

# Acupressure

# First



 **Introduction**

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All medicine originated from what people learned from their bodies first hand. Before there were pharmaceuticals, there were plants and elixirs. Before there was physical therapy or the acupuncture needle, there were hands. We're still pretty much in the same body as our distant ancestors. It is giving us the same messages that guided them to use those innate resources to heal everyday discomforts. This booklet outlines a simple, non-invasive method for easing those discomforts, based on the idea that our bodies function, like anything else with moving parts – on a supply of energy (Qi) whose delivery depends on adequate supplies and unobstructed pathways. Where the Qi doesn't flow, there is dysfunction and resulting discomfort. The discomfort tells us where to hold.

This material is meant to be used to assist self, family and friends to address everyday aches, pains, simple tension and discomfort before resorting to the use of self-prescribed, over-the-counter pain preparations; thus “*Acupressure First.*”

***Disclaimer:*** Acupressure is *not* intended for the diagnosis, treatment or cure of disease. It can *support* healing by reducing muscular tension, increasing relaxation and restoring the normal circulation of Qi and Blood. It does *not* replace Western medical treatment by qualified healthcare practitioners. Please see a physician for any persistent discomfort or symptom, no matter how minor.

# Acupressure First

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## Energy (Qi)

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Anatomy is structure. Function is movement. A bicycle is a structure. There is no function unless the parts move. The pedals move to make the wheels turn, the handlebars swivel. Movement requires energy. For the bicycle, the energy is usually provided by a human body, whose parts move to make the bike's parts move and whose movement requires energy. All the functions of the body - movement, digestion, blood circulation, tissue repair and maintenance, organ function, etc. – are movements that require energy.



Energy is produced by the body from food and air. This process happens inside the mitochondria of each cell and is used there. Extra energy also travels outside the cell through its own system of pathways, much like the blood travels through its own vessels and nerve impulses travel along nerves.

When the energy produced is sufficient to move all the parts that need moving and the pathways that deliver it are open and functioning, things work well. But if there isn't sufficient flow of energy, there is local dis-

function, which can lead to more general dysfunction and ultimately to the death of cells, tissues, organs and, ultimately, of the human being.

The human body is exquisitely sensitive to the adjustments that need to be made to keep the flow going. But if an imbalance persists, it will call on the consciousness to lend a hand. The way it gets attention is through sensation, usually discomfort or pain. There is a saying from Chinese medicine: “*Where there is no flow, there is pain. Where there is flow, there is no pain.*”

Pain and discomfort are information

The senses – sight, touch, taste, hearing and smell - provide us with information mostly about the outside. Pain is information from the inside that brings our attention where it is needed. Our natural impulse is to touch the place that is affected, which also sparks a small current of energy in that place to boost the flow.

Acupressure is informed touch that also engages the pathways through which the energy can flow.

The simplest form of acupressure is to touch what hurts: the local point. As you touch it or near it, imagine breathing into it. This will also direct attention and movement to the area.

Acupressure assists the flow, first by bringing attention to the *local* area by touching the *local point*, and then reminds the body of flow by touching another point above or below, in front or in back, to the left or right of the local point. When a point is used this way it is called a distal point. When the distal point is on one of the pathways that carry energy through the local point, the effect is greater.

***Where there is no flow, there is pain. Where there is flow, there is no pain.***



## **How to Use This Booklet: The Method**

Touch where there is discomfort or tension and hold that area (local point). Find the closest point in the list on pages 7-10 hold it with the point(s) suggested (distal point). A distal will usually be along a connected pathway, which reminds the body of the flow. Fingers and toes can be good general distal points. Try specific point combinations until you find one that works.

There is no “right” amount of pressure. It varies from person to person and from one time to the next on the same person. Approach the point slowly and respectfully, listening for any reaction, ready to ease up or go deeper depending on what feels productive to the receiver. Imagine breathing in and out through the local point. Hold for 1 to 2 minutes or until you feel a change. If the area is too painful to touch, go above or below it or touch the same area on the other side of the body. The meridians are the same on both sides. The body remembers, so touching one side will affect the other.

### **CAUTIONS:**

- **An asterisk (\*) indicates that this point should *not* be used on pregnant women, especially in the first trimester.**
- **Do NOT press on open sores or varicose veins.**
- **Do NOT work on someone with a contagious illness.**
- **DO see a licensed health care practitioner if discomfort or symptoms persist, no matter how minor.**

## **Point Combinations for Common Problems**

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### **Anxiety, Agitation, Panic Attacks (hold points on one side at a time):**

Little Finger Side of Wrist (H 7, 8, 9)

Front of Lower Arm (P6)

Palm Point (P8)

### **Back Pain/Tension**

Pain Point (use tennis balls under the back and lie on a soft surface)  
with Behind Knee (Bl 40) and/or Outer Ankle Bone (Bl 62)

