



**Historically I have taught classes to patients on a variety of different topics.**

**Here is my class handout from the class “An Introduction to Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine”.**

**If you are interested in understanding how Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine came to be, this would be a great handout for you to explore!**

**Please enjoy it!**

*This is for informational and educational purposes only. Please consult with a physician or other healthcare professional regarding any medical or health related diagnosis or treatment options.*

*Balanced Healing of Jacksonville does not recommend self-management of health issues. Never disregard or delay medical advice based upon information you may have read. Always consult with your physician before starting a new health regimen or diet change.*

# An Introduction to Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine

## History:

- 6000 BC: sharpened stones and bones were used as acupuncture needles, blood drawing, and lancing abscesses
- Documents from 198 BC are the first of its kind to reference meridian systems.
- The very first document that unequivocally described an organized system of diagnosis and treatment which is recognized as Acupuncture is *Huang Di Nei Jing* (Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine) dating from about 100 bc.

### *Huang Di Nei Jing*

- Documented as Q & A format (Questions by the Emperor & Replies from his minister).
  - A compilation of traditions handed down over centuries, presented in terms of the Taoist philosophy.
  - The concepts of meridians, in which the Qi (vital energy or life force), flowed are well established by this time, though the precise anatomical locations of acupuncture points developed later.
- Acupuncture continued to be developed and recorded in texts over the subsequent centuries and gradually became one of the standard therapies used in China, alongside herbs, massage, diet and moxibustion.
- Many different theories of diagnosis and treatment emerged, sometimes even contradictory, possibly as competing schools attempted to establish their exclusiveness and influence.
- Bronze statues from the fifteenth century show the acupuncture points in use today, and were used for teaching and examination purposes.
- During the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644), The Great Compendium of Acupuncture and Moxibustion (CAM) was published, which forms the

basis of modern acupuncture. In it are clear descriptions of the full set of 365 points that represent openings to the channels through which needles could be inserted to modify the flow of Qi energy. It should be noted that knowledge of health and disease in China developed purely from observation of living subjects because dissection was forbidden and the subject of anatomy did not exist.

-Interest in acupuncture among the Chinese declined from the seventeenth century onwards as it came to be regarded as superstitious and irrational. It was excluded from the Imperial Medical Institute by decree of the Emperor in 1822.

-The knowledge and skill were retained, however, either as an interest among academics or in everyday use by rural healers. With China's increasing acceptance of Western medicine at the start of the twentieth century, final ignominy for acupuncture arrived in 1929 when it was outlawed, along with other forms of traditional medicine.

-After the installation of the Communist government in 1949, traditional forms of medicine including acupuncture were reinstated, possibly for nationalistic motives but also as the only practical means of providing even basic levels of health to the massive population. Chairman Mao is quoted as saying, in relation to traditional medicine, 'Let a thousand flowers flourish' although he himself rejected acupuncture treatment when he was ill.

-The divergent strands of acupuncture theory and practice were brought together in a consensus known as traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), which also included herbal medicine.

-Acupuncture research institutes were established in the 1950s throughout China and treatment became available in separate acupuncture departments within Western-style hospitals. Over the same period, a more scientific explanation of acupuncture was sought by Prof.

