

ACUPRESSURE SELF-HELP: Daily Practices for Balancing Energy Flow

THREE PRACTICES FOR BRUSHING ENERGY THROUGH THE BODY

(1) Tui Na Acupressure Self Massage

Tui Na self massage is a simple sequence you can use 1) as a warm up before practicing acupressure self-help, 2) as a quick energy pick-me-up at any time of day, or 3) as a complete practice in itself to be done daily.

The sequence uses a variety of strokes, always moving between joints, e.g., from shoulder to elbow, elbow to wrist, wrist to fingertips. For the brush stroke, brush away from the body on both sides of the arms and legs. For the other three strokes, move continuously down one side of a limb, then up the other side. Do the strokes at least five times between each joint.

The strokes:

- 1) brush with the flat, palm-side of the fingers,
- 2) grasp with the palm of the hand,
- 3) tap with a loose fist (as if holding a raw egg)
- 4) circle with the flat of the fingers.

The sequence:

- 1) down the outside of the left arm (upper arm, forearm, hand)
- 2) up the inside of the left arm (hand, forearm, upper arm)
- 3) down the left side (from armpit through ribs to pelvis)
- 4) down the outside of the left leg (thigh, calf, foot)
- 5) up the inside of the left leg (foot, calf, thigh)
- 6) down the inside of the right leg
- 7) up the outside of the right leg
- 8) up the right side (from pelvis through ribs to armpit)
- 9) down the inside of the right arm
- 10) up the outside of the right arm
- 11) chest
- 12) abdomen
- 13) low back
- 14) head

(2) Brushing the Twelve Meridians



Step 1

1. Brush down the outside of one arm, from shoulder to hand. Then continue up the inside, from hand to armpit. Make this complete circuit at least nine times. Then brush the other arm.
2. For the legs, brush down the outside of both legs (thigh to foot) and up the inside. Make this complete circuit at least nine times.



Step 2

(3) Tracing the Three Yang Meridians

Tension accumulates in the head, neck, and shoulders. We trace the following meridians from head to foot to encourage energy to move down, draining tension from the upper body into the ground.

Stomach Meridian - This is especially good for chronic acid reflux, heartburn, nausea, vomiting, belching.

With both hands, stroke both sides of the body in the following sequence:

- From under the eyes down to the chin
- Up the sides of the face to the temples
- Retrace this line back to the chin
- Come down on either side of the throat
- Move out to the center of the collar bone
- Move straight down the chest through the breast area
- Come in to either side of the navel
- Move straight down to the pubic bone
- Stroke out diagonally to the hip joints
- Move the hands down the thighs and calves (halfway between the front and outside of the leg)
- At the ankle, stroke down the center of the foot to the second toe
- Shake and pinch the second toe. Let the neck relax and hang down.

Gall Bladder Meridian - This is especially good for headaches, sciatica, pain along the outer thighs.

On both sides of the body, make small circles in the following sequence:

- Circle from the outer edge of the eye to the front of the ear (tragus)
- Continue circling from the front of the ear up to the temple
- Circle behind the ears to the mastoid process at the base of the skull
- Come straight up over the head to the forehead, above the eyebrows
- Move back across the head to the base of the skull (the little hollow)
- Move down the neck and out to the midpoint on the top of the shoulders
- Circle the fingertips across the chest to the sides of the body and move down the ribs and the pelvis
- Continue circling down the outside of the thighs, then the calves
- Circle above the outer ankle bone, then across the top of the foot to the fourth toe
- Shake and pinch the fourth toe. Let the neck relax and hang down.

Bladder Meridian - This is especially good for back aches and headaches.

On both sides of the body, make small brushing movements as follows:

- Brush up between the eyebrows
- Brush over the top of the head and down both sides of the back of the neck
- Reach up behind you and, with the thumbs and index fingers, brush two lines down each side of the spine
- Continue the four lines over the buttocks
- With each hand, brush one line down the back of the thighs and calves
- Brush below the outer ankle bone, then along the side of the foot to the little toe
- Shake and pinch the little toe. Remember to let the neck relax and hang down.