Outer Ankle (Bl 60)

with Inner Ankle (K3) (As though pinching the Achilles tendon)

### **Breathing Difficulties**

Lung Point (Lu 1)

with base of thumbnail

### **Calf Tension/Pain/Charley Horse**

Back of Calf (Bl 57) (As you flex the ankle)

### **Constipation**

Outside Navel (St 25)

with Back of Hand (LI 4\*)

Hip Bone Corner (Bl 25)

with Back of Hand (LI 4\*)

### **Eyes/Vision:** (Hold each point on left and right simultaneously, then hold the next point.)

Corner of Eye (Bl 1), Inside End of Eyebrow (Bl 2), Outer End of Eyebrow (TW 23), Outside Corner of Eye (GB 1), Under Eye (St 1)

### **Headache (stress- and tension-related):**

Base of Skull (GB 20)

with Forehead (GB 14)

High Neck (Bl 10)  
with Corner of Eye (Bl 1)

Jaw point (St 6)  
with Under Collarbone (St 13)

**Heart Emergency (*As you call 911 for Emergency Service!!*)**

Little Finger (H 9)

**Heartburn (Acid Reflux):**

Edge of Rib Cage - Stomach (St 19) – both left and right or  
Edge of Rib Cage – (St 19)  
with Outer Calf Muscle (St 36\*)

**Hiccups:**

Top of Breastbone (CV22)  
Press toward toes, NOT TOWARD THROAT

**Hip Pain/Tension:**

Hip Joint 1 (GB 29) and/or Hip Joint 2 (GB 30)  
With Outside Knee (GB 34), Toes (4<sup>th</sup>)

**Indigestion:** (See also Heartburn)

Edge of Rib Cage – Liver (Lv 14)  
With Front of Lower Arm (P6)

**Insomnia:**

Outer Anklebone (Bl 62)  
with Inner Anklebone (K 6)  
Back Tension Point (Feel for the tense or sore place)  
with Behind Knee (Bl 40), Outer Anklebone (Bl 62), Inner Anklebone (K6)

**Jaw Pain/Tension:**

Jaw point (St 6)  
with Under Collarbone (St 13), Back of Hand (LI4\*)

**Knee Pain/Swelling:**

Pain Point

with Inner Anklebone (K 6) and/or Outer Anklebone (Bl 62)

Below Inner Knee (Sp 9)

with Big Toe

**Menstrual Cramps:**

Above Inside Ankle Bone (Sp 6\*) (Do not use if there is excessive bleeding.)

**Muscle Cramps and Spasms:**

Local area

with Top of Foot (Lv 3)

**Muscle Fatigue:**

Local Area

with Outer Calf Muscle (St 36\*)

**Muscle Tension:**

Local Area

with Outside Knee (GB 34)

**Nasal Congestion/Runny Nose**

See Sinuses

**Nausea:**

Back of Lower Arm (TW 5)

with Front of Lower Arm (P6)

See special point for Nausea with Pregnancy

**Neck Pain/Tension:**

Pain Point

with Back of Hand (LI 4\*) and/or Back of Lower Arm (TW 5)

Side of Neck (GB Extra)

with Outside Knee (GB 34)

**Pregnancy:**

**DO NOT USE** LI 4, Sp 6, St 36, or GB 21 until labor has started.

For breech presentation use End of Little Toe (Bl 67)

For nausea, morning sickness use Edge of Rib Cage (Lv 14) and tap breastbone

See other symptoms, e.g. insomnia, constipation, etc.

**Shoulder Pain/Tension:**

Top of Shoulder (GB 21\*)

with Outside Knee (GB 34) and/or Back of Lower Arm (TW 5)

Middle of Shoulder Blade (SI 11)(Use a tennis ball)

**Sinuses:**

Under Cheekbone (St 3)

with Under Collarbone (St 13), Back of Hand (LI 4\*)

Corner of Eye (Bl 1)

with Back of Hand (LI 4\*)

Inner End of Eyebrow (Bl 2)

with Back of Hand (LI 4\*)

**Tendonitis:**

Elbow: Elbow Crease (LI 11)

with Back of Hand (LI 4\*)

Carpal Tunnel: Locate and work on Neck and Shoulder Tension

Pain Point

with Fingertips or Toes

**Toothache:**

Pain point

With Back of Hand (LI 4\*)

**Unconsciousness (*While you call 911 for emergency services!*):**

Sole of Foot (K 1)

## How to Locate Common Points (listed alphabetically)

Acupressure points can be activated in an area about the size of a dime. As you gain experience, you will refine your angle and relation to surrounding landmarks. The true location of a point is where you contact the Qi, no matter what it says on a map. Start just by finding the tenderest or tensest place in the area of concern and follow it in as it releases.