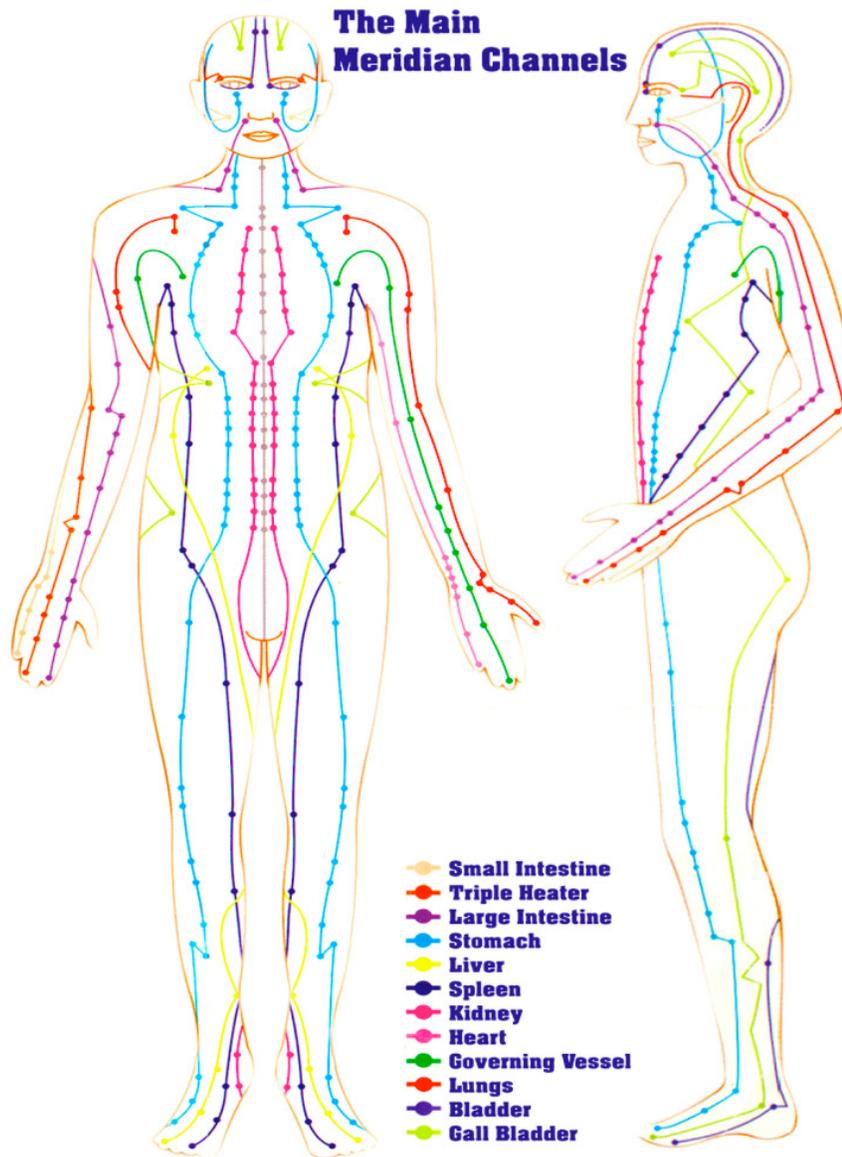
Han in Beijing who undertook ground-breaking research on acupuncture's release of neurotransmitters, particularly opioid peptides.

-The spread of acupuncture to other countries occurred at various times and by different routes. In the sixth century, Korea and Japan assimilated Chinese acupuncture and herbs into their medical systems. Acupuncture arrived in Vietnam when commercial routes opened up between the eighth and tenth centuries. In the West, France adopted acupuncture rather sooner than other countries.

-In 1971, a member of the US press corps was given acupuncture during recovery from an emergency appendectomy in China, which he was visiting in preparation for President Nixon's visit. He described the experience in the New York Times and subsequently teams of US physicians made fact-finding tours of China to assess acupuncture, particularly its use for surgical analgesia.

-Acupuncture finally reached its present level of acceptability in the USA when an NIH (National Institute of Health) consensus conference reported that there was positive evidence for its effectiveness, at least in a limited range of conditions.

## Understanding Meridians: *A brief explanation*



Meridians are “energy highways” in the human body. Qi (energy, vital life force), flow through these meridians.

Meridians flow within the body, not on the skin surface, and each meridian has it’s own set of acupuncture points located on that channel.

The term ‘meridian’ describes the overall energy distribution system of Chinese Medicine and helps us to understand how basic substances of the body (Qi, blood and body fluids) permeate the whole body. The individual meridians themselves are often described as ‘channels’ or even ‘vessels’ which reflects the notion of carrying, holding, or transporting qi, blood and body fluids around the body.

Meridians can be best understood as a process rather than a structure.

There are twelve main meridians. Each limb is traversed by six channels, three Yin channels on the inside, and three Yang channels on the outside.

Channels:

Arm Tai Yin = Lung Channel

Leg Tai Yin = Spleen Channel

Arm Shao Yin = Heart Channel

Leg Shao Yin = Kidney Channel

Arm Jue Yin = Pericardium Channel

Leg Jue Yin = Liver Channel

Arm Yang Ming = Large Intestine Channel

Leg Yang Ming = Stomach Channel

Arm Tai Yang = Small Intestine Channel

Leg Tai Yang = Bladder Channel

Arm Shao Yang = San Jiao Channel

Leg Shao Yang = Gall Bladder Channel

The arm and leg channels of the same name are considered to ‘communicate’ with each other in Chinese medicine. Thus, problems in a

given channel or organ can be treated by using various points on the communication ‘partner’. As an example: a problem with the lungs can be treated by using points on the Spleen channel as they are both Tai Yin channels.

In addition, each meridian is a Yin Yang pair, meaning each Yin organ is paired with its corresponding Yang Organ: the Yin Lung organ, for example, corresponds with the Yang large intestine.

