



Osteopathy, Mindfulness and Acceptance-based Programme for people with persistent pain

Patient Information Sheet

Introduction

This information sheet is for people with persistent musculoskeletal pain who are interested in taking part in an OsteoMAP course at the European School of Osteopathy's Clinic. The information sheet explains how these courses are different from standard osteopathic treatment, and answers some frequently asked questions about the potential benefits and possible risks of taking part.

What is the purpose of the OsteoMAP course?

Research has shown that people with persistent pain can gain benefits from multidisciplinary healthcare and that self-management programmes can help to improve emotional health and decrease the use of medication and reliance on treatment. Over the last few years, a group of osteopaths have been developing a new type of pain management course, which aims to help people with long-term pain to find effective coping strategies and ways to live fuller lives, despite pain. Each course is for one individual patient at a time (i.e. no group work), and consists of six, one hour sessions which combine osteopathic treatment with mindfulness-based exercises and home practice to help you to develop new self-care skills.

Who is the course designed for?

The course is for people who have had pain for more than six months, who gain some benefit from osteopathic treatment (or could gain benefit) but have symptoms that may not resolve completely with manual therapy alone. You are welcome to discuss the course with your GP, the osteopaths who are already treating you or the clinic tutors at the ESO. If you are interested in taking part, we will ask you to fill in an application form and we will contact you to arrange a meeting at the ESO Clinic.

What happens on an OsteoMAP course?

Firstly, you would be invited to attend an individual meeting with one of the team to discuss what you would like to gain and whether this type of course might be helpful for you. If we agree that it would be appropriate for you to take part, we will offer you

a place on the next course. Each session involves a mixture of osteopathic treatment, discussions about the impact of pain in your life, and different activities to help you learn about your body, reactions to pain, what your symptoms mean and different ways of managing discomfort. The aim is to help you to create a more flexible, fulfilling life. We have found that the course works best if you are willing to take part in the activities fully and explore different ways of coping with pain, but all activities are optional and you do not have to do anything you do not feel comfortable with. You would continue with any normal medical treatments during the course but we will ask you not to have additional osteopathy for six weeks (in the ESO Clinic or with another osteopath), as treatment forms part of each session. If you decide that the OsteoMAP course is not right for you, you can stop at any time and return to your previous healthcare practitioners.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Research has shown that people who practice mindfulness skills and take part in acceptance-based courses can feel able to cope more effectively with their symptoms. We hope that you will gain a better understanding of the way that pain currently affects your life, and develop new ways of managing pain that will enable you return to more fulfilling ways of living your life.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

The course may differ from previous osteopathic treatment because we will be working together and you will be asked to be an active participant in choosing directions for your treatment and practising new coping skills at home. A lot of learning occurs in between the weekly sessions, and it is helpful if you can set aside about 15 minutes each day for home practice. Osteopathic treatment is provided by a team of osteopaths. Serious reactions to treatment are rare and occur in less than one in over 100,000 consultations. The course involves practising mindfulness skills and it is quite common to notice your pain more at the start, but this is likely to mean that your awareness is increasing rather than you are getting worse. You will also be asked to think about how pain affects your life, which can be upsetting or depressing. This can feel frustrating but it is often an important and necessary part of learning to cope differently. The course involves experimenting with gentle physical movement and mindful approaches to activities we do in normal daily life. If you feel unsure about anything, you are welcome to discuss it with the OsteoMAP team, your GP or usual healthcare practitioners.

When are OsteoMAP courses available?

Courses run on Thursday afternoons between 22nd February and 5th April, at the ESO Clinic at 104 Tonbridge Road, Maidstone. Cost per session is £28

If you have questions or would like further information, please call 01622 685989 or contact us via our website at www.eso.ac.uk/clinic-contact.