Please notice that the points in this document are given very simple names related to their location for friendlier use by people not familiar with Classical Chinese Medicine. The point numbers in parentheses can be used to find more formal anatomical locations in any CM point location text.

**Note: A “body inch” or “tsun” is a measurement based on the proportions of individual bodies.**

**One body inch is equal to the width of the thumb**  
finger widths

3 body inches are equal to four finger widths

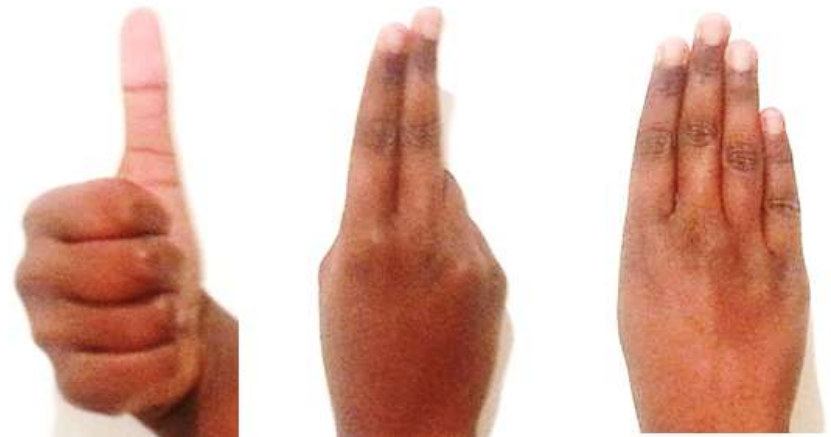
**1 cun**

**1 ½ cun**

**3 cun**

### **CAUTION:**

- (\*) indicates that this point should *not* be used on pregnant women, especially in the first trimester.
- **Do NOT press on open sores or varicose veins.**
- **Do not touch contagious conditions**

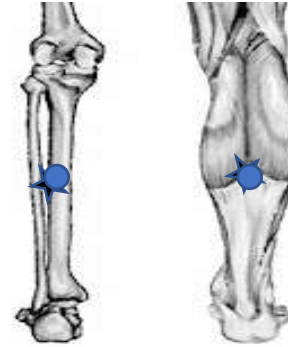


**Above Inside Ankle Bone (Sp 6\*)**

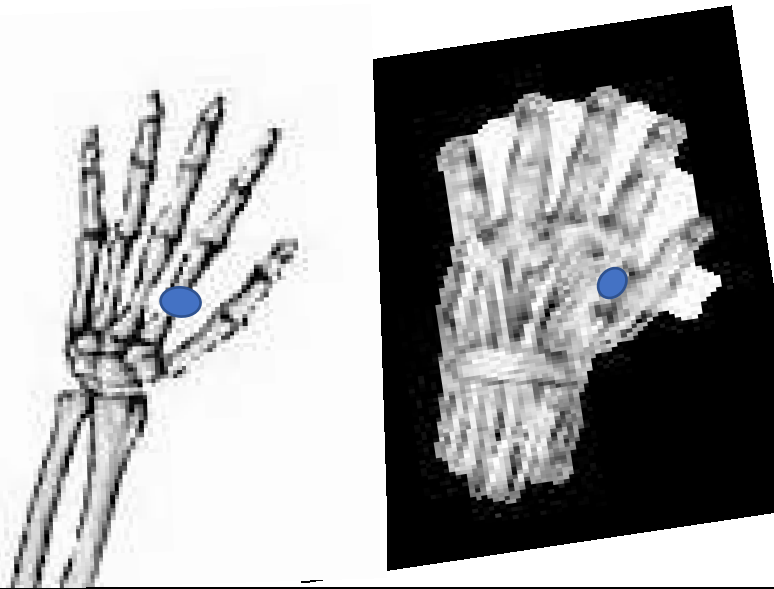
Three body inches above the inner ankle bone

**Back of Calf (BI 57)**

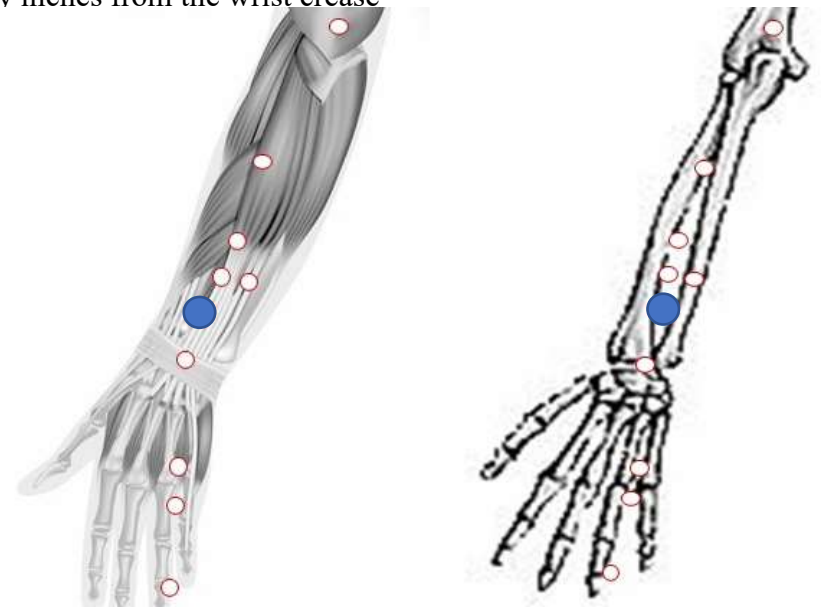
Slide up the Achilles tendon to the space between the two bulges of the calf muscle