THREE PRACTICES USING THE FINGERS

(4) Holding the Individual Fingers

"Get rid of **Worry FAST.**" **Worry / Fear / Anger / Sadness / Trying To**



Worry: The "quickie" is to hold the thumb. The sequence is thumb, middle, little finger.

Additional benefits: for depression, hate, obsession, anxiety, self-protection, to revitalize physical fatigue, for the back of the head, breathing, and digestive discomforts.



Fear: The "quickie" is to hold the index finger. The sequence is thumb, index, little finger.

Additional benefits: for timidity, mental confusion, depression, perfectionism, criticism, frustration, digestive issues, elimination, wrist/elbow/upper arm discomforts.



Anger: The "quickie" is to hold the middle finger. The sequence is little, ring, middle finger.

Additional benefits: for feeling cowardly, irritable, indecisive, unstable, not alert, overly emotional, general fatigue, eye issues, forehead discomforts.



Sadness/Grief: The "quickie" is to hold the ring finger. The sequence is thumb, index, middle, ring finger.

Additional benefits: for negative feelings, common sense, excess mucus, breathing, ear discomforts.



Trying To/Pretense (cover-up): The "quickie" is to hold the little finger. The sequence is little, ring finger.

Additional benefits: for "crying on the inside and laughing on the outside," feeling insecure, nervous, confused, issues of "why am I here," calms nerves, aids bloating.

(5) Holding the Finger Mudras

For details on the benefits of each mudra position, see www.BalanceFlow.com/stress.htm. There's a link to the finger mudras under Jin Shin Jyutsu: Fingers and Daily Flows.



1. Exhaling the Burdens and Blockages (palm side of middle finger)

Hold palm side of left middle finger lightly with right thumb. Place rest of right fingers on back of left middle finger. (Reverse for right middle finger.)



2. Inhaling the Abundance (back of middle finger)

Hold back of left middle finger lightly with right thumb. Place rest of right fingers on palm side of left middle finger. (Reverse for right middle finger.)



3. Calming and Revitalizing (palm side of little and ring fingers)

Hold palm side of left little and ring fingers with right thumb. Place rest of right fingers on back of left little and ring fingers. (Reverse for right fingers.)





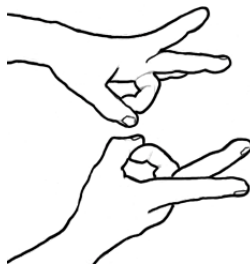
4. Releasing General Daily Fatigue (thumb, index, middle)

Hold back of left thumb, index and middle fingers with right thumb. Place rest of right fingers on palm side of left thumb, index and middle fingers. (Reverse for right thumb and fingers.)



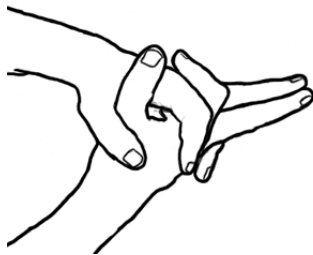
5. Total Revitalization (thumb sandwich)

Make a circle with right middle finger and thumb (palm side thumb on middle fingernail). Next slip left thumb between circle of right thumb and middle finger (left thumb palm touching right middle fingernail). (Reverse for right thumb.)



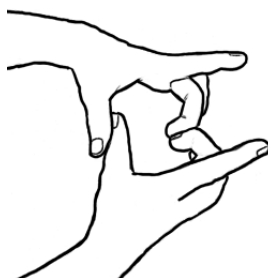
6. Breathing Easily (ring fingernail to thumb)

Touch ring fingernail with palm side of thumb on both the left and right hands.



7. Exhaling Dirt, Dust, and Greasy Grime (steeple with middle fingers)

Touch palm side of left and right middle fingers in folded hands position.



8. Inhaling the Purified Breath of Life (touch middle fingernails)

Touch left and right middle fingernails together.

(6) The Extended Sequence for Holding Individual Fingers

Holding individual fingers helps bring balance and harmony to the attitudes underlying physical and emotional conditions. In addition to holding individual fingers, we can hold a sequence of fingers to support the basic attitude we wish to harmonize.

"Get rid of **Worry FAST.**" **Worry / Fear / Anger / Sadness / Trying To**



Worry: The "quickie" is to hold the thumb. The extended sequence is to hold the thumb, then hold the middle finger, then hold the little finger.

