

Important Information About Working With Our Clinic

Welcome

At The Alternative Clinic, you will receive care from world-renowned practitioners and clinical residents who are deeply committed to understanding you and your condition. Our approach prioritizes time, relationship, and tangible treatments to create obvious and lasting changes. Our practitioners spend the entirety of your appointment time in the treatment room with you—listening, assessing, and working directly on your body. We aim to make tangible, undeniable improvements as quickly as possible. However, successful results require commitment from both practitioner and patient, including follow up visits with ongoing evaluation and treatment. This document outlines expectations for treatment in our clinic to develop a beneficial practitioner–patient relationship.

First Visit

Your initial visit includes a thorough intake to understand your health concerns and determine an appropriate treatment strategy. Every treatment plan is fully individualized and may include discussion or lifestyle guidance, acupuncture, cupping, bodywork, moxibustion, and/or a custom herbal formula. In most cases, the first appointment is primarily focused on interview and evaluation, with prescription of an initial bag of herbs to begin treatment if appropriate.

Follow-Up Visits

Each follow-up visit evaluates how our work is affecting the concerns that brought you to the clinic, as well as changes or improvements in your physical and mental wellbeing. Based on evaluation we adjust treatment and modify herbal formulas. Our work is dynamic and responsive, always guided by how your body is changing.

Scheduling & Commitment

We ask patients to commit to a minimum of five treatments, with the first three visits typically scheduled two weeks apart. For continuity of care and best outcomes, we strongly recommend working with the same practitioner, and booking appointments ahead of time to ensure availability. By the fifth visit, we usually see measurable progress, allowing us to estimate the time required for full resolution. If significant progress has not occurred, we may recommend diagnostic tests to gather more information. We do not believe in wasting a patient's time or money, and do expect results

from our work because we are good at what we do, and are actively engaged in doing it. Lack of change despite committed work on the body over a period of weeks to months is diagnostically quite relevant.

Custom Herbal Formulas

Most patients at our clinic receive a custom herbal formula. This approach is uncommon in our field, as many of our colleagues solely utilize acupuncture treatments or dispense pre-made herbal pills. A custom herbal formula functions as a personalized daily treatment and is a critical component of our clinical work. Regular follow-up visits to discuss changes from herbs are essential to continuously refine the formula for optimal results. As you change, the herbs and treatment should change.

What Makes Our Clinic Unique

In the West, acupuncture is often a passive, spa-like service, where patients rest quietly on a massage table with needles creating minimal sensations. Practitioners maximize volume by treating multiple patients simultaneously, expecting magic to happen from painless needles and solitude. While this is a common style of acupuncture in the west, this is not our practice. At The Alternative Clinic, practitioners are actively engaged with you for the duration of your session. Our treatments are intentional and involve tangible sensations, which are often necessary to influence or force the body to shift. Our training and experience creates results when others do not. That means we are doing something different from what you may have experienced elsewhere.

Because our practitioners are with patients back-to-back each clinic day, they are unable to take phone calls or respond to emails during clinic hours. The full dedication they provide to each patient is also provided to you during your appointment. This means emails are reviewed and answered only when time allows outside of clinic shifts, which is often limited due to travel and teaching commitments. If having a practitioner readily available or on call is essential for you, our clinic may not be the right fit. We are not a concierge medical clinic, however our front desk staff are available to assist with logistical questions, and will pass on a message to your practitioner if there is an urgent situation. Practitioners will respond to emails as their schedules allow, it may be days before being able to get back to you. We appreciate your understanding of these structural realities.

Non-Profit & Teaching Environment

We are a non-profit clinic with a dual mission: to provide exceptional, affordable care to the public, and train the next generation of skilled practitioners to influence the field of medicine in this country. As a teaching clinic, we host practitioners from around the world for short term training and competitive residency programs. As a result, there will be multiple people present in the treatment room, and you may hear a variety of accents and languages in our clinic. If you seek a more private treatment experience, please book with one of our resident practitioners, or seek care with one of the many other acupuncturists in Asheville who can offer a more private or concierge experience.

Working Concurrently With Other Alternative Medicine Practitioners

If you are exploring treatment options, we welcome you to schedule an initial visit to determine whether our clinic is a good fit. However, once you commit to working with us, we require that we are the **sole and principal alternative medical provider** in your case. We do not accept patients who are concurrently under the care of naturopaths, functional medicine practitioners, other alternative medicine providers, or who are actively following large supplement protocols or detox regimes. This policy is not based on exclusivity. Our methodology depends on accurately measuring changes resulting directly from our treatments. Multiple simultaneous interventions make it impossible to determine what is—or is not—working, which compromises outcomes. If you are currently working with other practitioners or considering other treatment modalities, we encourage you to fully explore those options first. Should your health concerns persist, we would be happy to assist you at that time.