**Back of Hand (LI 4\*)**

Holding thumb and index finger together, press at end of crease between them toward finger

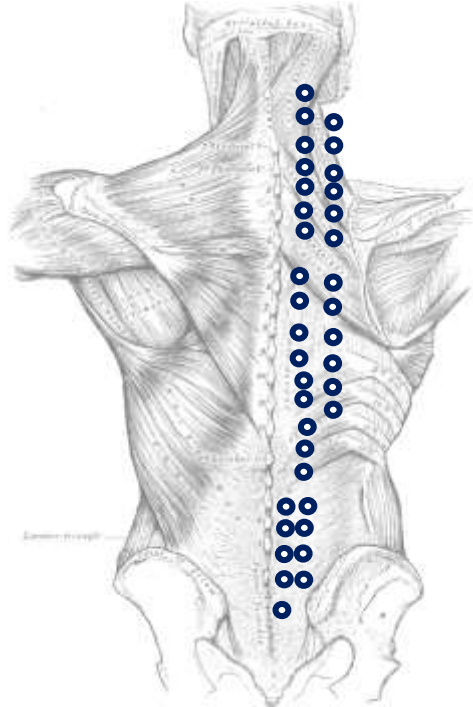
**Back of Lower Arm (TW 5)**

Two body inches from the wrist crease



**Back Tension Point**

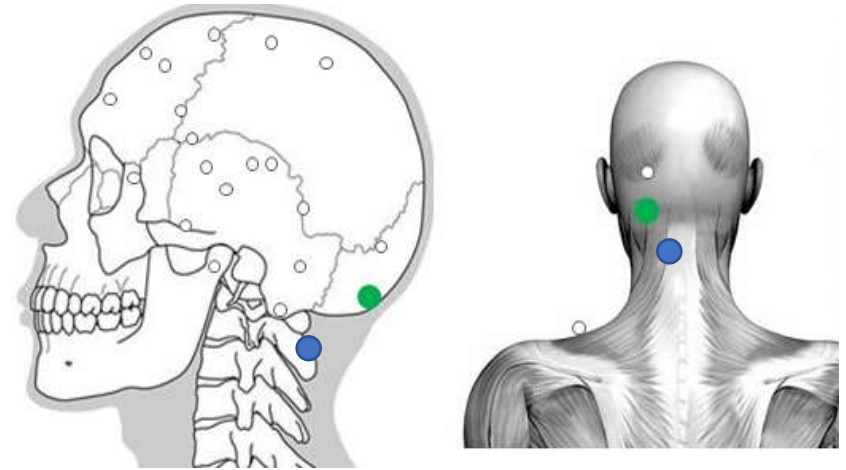
Hold any point where there is tension or soreness

**Base of Skull (GB 20)** ●

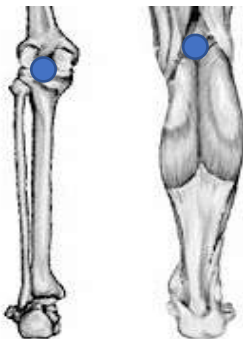
Feel under the base of the skull, just above the hairline, for the tender point

**High Neck (BI 10)** ●

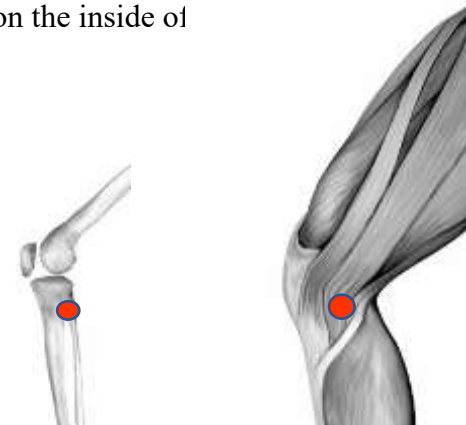
Just down and inside Base of Skull, on the edge of the neck bone

**Behind Knee (BI 40)**

In the middle of the crease behind the knee  
(See Back of Calf)

