



THE UNIVERSITY  
of EDINBURGH

Improving lifelong well-being



## *Frequently asked questions (FAQs) about electro-acupuncture*

### **What is electro-acupuncture (EA)?**

Acupuncture needles can be stimulated either by hand or by a small amount of electrical current attached to the needles to maximise its effect. When needles are stimulated by electrical current it is called electro-acupuncture. The stimulation usually lasts about 20 to 30 minutes.

### **Why use EA?**

In EA, the needles can be stimulated consistently. It is not practical for the acupuncturist to stimulate the needles by hand consistently for 20 minutes.

Studies have shown that both manual stimulation and EA is helpful with pain management as it helps to body to release its own pain-relieving and anti-inflammatory chemicals, such as endorphins and cortisol.

### **Do I feel any sensation during EA?**

Typically, you will feel a mild tingling sensation and/or experience mild involuntary muscle twitches which might feel strange to you, but these are normal sensations.

### **Is it safe?**

Yes, it is a safe treatment for most people. However, it is not recommended for people with a pacemaker.