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Dear New Patient,

### **Welcome to Black River Acupuncture & Integrative Wellness!**

We are excited to welcome you to our office and provide you with the highest quality Acupuncture, Chinese Herbal Medicine, and Integrative Wellness services. We strive to adapt the ancient wisdom of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) to meet the needs of your modern, everyday life. By creating lasting patient-practitioner relationships we support an active and goal-centric treatment environment. We look forward to meeting your unique needs with an emphasis on preventative wellness care. This letter serves as an introduction to our location, an overview of our office policies, and “what to expect” for your first visit.

We are located at **442 Century Lane (Suite 300) in Holland, MI**. Our office is accessible off of US Route 31 from both 16th Street and 24th Street. The building is one block west of Menards and directly across from BAM! Entertainment and Bowling Center. The entrance to our suite is located on the backside of the building. When you arrive at 442 Century Lane, drive straight into the parking lot and take a left turn to find our marked door. If at any time you have difficulty locating our office please call **616.416.0746** for assistance.

### **Commonly Asked Questions & Tips for Your First Acupuncture Appointment:**

***Does acupuncture hurt?*** Acupuncture needles are very fine. They are similar in width to a cat whisker and do not draw blood like a hypodermic needle. Although there is a sensation associated with needle insertion, it is more of a short prick or even a dull ache; some patients compare the sensation to that of plucking a single eyebrow hair. The area surrounding the insertion site may feel achy & heavy, or electric & “buzzy”, or may not feel like anything at all! If you ever feel uncomfortable during your treatment or a particular needle is bothersome, just let your practitioner know so they may adjust the needle to meet your needs.

***What should I wear?*** Please wear comfortable clothing to your appointment. Your practitioner will likely need to access your arms up to your elbows and your legs up to the knees. Loose fitting clothing is ideal. Shorts and a t-shirt are a good option; also consider leggings or sweatpants that can be rolled up to the knee comfortably. We have a large bathroom available in our building if you would like to change your clothing upon your arrival to your appointment; please plan to come a few minutes early if this is the case.

***Should I eat before my appointment?*** Yes. It is best to have a light meal or hearty snack 30-60 minutes before your appointment. Please stay hydrated before and after your appointment. Over-eating or under-eating may increase likelihood of dizziness or nausea during or after acupuncture treatment. Please avoid alcohol consumption or use of recreational drugs before and after your acupuncture treatment.

**Do you accept insurance?** We are currently a “cash practice” meaning we are not in network with any insurance providers. We do accept Health Savings Account (HSA) debit cards as a form of payment. We can create a “Superbill” which is a detailed report of your self-paid acupuncture appointments you may submit to your insurance company. Payment is due in full at the time of service. If you need to cancel or reschedule your appointment for any reason, please allow 24 hours notice to avoid paying a “no-show” or late cancellation fee.

**Please fill out your Health History Form before arriving to your appointment. This document is either included as an attachment to this email, or is in your paper packet.** If you would like to fill out your paperwork at our office, please plan to arrive at least 20 minutes prior to your scheduled appointment time. Also plan to provide any past or recent medical files for your practitioner, including blood work, lab results, and medication/supplement lists. Although this can be a lot of information to report & review, this helps your practitioner provide the highest quality integrative wellness care. We place emphasis in Chinese Medicine on examining each and every bodily system to address all aspects of your health. Be aware that your first acupuncture appointment is 90 minutes duration and longer than a typical appointment; your subsequent “follow-up” private appointments will be 60 minutes long.

**Please plan your appointments so that you have ample time to travel to and from our office.** This maximizes the relaxation and stress management effect of your treatment. If you arrive late to your appointment, please be aware that your contact with your practitioner will be limited to the remaining time allotted. Following treatment you may find you are very relaxed or fatigued. This is a normal response to treatment. For 24-48 hours, try to avoid strenuous activity, long distance travel, and exposure to windy/hot/cold environments as to minimize strain on your body. If you find you are very fatigued following treatment, please refrain from operating a vehicle until the feeling subsides.

**There may be occasional herbal fragrances in our office.** Although we work to minimize harsh fragrances in our office for the comfort of our more sensitive patients, we do perform moxibustion as a therapeutic modality. Moxibustion involves the burning of the herb Ai Ye, or “mugwort” to warm acupuncture points and surrounding skin/muscle. We take all measures necessary to minimize moxa smoke and smell in our office. Please let us know if you are particularly sensitive to smoky scents.

**We play relaxing music in our office to provide ambience.** Let us know if you'd like us to adjust our music in any way. To the best of our ability, we keep noise down to a minimum to maintain a relaxing environment.

**Please don't hesitate to contact your practitioner with any questions or concerns about your acupuncture treatment, Chinese herbal formula, or overall treatment plan.** We know most of our patients are brand new to Traditional Chinese Medicine. We want your experience to be as smooth and positive as possible. We emphasize patient education in our practice and enjoy making the concepts and wisdom of Traditional Chinese Medicine accessible. Please reach out with questions directly via phone or email, or check out our Facebook page or Instagram profile for ongoing educational posts. If you prefer print media, let us know and we will provide you with helpful handouts.

### **Thank you for selecting Black River Acupuncture & Integrative Wellness!**

We look forward to providing you with a relaxing & supportive space for stress reduction and healing. If you have any remaining unanswered questions, please don't hesitate to contact our office via phone or email.