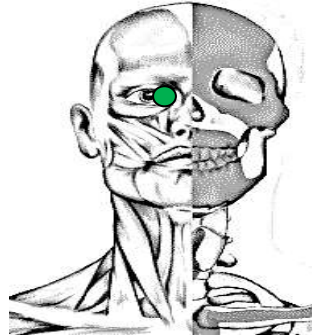
**Below Inner Knee (Sp 9)**

Slide up under the ledge on the inside of



**Corner of Eye (Bl 1)**

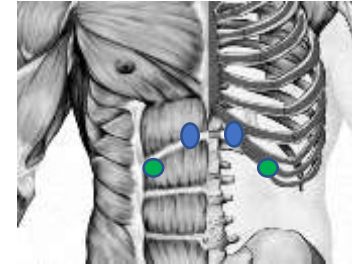
Inner corner of the eye, just inside the tear duct, pressing toward the nose.

**Edge of Rib Cage – Liver (Lv 14)** ●

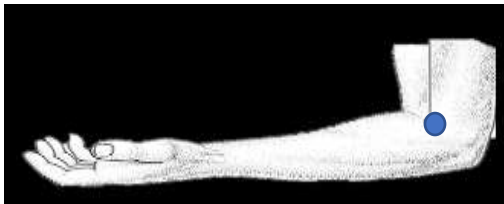
Under the edge of the rib cage in front, just inside nipple line

**Edge of Rib Cage - Stomach (St 19)** ●

Under the edge of the rib cage in front, at the level of the tip of the Xiphoid process

**Elbow Crease (LI 11)**

At the outer end of the crease in the elbow.

**End of Little Toe (Bl 67)**

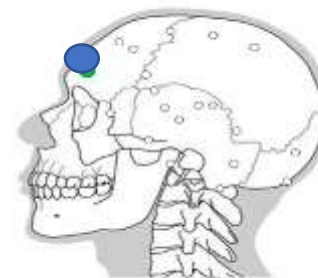
Hold at the outside of the base of the 5th toenail.

**Fingertips or Toes**

Hold either the base of the fingernail or wrap your fingers around the whole digit

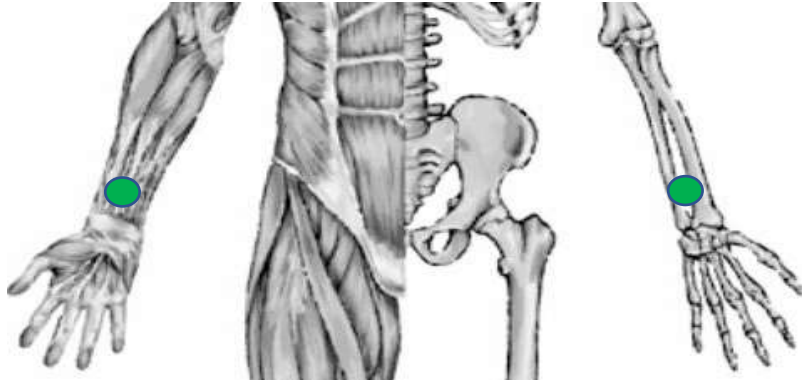
**Forehead (GB 14)**

One body inch above the eyebrow just above the pupil of the eye

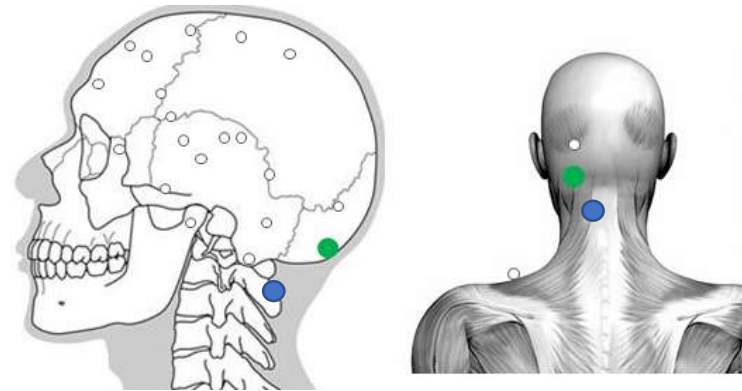


**Front of Lower Arm (P6)**

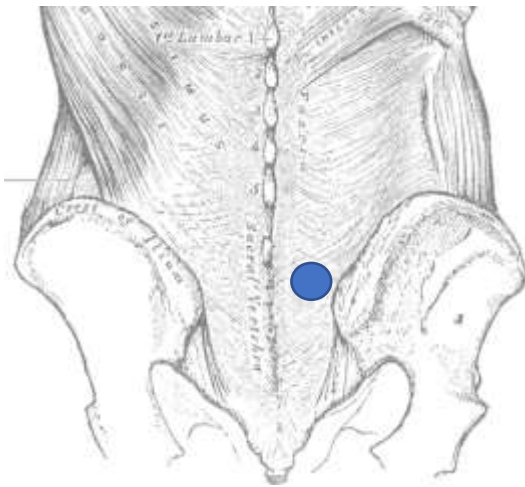
Two body inches from the inner wrist crease

