: neck, shoulder and arm
- Point finding in the veterinary species

### **Introduction to trigger points**

- Trigger point theory in man and animals
- Finding trigger points

### **Pain recognition in animals**

#### **Principles of point selection**

#### **Safety quiz**

#### **Point selection exercises – neck, shoulder and forelimb conditions**

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## **Module 2 – foundation course**

### **Points in the lower back and leg**

- Point finding in the veterinary species
- Needling practice

### **Neurophysiology of acupuncture**

- Revision of pain pathways and the nervous system
- Explaining the principles of point selection

### **Point location dogs and horses**

- Practical handling and location
- Further principles of point selection
- Point selection exercises – lumbar, lumbosacral region and hindlimb
- Clinical discussion

### **Clinical aspects of treatment**

- Which patients to treat
- Which conditions to treat
- Contraindications/cautions
- Needles and needling techniques
- Frequency and timing of treatments

### **Safety and side effects**

- Safety of acupuncture
- Serious adverse side effects
- Minor adverse side effects
- Relevance to the veterinary species

### **Planning patient treatments and presentations**

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## **Module 3 – foundation course**

### **Face and abdomen points**

- Point location
- Practice needling
- Use of different needling techniques
- Discussion of relevance of face points in animals

### **Segmental acupuncture**

- The use of acupuncture for functional non pathological disorders
- Paraspinal needling – theory and practice
- Other approaches to segmental needling
- Treatment of visceral conditions: point selection exercises

### **Case demonstrations**

- Case demonstrations with discussion
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## **Module 4 – foundation course**

### **Introduction to electroacupuncture**

- Electroacupuncture theory
- Electroacupuncture experience

### **Dermatology**

- Theory and research of acupuncture in dermatology
- Consideration of dermatological conditions

- Point selection exercises

### **Research and audit**

- Challenges of acupuncture research
- Examples of acupuncture research
- Questions to ask and pitfalls to avoid

### **Case studies**

- Devising treatment plans for more complex cases

### **Running a veterinary acupuncture clinic**

- Safety
- Practical considerations
- Timings and pricing

### **Quiz**

- Opportunity for revision and reflection

### **Case presentations**

### **Final forum**

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## **Electroacupuncture (EA)**

### **Module 5**

#### **Aims:**

- To expand on the introductory ideas of electroacupuncture and to allow participants to introduce EA into their practice

#### **Outcomes:**

By the end of this module the participants should be able to:

- State how electricity has been used historically in medicine
- Define the general principles of electroacupuncture
- Understand the electroacupuncture device with which they are supplied
- State when and why they will use electroacupuncture
- Understand safety considerations and potential side effects of electroacupuncture
- Be able to apply their theory of electroacupuncture to a number of conditions

### **Introduction to the use of electricity in medicine**

#### **Electroacupuncture - theory**

- Safety
- Contraindications and cautions
- Principles
- Effects
- Indications

### **Electroacupuncture- practical**

- Familiarization with the EA device
- Use of the device
- Use in specific conditions

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## **Review, refresh and update**

### **Module 6**

#### **Aims**

This module aims to refresh and revise the major concepts covered in modules 1-5 before moving on to update participants in current research and practice.

#### **Outcomes**

By the end of this module participants should:

- Feel comfortable and confident with all the major concepts of modules 1-5
- Have covered issues arising from using acupuncture in practice
- Be aware of some of the new pieces of research into musculoskeletal pain and their significance

#### **Review and refresh**

- Issues arising from practice
- Revision of points and anatomy
- Revision of safety

#### **Update on acupuncture for musculoskeletal conditions**

- Current research – human
- Current research – animal
- Specific conditions – hip, stifle, hock
- Specific conditions- shoulder, elbow, carpus

#### **Case presentations and case discussions**

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# **Treatment of pain / understanding of pain for the acupuncturist**

## **Module 7**

### **Aims**

- To revise and review understanding of acute pain
- To revise and review chronic pain as a distinct phenomenon from acute pain
- To classify chronic and acute pain and distinguish between the sensation of pain and the emotion of suffering

### **Outcomes:**

By the end of this module participants should be able to:

