

## **Regulations for Acupuncture Injection Therapy (AIT)**

Acupuncturists who plan to practice Acupuncture Injection Therapy (AIT) must first meet the requirements set forth below.

- 1 The Acupuncturist shall file a completed and signed application form provided by the Board of Medical Examiners or the Acupuncture Advisory Committee and fee as necessary.
- 2 The Acupuncturist shall submit proof of completion of the following education, satisfactory to the Acupuncture Advisory Committee, in the pharmacology and general use of the injectables authorized for use under this regulation. Such education shall have been earned in classes approved by the board or committee and shall be taught by qualified instructors as approved by the board or committee. The education in the therapeutic use of the injectables shall be taught by a licensed health care practitioner with appropriate training and a minimum of five years experience using the injectables. The board or committee shall have final authority for approval of classes and instructors. The entire educational program shall be completed within two (2) years from commencement of classes. The above education shall be in addition to the education required to meet the minimum educational program requirements for licensure as an Acupuncturist. The education shall include a minimum of sixty (60) hours, including injectable clinical practice, in the following areas with one (1) hour of education equal to that defined by the accreditation commission for acupuncture and oriental medicine (ACAOM):
  1. History and development of acupuncture injection therapy;
  2. Differential diagnosis;
  3. Definitions, concepts, and pathophysiology;
  4. The nature, function, channels entered, and contraindications of herbal, homeopathic, and nutraceutical injectables;
  5. Diseases amenable to treatment with acupuncture injection therapy and the injectables appropriate to treat them;
  6. Identification of appropriate points for treatment, including palpatory diagnosis;
  7. A review of anatomy and referral zones;
  8. Universal precautions including management of blood borne pathogens and biohazardous waste;
  9. Procedures for injections, including preparing the injectables, contraindications and precautions;
3. Practicing acupuncture injection therapy without first providing application to the board or committee, proof of successful completion of the required course of study, and approval by the board or committee, shall be subject to discipline action by the board or committee. For the purpose of this rule the required course of study for the practice of acupuncture injection therapy shall not be a self study course.
4. Acupuncturist shall have an adverse event plan in place.
5. Acupuncturists shall show current medical malpractice coverage for this procedure and maintain coverage.

# Acupuncture Injection Therapy (AIT) Overview

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## Article 6

### Acupuncture Act of South Carolina

**Section 40-47-705.** For the purposes of this article:

- (1) 'Acupuncture' means a form of health care developed from traditional and modern oriental concepts for health care that employs oriental medical techniques, treatment, and adjunctive therapies for the promotion, maintenance, and restoration of health and the prevention of disease.

The Acupuncture Advisory Committee to The Board of Medical Examiners is charged with making recommendations to the Medical Board with regard to the practice of acupuncture with the interest and safety of the general public in mind. To this end, we endeavored to examine the Acupuncture Act and have begun the process of the formation of regulation in areas which are not specific. An area of great importance is Acupuncture Injection Therapy (AIT). The reason to examine this area is that this type of acupuncture, while increasingly becoming a part of the core curriculum of schools, is not a universally practiced procedure for those who have not been in the schools in recent years. The South Carolina Acupuncture Act defines this type of acupuncture as within our scope of practice. To protect the public and to ensure adequate training, the committee seeks to identify those who practice acupuncture injection therapy and to set a minimum standard of education.

The information in this overview was gathered from states with similar laws to South Carolina, and the draft recommendations made in the next document are a compilation of standards adopted by these states. The States involved in this compilation are Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, New Mexico, Oregon and Washington state. The draft recommendations closely follow Florida's conservative regulations. The draft recommendations do not require that all acupuncturists receive training in this adjunctive therapy, the recommendations merely require those who wish to practice AIT to apply to the medical board or acupuncture committee and be approved to practice AIT. The Board and committee thereby identify AIT practitioners and verify their education in this therapy.

# Overview

Acupuncture injection therapy (AIT), also known as point injection therapy or biopuncture, is a modern adjunctive oriental medicine technique that utilizes the injection of natural and biological substances into acupuncture points to promote, maintain or restore health and to prevent diseases. It combines the actions of acupuncture with the pharmacological effect of sterile Chinese medicinal herbs or other biomedical substances. It uses hypodermic needle techniques at specific acupuncture point locations so as to produce successful clinical outcomes in accordance with Traditional Oriental Medicine.

## I. Commonly Used Injectable Materials:

Any sterile medicinal liquid which can be used for intramuscular injection is suitable for acupuncture injection therapy.

### 1. Commonly used sterile Herbal Injectables:

- Gan Cao (Glycyrrhizae)
- Dan Shen (Salvia)
- Ai Ye (Fo. Artemisiae Argyi)

### 2. Western Medicinal Injections

- Homeopathics
- Nutritional
- Normal saline
- Vitamin

## II. Method

### 1. Equipment

Syringes that contain 1, 2, 5, 10, and 20 ml of injectable material are used. 5# gauge to 7# gauge injection needles are used for most acupoints. 9# gauge needles are used for deep points, when necessary.

### 2. Selection of points

According to the location and nature of the illness, local and distal points are selected. The number of points should be small, usually 2 to 4 points. Meridian points, Ashi points (points that are tender to the touch) as well as points located in muscular areas are best.

### 3. Treatment Course

For patients with acute diseases, 1 or 2 injections weekly. For those with chronic diseases, once every day or every other week.

### III. Indications

This therapy may be used for all diseases which are suitable for acupuncture treatment. Point injection is indicated specifically in syndromes of pain in the lower back and leg, pain in the joints, and some chronic diseases.

### IV. Precautions, Cautions and Contraindications

#### 1. Care should be given as to the following variables:

- a. pharmacological action.
- b. Dosage.
- c. Quality.
- d. Expiration date of the injectable material.
- e. Incompatibility of injectable material with the patient's Traditional Oriental Medicine or biomedical signs and symptoms.
- f. Side-effects. Medicines with severe side-effects are not suitable for point injection. Injectables with powerful effects should be used with caution.
- g. Allergic reactions of the medicines. Skin test should be given for medicines (procaine hydrochloride and others) which may lead to allergic reactions.

#### 2. Point injection therapy contraindications

As with acupuncture, acupuncture injection therapy is contraindicated for pregnant women in the following locations: points of the lower abdomen, lumbosacral region, Spleen 6 (Sanyinjiao), LI 4 (Hegu), and Gall Bladder 21 (Jianjing). For elderly individuals, children and individuals with a weak constitution or deficiency syndrome, fewer points and smaller dosages of medicine are advisable. As mentioned above, the injectable material must be tested for allergic response.

3. As with acupuncture, the syringes, needles, and the injection areas must be strictly sterilized.

#### 4. Adverse reactions to acupuncture injection therapy

If the patient faints, the management of the patient is the same as with needle shock in acupuncture or a vasovagal reaction in the biomedical clinic. In the rare case of an adverse event, the Board of Medical Examiners may require the practitioner to have an emergency plan in place including oxygen and an emergency epinephrine kit or benadryl availability.

Source Texts Used In Acupuncture and AIT Education:

*Therapeutics of Acupuncture and Moxibustion*  
Medicine and Health Publishing Company

*Biopuncture in General Practice*, Kersschot, J. 2004

*Acupuncture, A Comprehensive Text*, Shanghai University Eastland Press

*Chinese-English Manual of Commonly-Used Herbs in Traditional Chinese Medicine* ISBN: 7-5359-0871-3

*Atlas of Pain Management Injection Techniques*, Waldman