

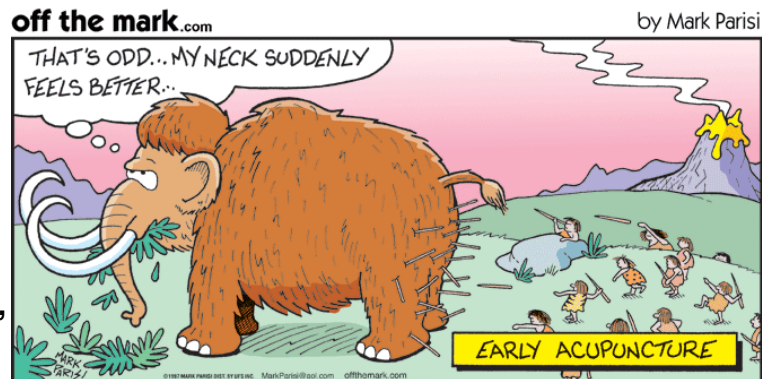
Traditional Chinese Medicine & Heart Health

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Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is a complete system of natural medicine that has evolved continuously from at least 500 BCE to the present. Components of TCM include acupuncture, herbal medicine, dietary therapy, tuina massage, acupressure, cupping, moxibustion, and qi gong (breathing exercises).

TCM continues to grow and modernize today, and is practiced and researched alongside Western ('allopathic') medicine across China. Hospitals and universities there have departments for TCM cardiology, gynecology, pediatrics, oncology, dermatology, internal medicine, orthopedics and traumatology, etc.

Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine herbs are used effectively in these hospitals and around the world for **stroke, hypertension, atherosclerosis, angina, coronary heart disease**, and more. Acupuncture can help lower blood pressure, improve blood circulation, reduce fluid retention, manage diabetes, improve digestive health, promote sleep, reduce stress (balance the nervous system), reduce chronic pain, headache and numbness, or support you to reduce unwanted consumption of alcohol, cigarettes or foods.



TCM's medical theories and concepts (e.g. "yin," "yang," "Qi") are very different from Western/allopathic biomedical language, but efforts around the world are ongoing to bridge the two systems to achieve the best results for patients.

In TCM, the **body, mind, spirit & emotions** have always been seen as interconnected, and are treated **simultaneously**. In particular, the 'Heart' system in TCM is closely connected to mental and emotional balance. Stress, anxiety and sleep are among the many emotional health issues we treat. Sleep and other mental-emotional issues have been linked to hypertension, atherosclerosis, heart failure, heart attacks, stroke, diabetes and obesity.

For free resources, articles, recipes, and FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) about acupuncture and TCM, see: <http://paulinehwang.ca>.

To book a free 20 minute (phone or in person) consultation about how TCM and acupuncture can help you, call Pauline at 416-890-7770 or email info@paulinehwang.ca.

Qi gong posture and alignment

Qi Gong (a.k.a. Chi Kung) exercises use breathing, postures and deliberate movements to gather and cultivate healing energy in the body, strengthen the body, and focus the mind. Having proper form while doing these exercises is important. Your circulation will gradually improve as you do Qi Gong, and you want to make sure you're not putting undue strain on your heart.

NOTE: If you can't stand, just adapt the instructions below to sitting on a chair!

Qi Gong standing

1. Stand with feet parallel, shoulder-width apart
2. Loosen knees and waist **slightly** as if about to sit on an invisible chair
3. Lift top of head and slightly push out lower back to elongate spine
4. Tuck chin and let shoulders relax slightly rounded (don't push chest outward)
5. Shift weight forward **slightly** until weight is over centre of feet.
6. Concentrate strength on front of thighs and spine. Relax the rest and let body weight sink. Let your tailbone relax toward the ground as if a weight is hanging from it.
7. Create space between your arms and body as if you have eggs underneath your armpits and don't want to break them. Envision yourself as a pine tree, with supple branches hanging downward, and roots deep in the ground.
8. (optional) Raise arms as if hugging a tree (keep shoulders relaxed). Keeping your arms out in front of you can help energy to circulate in the heart area more easily.
9. Let thoughts go, focus attention on breathing in and out of your 'dantian' (2 inches below the navel, between the front and back of your body). This focus improves the "yin" and "yang" energy foundation of your body, and strengthens your Chinese medicine "Kidney-adrenal" system, which is important to support Heart health!