We hold the **thumb** for Worry. The **middle** finger (Anger) helps deal with the frustrations that are often associated with Worry. The **little** finger is associated with the Heart function and helps us take our concerns into the heart, where they can be softened.



Fear: The "quickie" is to hold the index finger. The extended sequence is to hold the thumb, then the index finger, then the little finger.

The **thumb** is associated with Stomach and Spleen energy, which have to do with digestion and grounding. So holding the thumb when there is Fear helps bring our energy down (grounding) and gives us energy (digestion). We hold the **index** finger for Fear. Holding the **little** finger, associated with Heart energy, supports and energizes the process of dealing with Fear.



Anger: The "quickie" is to hold the middle finger. The extended sequence is to hold the little finger, then the ring finger, then the middle finger.

Holding the **little** finger when we are angry alleviates the heat of anger (the Fire element is associated with the Heart). Holding the **ring** finger, which is associated with Lung energy, helps us breathe. We hold the **middle** finger for Anger.



Sadness/Grief: The "quickie" is to hold the ring finger. The extended sequence is to hold the thumb, then the index finger, then the middle finger, then the ring finger.

Holding the **thumb** helps us with the Worry that is often involved in Grief. Holding the **index** finger helps us deal with our fears, which can deplete our reserves. By overcoming our fears, we are able to face our grief. Holding the **middle** finger helps us release feelings of frustration, anger, and oppression that may be associated with Grief. We hold the **ring** finger for Sadness.



Trying To/Pretense (cover-up): The "quickie" is to hold the little finger. The extended sequence is hold the little finger, then the ring finger.

Holding the **little** finger puts us in touch with our Heart energy. Holding the **ring** finger helps us deal with the grief that may be underneath our tendency to put up a defensive front when we are feeling sad on the inside.

THREE BASIC DAILY ENERGY FLOWS TO START YOUR DAY

(7) Harmonizing the Primary Source of Energy in the Body

The **Main Central Flow** is one of several simple daily flows that reduces stress, boosts immunity, and revitalizes the body. It flows in an oval circuit, going down the face, neck, and sternum, through the abdomen to the pubic bone, up the spine on the back, over the head to the forehead, and then makes the circuit again. The Main Central is the primary harmonizing energy flow in the body and our main source of energy. It will revitalize and restore all the other flows of the body. It's especially useful when there is an imbalance on one side of the body.

In the following sequence, your right hand remains on top of your head until the last step. Hold each position for one minute or until you feel a pulse.

1. Right hand on top of head (1)



2. Left hand between eyebrows (2)

3. Left hand tip of nose (3)

4. Left hand between the breasts (4)

5. Left hand at base of breastbone (5)

6. Left hand on top of pubic bone (6)



7. Move right hand to base of spine (coccyx) (7)

(8) Supervisor Flow for Harmonizing the Body's Energy

1. For the right side of the body, place the left hand over the right shoulder, and place the right hand under the right hip on the "sitting" bone. You can hold this point with the palm up or down. Hold both hands for a few minutes or until you feel a pulse.



Step 1

2. Keep the left hand on the right shoulder and move the right hand to the right hip crease (groin). Hold.

3. For the left side of body, place the right hand over left shoulder and the left hand on left "sitting" bone. Hold.

4. Keep the right hand on the left shoulder and move the left hand to the left hip crease (groin). Hold.



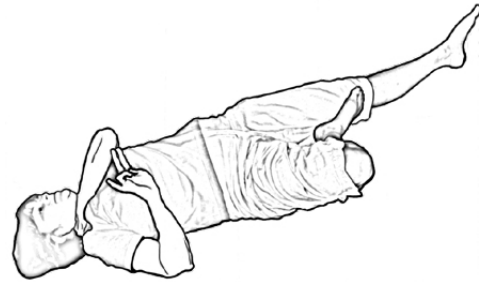
Step 2

(9) Diagonal Mediator Flow for Harmonizing the Body's Energy



Step 1

1. For the right side of the body, place the right thumb on the right ring fingernail, and place the left hand over the right shoulder. Bring knees together. When lying down, an alternative to bringing the knees together is to place the ball of the right foot on the inside of the left knee.
2. For the right side of the body, place the left thumb on the left ring fingernail, and place the right hand over the left shoulder. Bring the knees together or place the left foot on the inside of the right knee.