- State how acute pain and chronic pain are different from each other
- Understand the physiology and experience of pain
- Explain how pain can manifest in different ways, including as behavioural problems
- Explain the various causes and classifications of pain and the clues that help to distinguish them from each other

### **Introduction to pain**

- Acute pain, definitions of pain, physiology of pain
- How chronic pain compares with acute pain
- Neurophysiology of acute and chronic pain
- Classifications of pain
- Distinction between pain and suffering

### **How pain manifests as a behavioural problem:**

- Aggression
- Anxiety and fear
- Compulsive disorders
- Miscellaneous/bizarre

### **Causes of pain in the cat and dog**

- Musculoskeletal
- Neurological
- Visceral
- Oral/aural/dermatological

### **Classifications of pain**

- Nociceptive
  - Neuropathic
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## Module 8

### Aims:

- To explain the current status of assessment techniques
- To explain some approaches using osteoarthritis as an example

### Outcomes:

By the end of this module participants should be able to:

- Explain why assessing pain is not straightforward
- Apply the knowledge that behavioural changes are part of any assessment of pain
- Explain and apply some of the techniques used to assess pain and suffering
- Apply some approaches to osteoarthritis

### Assessment of pain:

- Current status of assessment techniques
- Triangulation
- Palpation techniques
- Gait/ muscular development/movement/posture

### Treatment of osteoarthritis as an example of chronic pain

- Osteoarthritis – the disease
- Sources of pain in OA
- An ABCDE approach to OA and where acupuncture fits into this.

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## Module 9

### Aims:

- To explain the practical approach to examination and how to base a treatment on the examination and history of the patient

### Outcomes:

By the end of this module participants should be able to:

- Understand that treatment plans cannot be started without examination of the patient
- Explain the confounding factors in assessment of pain problems
- Understand how acupuncture can be applied to patients with central sensitization
- Explain the limitations of acupuncture with anxious/aroused animals
- Appreciate the current research in terms of sedation effects on acupuncture

## **Examination of a patient**

- Superficial examination
- Effects of arousal and anxiety
- Forelimb lameness – hindlimb problem?
- Clues from physical difficulties
- Allodynia and hyperalgesia
- Trigger points – relevance and interpretation

## **Approach to patients:**

- Reducing anxiety
- Reducing central sensitization
- Good responders vs sensitive patients
- Sedation – when to use and what to use

## **Practical case examples**

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## **Module 10**

### **When acupuncture is not enough – what comes next?**

#### **Aims:**

- To demonstrate that acupuncture is not always enough and that multimodal analgesia and other techniques may need to be employed

#### **Outcomes:**

By the end of this module participants should be able to:

- Appreciate the limitations of acupuncture
- Explain how different pharmacological treatments work
- Appreciate how to choose between treatments
- Define the challenges of assessing physical therapies
- Be clear about how to devise treatment plans

### **When acupuncture is not enough**

- Outcome measures
- When acupuncture is not enough- what to do next

## **Pharmacological interventions**

- Licensed medications – indications/safety/side effects
- Unlicensed medications- indications/safety/side effects



## **Physical therapies**

- Challenges of assessing physical therapies
- Physiotherapy/hydrotherapy
- Other physical therapies

## **Other complementary and alternative therapies (CAM)**

- Challenges of assessing CAM
- Examples and results of studies

## **Discussion and forum**

Beyond musculoskeletal pain

### **Aims:**

- To demonstrate and revise the challenges of acupuncture research and to provide updates on the use of acupuncture in a range of clinical conditions

### **Outcomes**

By the end of these modules participants should be able to:

- Appreciate the challenges of acupuncture research and be able to assess published research papers
- Understand the current research on a number of clinical conditions and how this applies practically to the clinical situation

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## **Module 11**

### **Challenges of acupuncture research**

- “Placebo” and “nocebo” effects
- Examples of studies
- Practice reading, reviewing and evaluating acupuncture research papers

### **Update on dermatology and practical applications**

- Case examples/studies

### **Update on psychology and practical applications**

### **Update on visceral conditions and practical applications**

- Case examples/studies
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## **Module 12**

### **Update on acupuncture for ocular problems**

Update on acupuncture for neurological conditions and practical applications

Miscellaneous syndromes

Revision of techniques and conditions treated

Case studies and presentations

Final forum