Picture credit: http://www.luohan.com/html_uk/ukqg_zhan.html

Notes: If your legs shake, take a break. You can gradually do this for longer. This exercise has many many health benefits.

Basic movement exercises

Warm up

- Inhale and exhale deeply 3 times
- Gentle roll neck from one side, down to the chest, to the other side (not backward, please!)
- Gently roll shoulders forward and backward
- Keep breathing!
- Circle hips gently, both directions
- Circle knees gently (with hands on knees), both directions
- Shake out arms and legs
- Tap down arms, and sides of legs

Especially for heart health

Assume the Qi Gong standing posture. Continue to breath into your lower belly.

1. Chest opener

- Inhale, place arms straight out in front of you, palms down
- Then exhale, open both arms while turning palms up toward ceiling
- Repeat 1 minute while breathing

2. Arm swing

- Rock your weight slightly onto the balls and then heels of your feet
- Swing your arms up as you rock forward, and back as you rock back
- Repeat 2 minutes

3. Tuck yourself in

- Reach straight out in front of you, palms facing out in front of you
- Grab an imaginary blanket and pull it up over your chest (opening or 'puffing up' your chest slightly as you pull it up)
- Repeat 1 minute

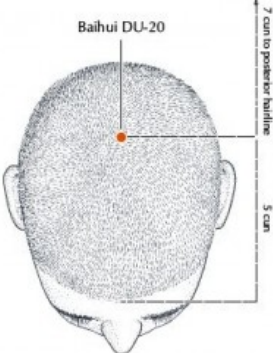
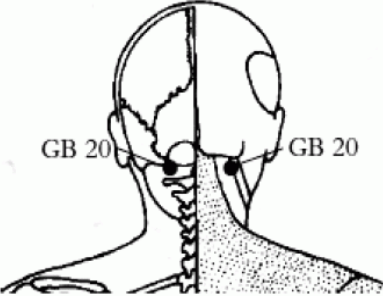
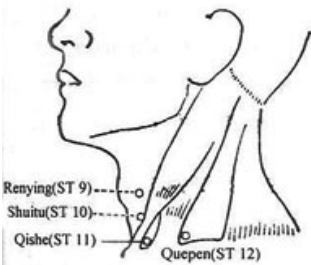
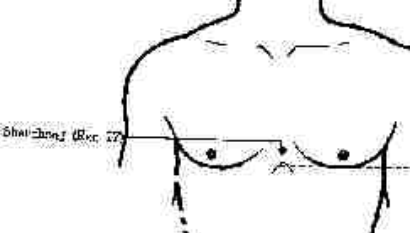
4. Deep belly breathing

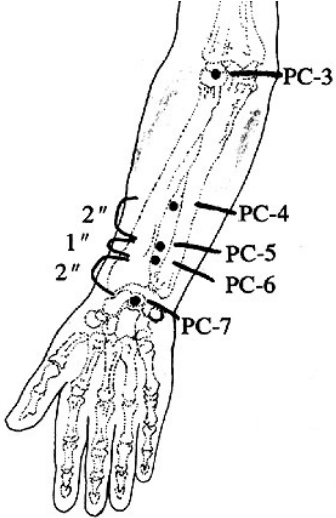
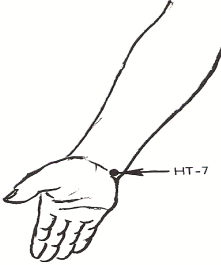
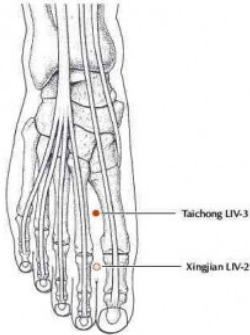
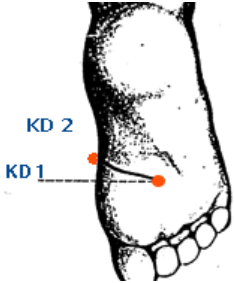
- Standing or sitting in Qi Gong posture, set a timer for 2 minutes
- Exhale completely, pushing the air out of all the parts of your lungs
- Relax and let your entire belly and chest expand with the in-breath
- Exhale completely again, and repeat

Self-Acupressure for Heart Health

These are some of the points that might be used for hypertension, angina, shortness of breath, and sleep / mood issues. It's best to use these points regularly and preventatively, e.g. 10-15 minutes daily.