**High Neck (Bl 10)**

Just down and inside Base of Skull, on the edge of the neck bone (See Base of Skull) ●

**Hip Bone Corner (Bl 25)**

At the inner end of the hip bone just before it runs into the spine

**Hip Joint 1 (GB 29) ●**

On the side of the hip in the sore point

**Hip Joint 2 (GB 30) ●**

On the back of the hip in the sore point, a few body inches behind and below Hip Joint 1

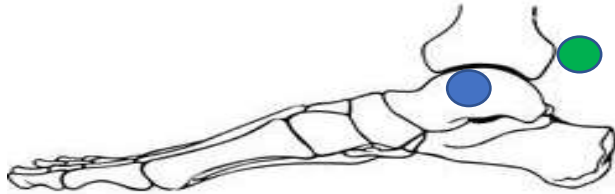
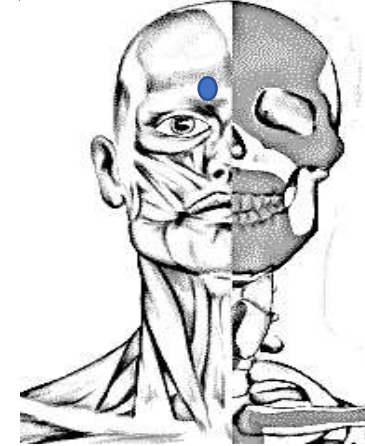


**Inner Ankle (K3) ●**

Behind the inner anklebone, between it and the Achilles tendon

**Inner Anklebone (K 6) ●**

In the hollow just below the inner ankle bone

**Inner End of Eyebrow (****Little Finger (H 9)**

At the base of the little finger nail on the inside. Pinch hard!

**Little Finger Side of Wrist (H 5, 6, 7)**

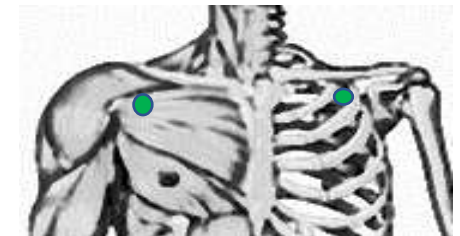
On the inside of the wrist below the little finger, starting at the wrist crease, use three fingers to hold between the bone and the tendon

**Local Area**

Wherever there is discomfort or tension

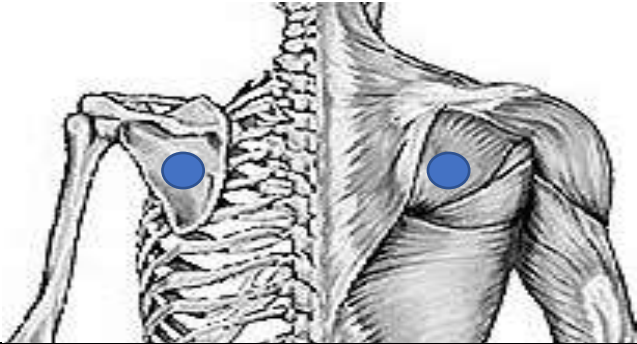
**Lung Point (Lu 1)**

On the edge of the chest, two fingers below the collar bone

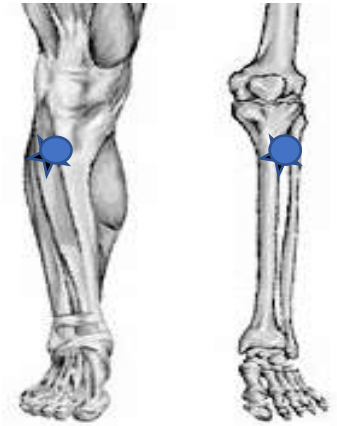


**Middle of Shoulder Blade (SI 11)**

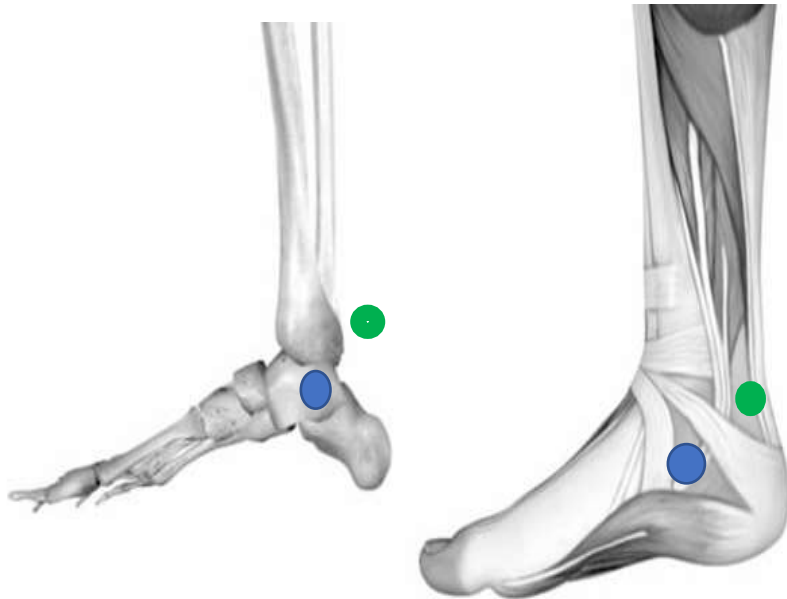
In the middle of the shoulder blade at the sensitive point