Organ Pairs:

Liver = Gallbladder

Heart = Small Intestine

Spleen = Stomach

Lung = Large Intestine

Kidney = Bladder

Pericardium = San Jiao

Each paired Organ has a series of associations:

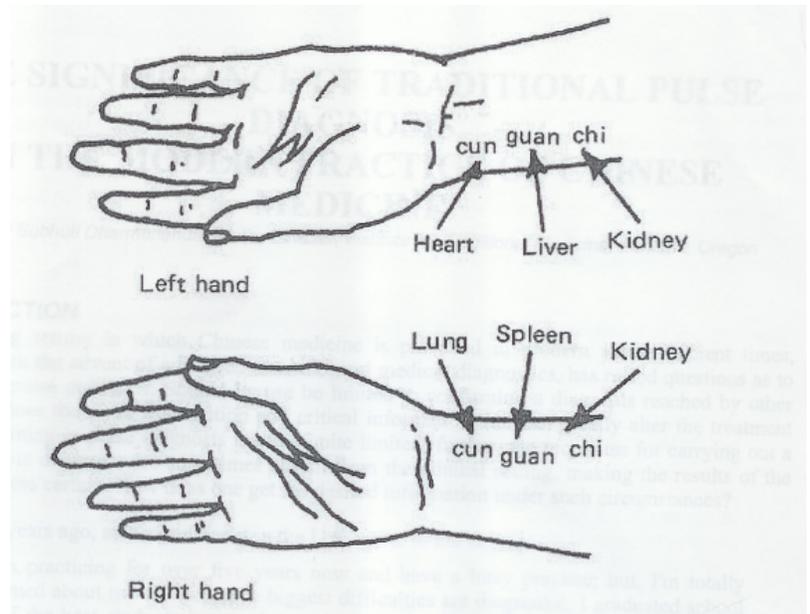
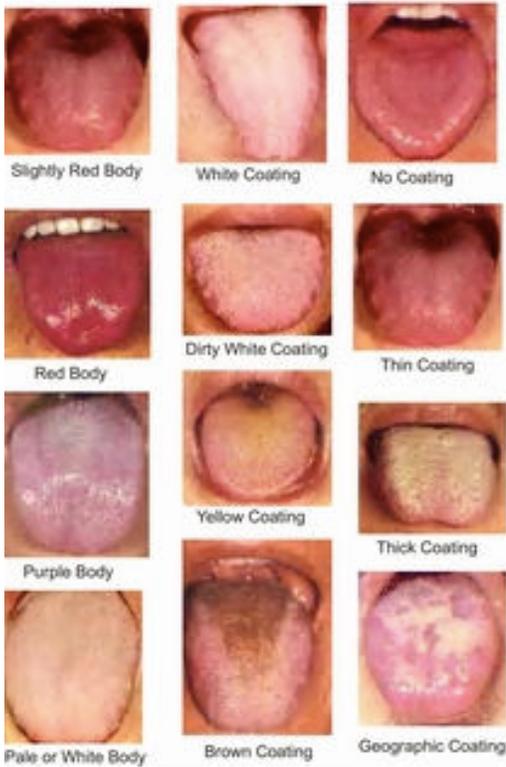
Movement	Wood	Fire	Earth	Metal	Water
Planet	Jupiter	Mars	Saturn	Venus	Mercury
Mental Quality	idealism, spontaneity, curiosity	passion, intensity	agreeableness, honesty	intuition, rationality, mind	erudition, resourcefulness, wit
Emotion	anger, altruism	hatred, love	anxiety, joy	grief, bravery	fear, gentleness
Zang (yin organs)	liver	heart/pericardium	spleen/pancreas	lung	kidney
Fu (yang organs)	gall bladder	small intestine/San Jiao	stomach	large intestine	urinary bladder
Sensory organ	eyes	tongue	mouth	nose	ears
Body Part	tendons	pulse	muscles	skin	bones
Body Fluid	tears	sweat	saliva	mucus	urine
Finger	index finger	middle finger	thumb	ring finger	pinky finger
Sense	sight	taste	touch	smell	hearing
Taste <sup>[13]</sup>	sour	bitter	sweet	pungent	salty
Smell	rancid	scorched	fragrant	rotten	putrid
Life	birth	youth	adulthood	old age	death, conception
Animal	scaly	feathered	human	furred	shelled

Acupuncture is an ancient art and science that is deeply intertwined in Meridian Theory. Some physicians spend their entire careers solely studying Meridian Theory as it is the true root of Acupuncture. It is an extremely complex theory, but without a true understanding of it, the benefits will be limited.