First shake out and relax your body. Get into a comfortable position. Then, gently press and hold these points, while breathing deeply, 3-5 minutes each point. In total, aim for 15+ minutes per day.

 <p>Baihui DU-20</p> <p>2 cun to posterior hairline</p> <p>3 cun</p>	<p>DU-20 'BAI HUI' ("A hundred meeting points"): The soft spot right at the top of the head (fontanelle area). This acupuncture point is wonderful for regulating the vertical flow of energy between the head and the body. It can thus help with dizziness, headache (some types), high blood pressure and stroke risk, 'heavy' or 'foggy' head, insomnia, stress, etc. Some people feel very peaceful and calm after acupuncture or acupressure on this point.</p>
 <p>GB 20</p> <p>GB 20</p>	<p>GALLBLADDER-20 'FENG CHI' ("Wind Pool"): At the base of the skull, in the depression midway out toward the ears. This acupuncture point is included in treatment protocols for a wide variety of issues including headache, high blood pressure, shoulder and neck tension, eye issues, stress, dizziness, insomnia, twitching, tremors, vertigo, early stage of colds/flu, etc.</p>
 <p>Renying (ST 9)</p> <p>Shuitu (ST 10)</p> <p>Qishe (ST 11)</p> <p>Quepen (ST 12)</p>	<p>STOMACH-9 'REN YING' ("Person's Welcome"): At the level of the Adam's apple, on the front edge of the sternocleidomastoid muscle. An effective point to reduce hypertension and chest fullness with difficulty breathing. Can also help with headache, dizziness, redness of the face, vomiting, wheezing and even acute back sprain.</p>
 <p>Shan-zhong (Ren 17)</p>	<p>REN-17 'SHAN ZHONG' ("Chest centre"): Four finger-widths up from where the bottom of your breastbone meets your ribcage. Breathe into your heart. Good for chest pain and tightness, angina, shortness of breath, anxiety, panic, depression, sadness, cough and tiredness.</p>

	<p>PERICARDIUM-6 'NEI GUAN' ("Inner Gate"): Middle of the inside forearm, three finger-widths from the wrist crease. Widely-used point for many functions – opening the chest, racing heart, anxiety, insomnia, nausea/ vomiting, motion sickness, moving stagnant Qi, emotional balance, and relationship to one's self.</p> <p>PERICARDIUM-5 and PERICARDIUM-4 (further up the forearm) also help with angina and chest pain. PC-5 is particularly good for "Phlegm" – rattling or stuffy chest, more discomfort on rainy days, and sputum (mucus). PC-4 is particularly good for sharp, stabbing pain.</p>
	<p>HEART-7 'SHEN MEN' ("Spirit Gate"): A great point for palpitations, cardiac pain, irritability, insomnia, disturbed sleep, sleep-talking, racing mind, epilepsy, disorientation, anxiety and aphasia (HT-5 is good for speech difficulties as well). The most important acupuncture point to calm the mind and the spirit.</p>
	<p>LIVER-3 'TAI CHONG' ("Great Rushing"): One of the most important points on the body to regulate Qi (energy) and blood circulation. Also treats many types of hypertension, tension, headaches behind the eyes or at the top of the head, shortness of breath, epilepsy, dizziness, numbness, digestive issues, insomnia, menstrual problems, genito-urinary difficulties, and pain (e.g. back pain). Compare with LIVER-2 and press the one that is more sore.</p>
	<p>KIDNEY-1 'YONG QUAN' ("Gushing Spring"): On the sole of the foot, where there's an indent when you point your toes (1/3 of the way to the heel). Massage with your hands, or step on a tennis ball to stimulate. Excellent for reducing panic and anxiety, headache, nausea, hypertension, insomnia, bringing energy 'down', depleted Original Qi, chronic sore throat, low back pain. Can use during anxiety or panic attack. Can focus on this point during Qi Gong exercises.</p>

NOTE: This is a general list. It is more effective to receive a *personalized TCM diagnosis* so that your point selection (which will likely include more/different points than this) will be more customized – each individual's balance is different. For a free 20 minute consultation about how TCM can apply to your own health, call 416-890-7770 or email info@paulinehwang.ca.