**Outer Calf Muscle (St 36\*)**

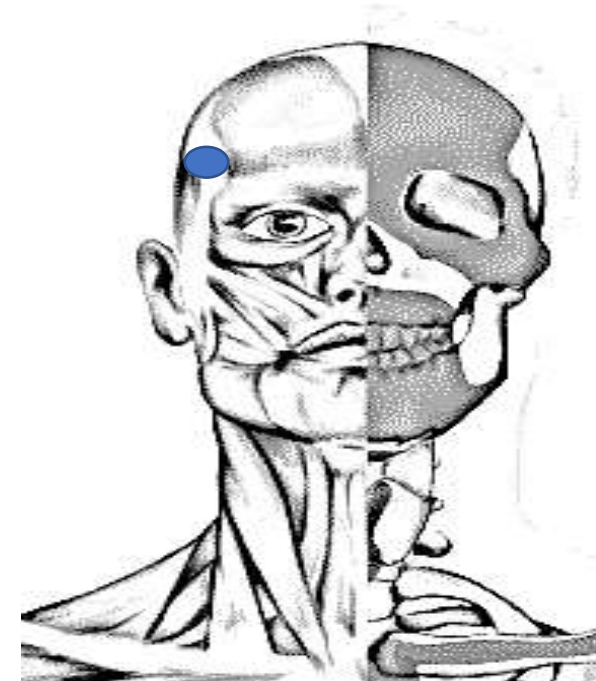
Three body inches along the shin from the bott  
1.5 body inches out into the muscle

**Outer Ankle (BI 60)**

Behind the ankle bone, between the Achilles tendon and the bone

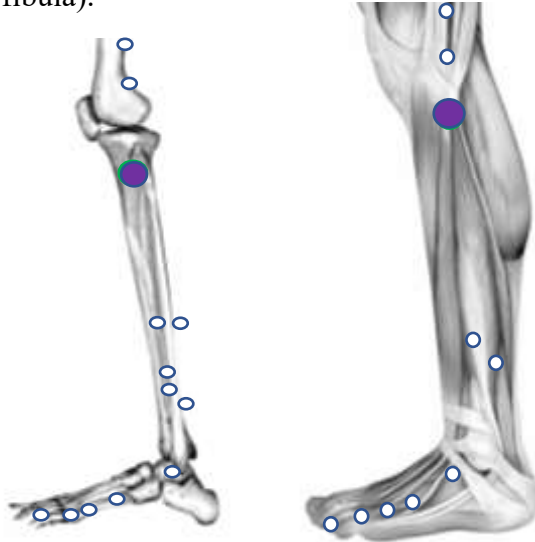
**Outer Ankle Bone (BI 62)****Outer End of Eyebrow (TW 23)**

In the hollow at the end of the eyebrow

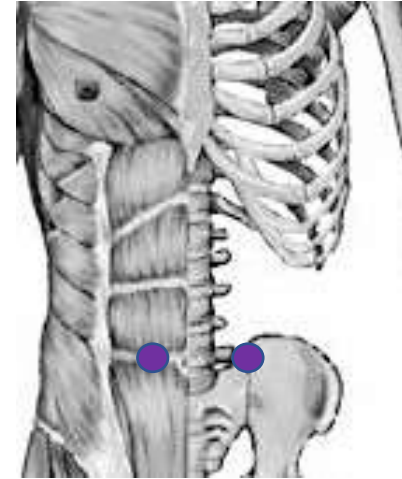


**Outside Knee (GB 34)**

Slide up the outer lower leg until you run into the underside of the bump (head of the fibula).