Step 1 when lying down

THE THREE DAILY "JANITORS" FOR THE END OF YOUR DAY

(10) Harmonizing Energy that Flows Up the Front of the Body

This is the first of three daily "janitors" for unloading stress that accumulates during the day. They can be done at any time, but are especially useful at the end of the day. Each flow is done with both hands. The hands act as "jumper cables," allowing universal life energy to flow through the body. When the instructions indicate "hold," you should hold both hands on the body for a few minutes or until you feel a pulse. You may sit, stand, or lie down, whatever is most relaxing for you.

These three flows, when combined with the Main Central (from the Neck class) and the Supervisor and Diagonal Mediator flows (from the Shoulder class) make an excellent and complete daily routine for harmonizing all of the body's energy. To get started, pick one of the flows that feels right for you, and do it on a daily basis. Then try a different one. Over time, you'll come to know them all and form the habit of doing them regularly. Start by working on the side of the body that has more pain or more muscular tension. When the muscles are tight, it's harder for the energy to flow. So we help this side of the body first.

This first of the three "janitors" helps Spleen function energy, in particular. The Spleen function governs the assimilation of nutrients from our food, which means it is the source of energy for our muscles. Fatigue is a symptom of deficient Spleen function energy. It also governs the movement of fluids in the body (swelling or bloating are symptoms of imbalance) and keeps the blood in the vessels (bruising easily, varicose veins, and hemorrhoids are symptoms of imbalance).



Step 1

For the right side of the body:

1. Place the left hand on the base of the spine and the right hand on the inside of the right ankle. Hold.
2. Move the right hand to the base of the rib cage on the left (under the ribs, in line with the center of the breast). Hold.



Step 2



Step 3

3. Leave the right hand on the ribs, and move the left hand to the area above the right breast (four fingers down from the center of the collar bone). Hold.

4. Move the left hand to the area just below the center of the left collar bone. Hold.



Step 4

For the left side of the body:

1. Place the right hand on base of spine and the left hand on the inside of the left ankle. Hold.
2. Move the left hand to the base of the rib cage on the right (under the ribs, in line with the center of the breast). Hold.
3. Leave the left hand on the ribs, and move the right hand to the area above the left breast (four fingers down from the center of the collar bone). Hold.
4. Move the right hand to the area just below the center of the right collar bone. Hold.

(11) Harmonizing Energy that Flows Down the Front of the Body

This flow helps Stomach function energy, in particular. The direction of Stomach energy is downwards. When Stomach energy flows in the wrong direction we have symptoms such as acid reflux, nausea, vomiting, and belching. Harmonizing Stomach function energy helps us feel grounded and centered. Stomach and Spleen energies are closely associated in Chinese medicine, so helping one will help the other.



Step 1

For the right side of the body:

1. Place the left hand on the right cheekbone and the right hand on the area just below the center of the right collar bone. Hold. The left hand stays on the cheekbone for the entire flow. Only the right hand moves.
2. Move the right hand to the base of rib the cage on the left (under the ribs, in line with the center of the breast). Hold.



Step 2



Step 3

3. Move the right hand to the left side of the small of the back, just under the ribs, near the spine. Hold.

4. Move the right hand to the base of the rib cage on the right (under the ribs, in line with the center of the breast). Hold.



Step 4

5. Move the right hand to the left inner thigh (halfway between the knee and the groin). Hold.

6. Move the right hand to the outside of the middle of the left shin bone (halfway between the knee and the ankle, about one thumb's width to the left of the shin bone). Hold.



Step 5



Step 6

7. Move the right hand to the left middle toe. Hold.



Step 7

For the left side of the body:

1. Place the right hand on the left cheekbone and the left hand on the area just below the center of the left collar bone. Hold. The right hand stays on the cheekbone for the entire flow. Only the left hand moves.

2. Move the left hand to the base of rib the cage on the right (under the ribs, in line with the center of the breast). Hold.

3. Move the left hand to the right side of the small of the back, just under the ribs, near the spine. Hold.

4. Move the left hand to the base of the rib cage on the left (under the ribs, in line with the center of the breast). Hold.

