

What is osteopathy?

A consent form for osteopathic practice

Osteopathy is an established system of diagnosis and hands on treatment in which a caring approach to the patient and attention to individual needs are of primary importance. In particular, it is concerned with the inter-relationship between the structure of the body – its muscles, ligaments and joints – and the manner in which the body functions. Osteopathy is a means of detecting and treating damaged parts of the body including those affecting the neuro-musculoskeletal systems.

What should I expect to happen at my first visit to an osteopath?

Your osteopath should make you feel at ease during your first consultation and any subsequent appointments and tell you what is happening throughout. You should feel free to ask questions at any point during the consultation. It is quite acceptable to bring a friend or relative along to the consultation if you prefer to do so. An adult or appointed representative should desirably be present with a patient who is 16 years or younger.

On your first visit, and before examination begins, the osteopath will discuss and record your current and past medical history in detail. It is essential that you inform your osteopath about any health condition or medication that is not discussed during the case history taking process e.g. if you experience fits, have a pacemaker or other electrical implants fitted, if you suffer unaccountable double vision, vomiting or dizziness or have difficulty swallowing. Equally you should inform your osteopath if you are receiving treatment or taking medication for other conditions, particularly diabetes, cancer, osteoporosis, asthma or clotting disorders.

As the consultation progresses, you will then normally be asked to remove some of your clothing so that a series of observations and biomechanical assessments can be made to attempt to identify points of weakness or excessive strain throughout the body. You should ask questions if you have any concerns or discomfort during treatment, and also tell your osteopath if you are not comfortable with certain forms of osteopathic treatment or do not wish to receive other forms of treatment that may be available within the practice e.g. acupuncture.

Is osteopathy safe?

Osteopathy is generally very safe. Osteopaths undergo a long period of training and are regulated by the General Osteopathic Council (www.osteopathy.org.uk). Training prepares osteopaths to examine and screen for potential difficulties that indicate where certain techniques should not be used, thereby avoiding patients being exposed to unnecessary risk. Serious side effects are rare – they have been reported as occurring in between 1 in



400,000 to 1 in 5,85 million patients undergoing cervical spine manipulation. Many patients attending osteopaths for treatment are currently taking non-steroidal anti-inflammatories, an estimated risk of serious side effects for this type of medication (e.g. gastro-intestinal ulcer or death) has, by comparison, been estimated by some researchers to affect 1 in 1000 patients.

What responses can I expect to osteopathic treatment?

Many patients consult osteopaths looking for relief from painful symptoms; some patients experience some initial aching for 24 to 48 hours after treatment but then start to gain relief from their symptoms. Research has been undertaken to look at common responses to manual therapy treatment and this has shown that local discomfort, tiredness, headache or stiffness can occur after treatment in approximately 10-20% patients.

In certain circumstances, further investigations may be suggested which could include an x-ray or blood test. This will allow a full diagnosis of the problem to be made and will enable the osteopath to tailor a treatment plan to your needs. If further medical treatment is needed the osteopath may contact your doctor, with your permission.

Consent

I hereby consent to – insert osteopath's or practice name - to contact my general practitioner, either verbally or in writing, which may involve releasing details of medical information, notes held and/or treatment received at the practice.

Statement of Consent for adult patients

I confirm that I have read the above information; I confirm that I have had the opportunity to discuss any concerns with the osteopath and have understood what has been explained to me. I consent to receive osteopathic treatment on this occasion, but I understand that I can refuse treatment (or any part of treatment) now or in the future without jeopardising future treatment at this practice. I understand that it is important that I inform my osteopath of any concerns, reactions or discomfort associated with treatment. I understand that I can also request to see another practitioner at this practice (not applicable to single practitioner practices).

Statement of Consent for patients aged 16 years or younger

I confirm that I have read and understood the above information, and I consent, as parent, guardian or appointed carer to this patient receiving osteopathic treatment at this time. I understand that they can refuse treatment (or any part of treatment) at any time in the future without jeopardising future treatment at this practice.