**Outside Navel (St 25)**

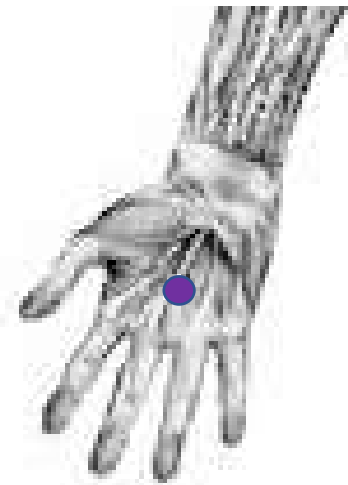
Two body inches outside the navel



**Pain Point**  
Wherever there is pain

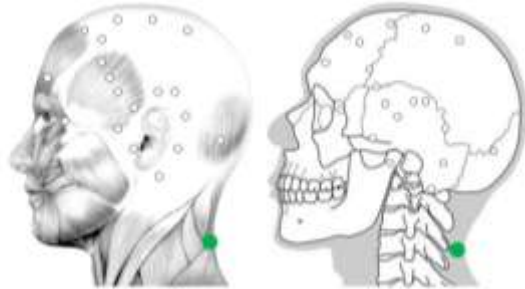
**Palm Point**

Where bent middle finger hits the palm

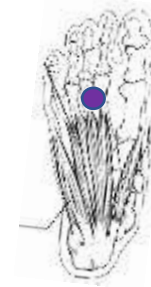


**Side of Neck (GB Extra)**

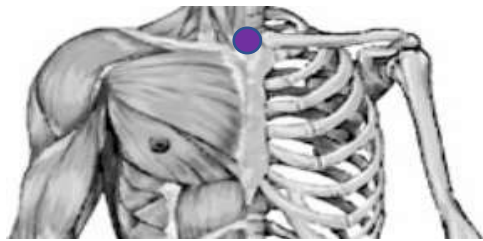
Halfway between the base of the neck and the base of the skull

**Sole of Foot (K 1)**

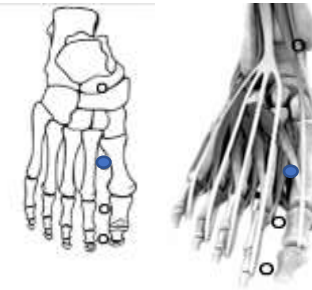
On the crease below the ball of the foot on a line between the 2nd and 3rd toes

**Top of Breastbone (CV22)**

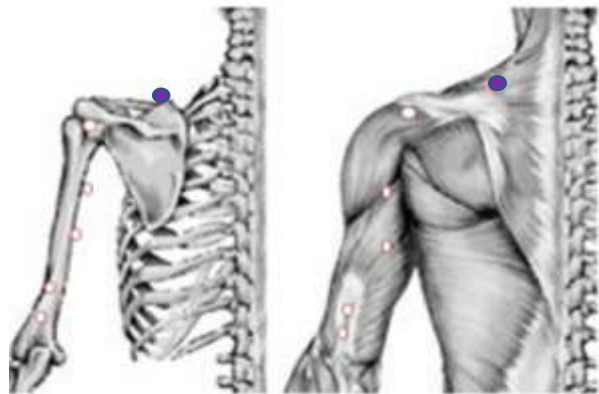
(Press toward the toes, not into the throat)

**Top of Foot (Lv 3)**

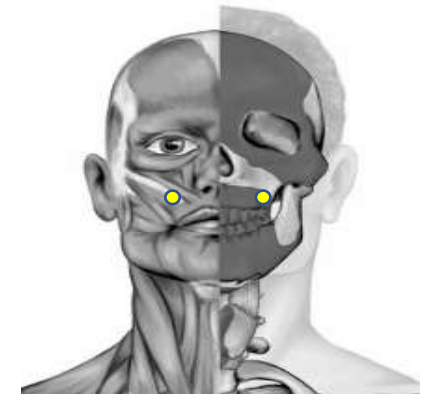
Slide up between the bones of the big toe and second toe to just before they meet

**Top of Shoulder (GB 21\*)**

Grasp the thick part of the top of the shoulder. The point is on the front edge.

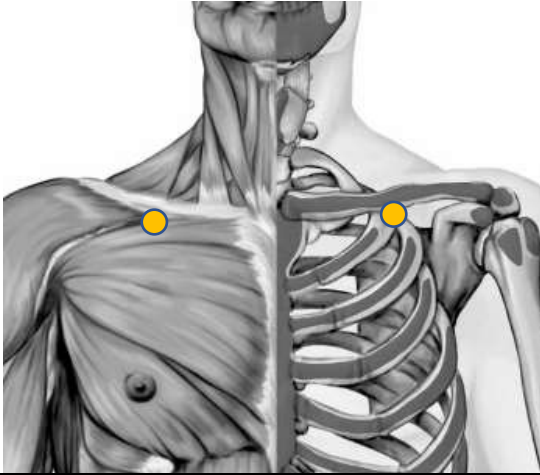
**Under Cheekbone (St 3)**

Under the cheekbone in line with the pupil of the eye



**Under Collarbone (St 13)**

Halfway along the length of the collar bone, just underneath it and on the outside edge of the ribs

**Under Eye (St 1)**

On the edge of the eye socket directly under the pupil of the eye