5. Move the left hand to the right inner thigh (halfway between the knee and the groin). Hold.

6. Move the left hand to the outside of the middle of the right shin bone (halfway between the knee and the ankle, about one thumb's width to the right of the shin bone). Hold.

7. Move the left hand to the right middle toe. Hold.

(12) Harmonizing Energy that Flows Down the Back of the Body

The energy channels on the back of the body all flow in a downwards direction. (Stomach energy is the only channel on the front of the body that flows downwards.) This flow is specifically for Bladder function energy, which means it helps the body's elimination process, helps headaches by moving energy from the head to the feet, clears stress from the back, and helps with muscle and leg discomforts.



Step 1

For the right side of the body:

1. Place the left hand on the right side of the neck (your hand can go behind your neck) and the right hand on the coccyx (tailbone). Hold. The left hand stays on the neck for the entire flow. Only the right hand moves.

2. Move the right hand to center of the back of the right knee (the center of the knee crease). Hold.



Step 2



Step 3

3. Move the right hand to the area just below the outside of the right ankle. Hold.

4. Move the right hand to the right little toe. Hold.



Step 4

For the left side of the body:

1. Place the right hand on the left side of the neck (your hand can go behind your neck) and the left hand on the coccyx (tailbone). Hold. The right hand stays on the neck for the entire flow. Only the left hand moves.

2. Move the left hand to center of the back of the left knee (the center of the knee crease). Hold.

3. Move the left hand to the area just below the outside of the left ankle. Hold.

4. Move the left hand to the left little toe. Hold.

The Body Clock: Acupressure for Daylight Savings Time and Jet Lag

Body clock and horary points:

- 3 - 5 AM Lung - LU 8 (one thumb width above inner wrist on thumb side)
- 5 - 7 AM Large Intestine - LI 4 (base of nail on thumb side of index finger)
- 7 - 9 AM Stomach - ST 36 (four fingers below knee, one thumb width out from crest of shin bone)
- 9 - 11 AM Spleen - SP 3 (foot side of big toe joint, on the edge of the foot)
- 11 - 1 PM Heart - H 8 (on crease of palm below little finger)
- 1 - 3 PM Small Intestine - SI 5 (depression on edge of wrist on little finger side)
- 3 - 5 PM Bladder - BL 66 (toe side of little toe joint, on edge of foot)
- 5 - 7 PM Kidney - K 10 (tendons at the crease on the inside of knee)
- 7 - 9 PM Pericardium - P 8 (center of palm)
- 9 - 11 PM Triple Warmer - TW 6 (4 fingers above outer wrist at center)
- 11 - 1 AM Gall Bladder - GB 41 (move up the foot to where the bones of the fourth and fifth toes meet, wiggle the toes to find tendon; jump over tendon towards little toe side)
- 1 - 3 AM Liver - LIV 1 (base of nail on big toe, little toe side of nail)

For daylight savings time, hold the horary point for the new time setting every two hours.

For jet lag: When you board the plane, set your watch to the time of your destination. Hold the horary point of the time at your destination every two hours. It's as if you pretend you're already there. You can hold for five minutes every hour or for 2 to 3 minutes every two hours, depending on how serious a problem jet lag is for you.

RESOURCES

See www.BalanceFlow.com for direct links to Amazon.com, where you can find detailed information on the following books and videos. Click on Acupressure Self-Help for Stress on the home page. This will also take you to additional self-help practices.

- **The Healer Within, Using Traditional Chinese Techniques to Release Your Body's Own Medicine** by Roger Jahnke
- **Qigong for Beginners, Eight Easy Movements for Vibrant Health** by Stanley D. Wilson
- **The Touch of Healing, Energizing Body, Mind, and Spirit with the Art of Jin Shin Jyutsu** by Alice Burmeister
- **Acupressure's Potent Points, A guide to Self-Care for Common Ailments** by Michael Reed Gach
- **The Trigger Point Therapy Workbook, Your Self-Treatment Guide for Pain Relief** by Clair Davies
- **Relax with Self-Therap/Ease, A Simple Illustrated Course** by Bonnie Pendleton and Betty Mehling
- **Medical Qigong for Treating Breast Disease** (video) by Jerry Alan Johnson