

ACUPRESSURE SELF-HELP TO RELIEVE TENSION, PAIN AND STIFFNESS IN THE SHOULDERS

(1) Shiatsu Stretch for Shoulder Stiffness



Step 1

1. Use three fingers to press the base of the left neck, where the shoulder joins the neck. You can use strong pressure. The direction of pressure is towards the center of the body at the level of the diaphragm (bottom of the ribs). Hold for five seconds. Repeat two more times, then do the same sequence on the right side.

2. Lean your head gently to the right. With your hands behind your back, grasp your left wrist with your right hand and pull your arm down. Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat two more times, then do the same sequence on the other side. This can be done standing or sitting.



Step 2



Step 3

3. Let both arms relax downwards, with the arms slightly away from the body. Keeping the arms in this position, pull both arms downwards. Hold for 10 seconds. Keeping your arms in the same position, raise both shoulders as high as possible. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat this sequence two more times.



Step 3

(2) Using a Tool to Reach Points on the Back

Various tools are available that allow you to apply pressure to hard to reach areas of the back. One of these tools is the Thera Cane®.

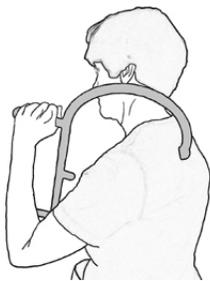


Figure 1 (back view)

To apply pressure to points on the upper back, place the curved end of the Thera Cane over your shoulder and position the ball at the end of the curve on a sore muscle. To apply pressure, raise the bottom of the Thera Cane away from your body (in Figure 2, you would push the right hand away from the body).



Figure 2 (front view)

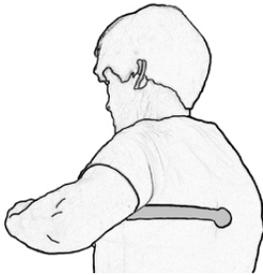


Figure 3 (back view)

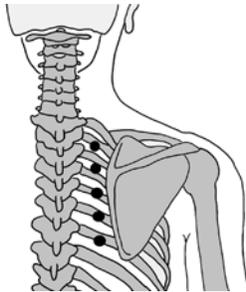
For areas of the mid-back, place the curved end of the Thera Cane under one arm. Position the ball at the end of the curve on your back. To apply pressure, push the other end of the tool away from your body (in Figure 4, you would push the right hand away from the body).

Apply pressure only to muscles, never to bone. The amount of pressure should be between pleasurable and painful. Increase pressure gradually.



Figure 4 (front view)

(3) Shiatsu Stretch for Stiffness between the Shoulders



Five points along the spine

1. Use a Thera Cane or other tool, if you have one, to press five points between the top and bottom of the shoulder blade, halfway between the spine and the shoulder blade. Hold each point for three seconds. Repeat two more times on one side, then press the same points on the other side.



Step 1 Figure 1



Step 1 Figure 2 (front view)

If you don't have a curved tool for reaching the back, you can press the top two points by reaching over your shoulder from the top (Step 1 Figure 1). You can reach the bottom three points by crossing your arms and reaching under your arm to the inside of the shoulder blade (Step 1 Figure 2). You can also place a tennis ball in a sock and position the ball between your back and a wall.

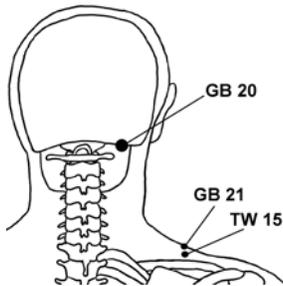


Step 1 Figure 2 (back view)

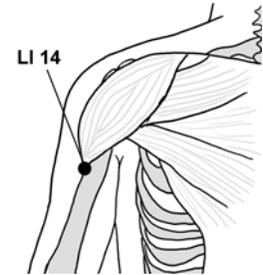
(4) Massaging the tops of the shoulders

		<p>With your fingers or a tool for reaching the back (such as a Thera Cane®), press three lines along the top of each shoulder. The first line is directly on top of the shoulder. The third line is just above the shoulder blade. The second line is between these two. If you use your hands, you can press further out to the edge of the shoulder between the bones. Do the three lines on each shoulder twice.</p>	
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(5) Acupressure Point Sequence for Shoulder Tension



Here are the points you will use for this sequence. The location of each point is described in the following steps. Note the location of LI 14 where the deltoid muscle attaches to the bone of the upper arm.



1. Start by relaxing the tops of the shoulders. You can grasp with your fingers, hold with a Thera Cane, or simply tap the tops of the shoulders with your fists.

2. Hold TW 15 on both sides of the upper back, right hand on right shoulder, left hand on left shoulder. To locate TW 15, measure three fingers out from the base of the neck and come down halfway to the top of the shoulder blade. Hold for one minute



Step 2

3. Place your right hand on top of the left shoulder at GB 21 (three fingers out from the neck). Place your left hand on your right upper arm at LI 14. This point is at the bottom of deltoid muscle (see anatomical drawing above). You may feel a slight indentation at this point. Hold until you feel a pulse at LI 14 or for at least one minute.



Step 3

4. Switch arms so that the left hand is at GB 21 on top of the right shoulder and the right hand holds LI 14 on the left upper arm.

5. Use your thumbs to hold the two hollows at the base of the outer skull (GB 20). Hold until you feel a pulse at this point or for at least one minute.

6. Repeat step 1, relaxing the tops of the shoulders with your hands, fists, or a tool such as the Thera Cane.



Step 5

(6) Acupressure Flow for Shoulder Tensions

1. For the right side of body, place the left hand on the back of the right shoulder (near the neck).

2. With the right thumb, press each right fingernail (one at a time) for one minute.

3. For the left side of body, follow steps 1 and 2 with the sides reversed (substituting right for left and left for right).

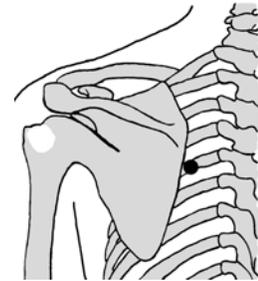
This flow also revives energy.



Steps 1 & 2

(7) Acupressure Flow for Upper and Middle Back Tensions

11. For the left side of body, place a knotted towel (or rubber ball) between the spine and shoulder blade at the mid-shoulder blade level of the left shoulder.



Step 1



Steps 2 & 3

2. Place your right fist under your left waist .

3. Keeping your right hand at the waist, place your left hand on the middle of the right inner thigh. Hold both hands on the body for a few minutes or until you feel a pulse.

4. Keeping your right hand at the waist, place your left hand on the outside of the right upper calf (feel for the bony knob at the top of the fibula, the bone of the outer foreleg). Hold both hands on the body for a few minutes or until you feel a pulse.

5. For the right side of body, follow steps 1 through 4 with the sides reversed (substituting right for left and left for right).



Step 4

Everyday Practices to Address Underlying Conditions

Remember to:

- 1) Start your day with the three basic energy flows
- 2) Warm up before practicing acupressure by brushing energy through the body
- 3) Hold the fingers throughout the day
- 4) End your day by using the daily "janitors"

The best way to benefit from acupressure is to pick one or two practices you enjoy and use them every day for one to two weeks. Gradually select additional practices you'd like to add. Identify a time of time when you'll remember to practice acupressure -- when you first get up, just before you go to sleep, while you're watching TV, even while you're reading a newspaper. The benefits of acupressure come with regular, consistent practice.