

osteopathic information service



visiting an osteopath

When you visit an osteopath for the first time a full case history will be taken and you will be given an examination. You will normally be asked to remove some of your clothing and to perform a simple series of movements. The osteopath will then use a highly developed sense of touch, called palpation, to identify any points of weakness or excessive strain throughout the body. The osteopath may need additional investigations such as x-ray or blood tests. This will allow a full diagnosis and suitable treatment plan to be developed with you. Osteopathy is patient centred, which means the treatment is geared to you as an individual.

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osteopathy for all of you

more leaflets available in this range:

- osteopathy and arthritis
- osteopathy for pain relief
- osteopathy for hobbies & young children
- osteopathy for work strain
- osteopathy for back pain
- osteopathy and driving
- osteopathy and pregnancy

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what is osteopathy?

Osteopathy is an established, recognised system of diagnosis and treatment that lays its main emphasis on the structural integrity of the body. It is distinctive in the fact that it recognises much of the pain and disability we suffer stems from abnormalities in the function of the body structure as well as damage caused to it by disease. Osteopathy uses many of the diagnostic procedures used in conventional medical assessment and diagnosis. Its main strength, however, lies in the unique way the patient is assessed from a mechanical, functional and postural standpoint and the manual methods of treatment applied to suit the needs of the individual patient.

osteopathy for all of you



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Osteopathy is a safe and natural approach to healthcare. Patients may be treated for health problems from the trauma of birth to the arthritis of the elderly, from the cradle to the rocking chair. Britain's osteopaths see over six million patients every year. Most practise privately at their own clinics. Increasingly, too, they are working with the NHS to make osteopathy more widely available.

for all of you



what about treatment?

Osteopaths use their hands both to investigate the underlying causes of pain and to carry out treatment using a variety of manipulative techniques. These may include muscle and connective tissue stretching, rhythmic joint movements or high velocity thrust techniques to improve the range of movement of a joint. Gentle releasing techniques are often used, particularly when treating children or elderly patients.

The cranial approach also uses very gentle techniques in which the osteopath's highly trained sense of touch is used to identify and correct mechanical disturbances and limitations, both in and around the joints for the skull, and throughout the body.

It can help a wide range of patients with conditions including glue ear, migraine, and dizziness and, for babies, the after effects of difficult deliveries. By gently releasing tension in the baby's body, the osteopath can often relieve discomfort which might otherwise be attributed to colic or fretfulness.



what do osteopaths treat?

A recent survey of osteopathic practices underlined the wide range of patients treated.

* Half suffer low back trouble

Most back pains result from mechanical disturbances of the spine – postural strains, joint derangement's and spinal disc injuries. Osteopathy, with its comprehensive approach to healthcare, is a particularly successful approach to treatment.

* Over half are women

Many women are working mothers and combining both aspects of their lives can give rise to problems from the perennial headache to debilitating musculo-skeletal disorders. Many headaches originate from stiffness and tension in the neck and osteopathic treatment can often bring relief. Pregnancy can put a strain on the whole spine and osteopathic treatment can help the body adapt to the many changes it experiences.

* A quarter are in their forties

Many patients are losing fitness at this stage in their lives and are more prone to injury. Osteopaths consider the whole person, examining posture and the strength and flexibility of muscles, ligaments and tendons.

Treatment is designed to alleviate current problems and to help prevent recurrences.



osteopathy and patient protection

Osteopaths are trained to recognise and treat many causes of pain. Osteopathy is an established system of diagnosis and manual treatment, which is recognised by the British Medical Association as a discrete clinical discipline.

For the last sixty years, osteopaths have worked within a system of voluntary regulation that set standards of training and practice.

In 1993, osteopathy became the first major complementary health care profession to be accorded statutory recognition under the 1993 Osteopaths Act. This has culminated in the opening of the statutory register of osteopaths by the General Osteopathic Council in May 1998. Only those practitioners able to show that they have been in safe and competent practice of osteopathy will be allowed onto the register and in the future all osteopaths will be trained to the same high rigorous standards. All osteopaths will need to have medical malpractice insurance and to follow a strict code of conduct.

Patients will have the same safeguards as when currently they consult a doctor or dentist.

for all

www.osteopathy.org.uk

of you