Acupuncture Alleviates Many Conditions such as:

- Migraines and Headaches
- Insomnia and Sleep Disorders
- Anxiety and Depression
- Pain Disorders
- Sports Injuries
- Post Operative Pain and Healing
- Constipation and Digestive Disorders
- Common colds
- Compromised Immune System
- Chronic Fatigue & Low Energy
- Menstrual Disorders and PMS
- Management of Acute & Chronic Conditions
- Infertility
- Health Maintenance
- Stress Management
- And much more!

## Tongue & Pulse Diagnosis



PULSE	IMAGE	DESCRIPTION & INDICATION	
<b>FLOATING</b> =SUPERFICIAL		<b>D</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly felt with light pressure, somewhat weak with heavy pressure</li> </ul>
		<b>I</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exterior pattern</li> <li>Yin deficiency if Floating &amp; Empty</li> </ul>
<b>DEEP</b> =SINKING		<b>D</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not clear with light pressure, but clear with heavy pressure</li> <li>Felt near the bone</li> </ul>
		<b>I</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interior pattern</li> <li>Qi/Blood stag. if Full / Yang def. if Weak</li> </ul>

An example what we feel when we take your pulse- there are 28 main (and most common) pulse patterns that can be distinguished from pulse diagnosis.

## A Typical Treatment:

Your Acupuncture Physician will look at your tongue and take your pulse. These are two very important methods of diagnosis and give us an overall understanding of what imbalances are occurring in your body.

From there, your practitioner will insert thin, single-use disposable needles into specific acupuncture points in a series called a Point Prescription. After about 20 minutes, the needles will be removed. Typically you will require a series of treatments, depending on your pattern.

## Common Acupressure Points That You Can Do At Home!

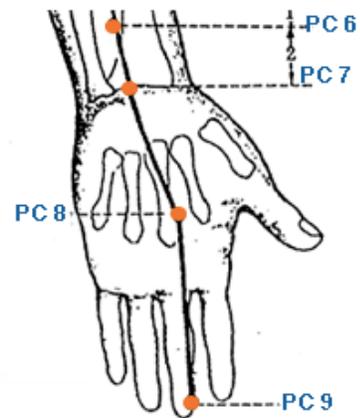
*\*Never use acupressure without first consulting with your Acupuncture Physician. Some points are contraindicated, especially during pregnancy and other conditions.*

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### Pericardium (PC) 6

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On the **Pericardium** meridian, located 2 cun above the wrist crease between the tendons of palmaris longus and flexor carpi radialis. Generally found by sliding the finger lightly from the wrist crease between the two tendons in the middle of the arm until it stops and pressing where it is most sore. This is the point where the motion sickness bands are designed to stimulate.

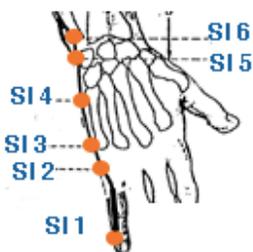


▫ **Uses:** anxiety, motion sickness, insomnia, nausea, carpal tunnel syndrome.

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### Small Intestine (SI) 3

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On the **Small Intestine** meridian, located at the ulnar end of the distal palmar crease proximal to the 5th metacarpal phalangeal joint at the junction of the red & white skin. Generally found by sliding your finger along the outside of your hand towards your pinky finger stopping in the depression before you get to the pinky joint.

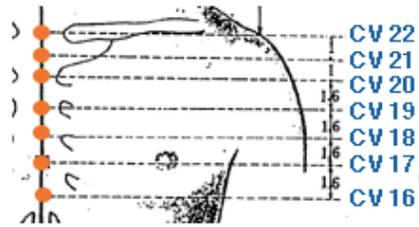
**Uses:** neck pain, headaches at the back of the head, earaches, ringing in the ears.

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## Conception Vessel (CV) 17

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On the **Conception Vessel** meridian, located on level with the 4th inter-costal space, midway between the nipples. Generally found by sliding your finger along the middle of the sternum from the bottom towards the top, your finger will fall into a depression that is in-line with your nipples.



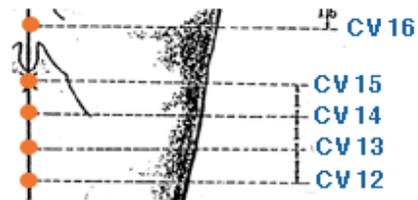
⌘ **Uses:** anxiety, cough, asthma, reflux, chest tension.

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## Conception Vessel (CV) 12

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On the **Conception Vessel** meridian, located midway between **CV 8** and **CV 16**, 4 cun above **CV 8**. Generally found by in the middle of the abdomen half the distance from the sternum to the belly button.

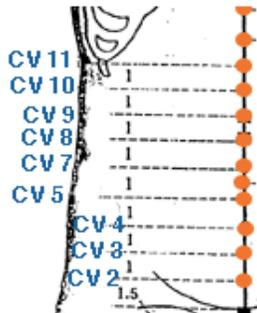


⌘ **Uses:** stomach/digestive issues such as heartburn, diarrhea, "nervous" stomach, poor digestion.

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## Conception Vessel (CV) 6

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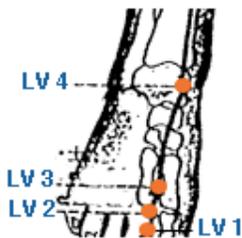
On the **Conception Vessel** meridian, located midway between **CV 5** and **CV 7**, 1.5 cun below **CV 8** (umbilicus). Generally found sliding your finger up the middle of your abdomen from the lower abdomen towards the belly button stopping about an inch below the belly button.

⌘ **Uses:** bloating, edema, prolapse, also an energizing point for general fatigue.

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## Liver (LV) 3

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On the **Liver** meridian, located on the dorsum of the foot in a depression distal to the junctions of the 1st and 2nd metatarsal bones. Generally found by sliding your finger in the depression between your big toe and the second toe until you are near where the tendons meet, then

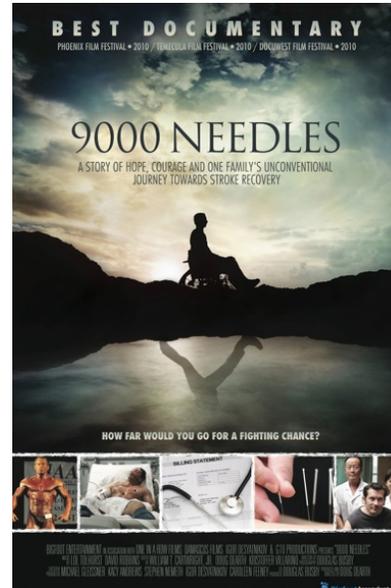
press where it is most sore.

⌘ **Uses:** anger, irritability, stress, headaches, menstrual pain, anxiety.

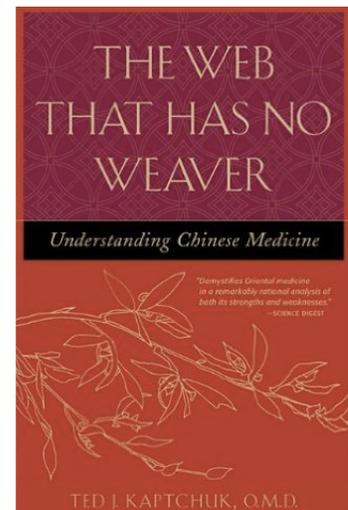
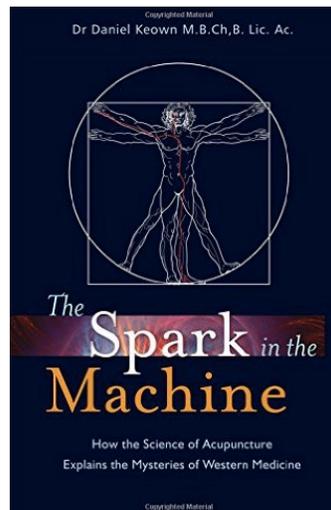
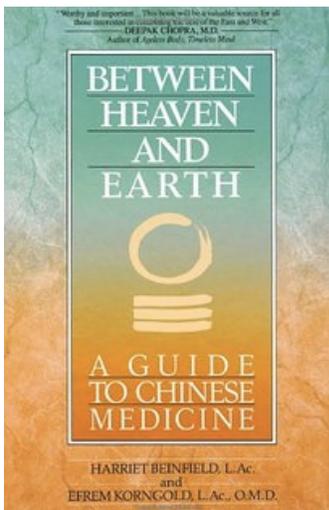
## Recommended Resources

Documentary: 9,000 Needles

Rent on Amazon for \$4



Books:



This handout is a compilation and adaptation from the following sources:  
<http://rheumatology.oxfordjournals.org/content/43/5/662.full>  
<http://www.acos.org/articles/the-chinese-medicine-meridian-system/>  
<https://theory.yinyanghouse.com/>