

NATURAL SYNERGY

EAST WEST BP BALANCE



**Natural Methods for Regaining
Healthy Blood Pressure**

Dr. Lin Xiaoxi & Emily J. Parker

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This publication was created to provide authentic and detailed information on Traditional Chinese Medicine for educational purposes. This information should be used as a supplement to your doctor's advice and not a replacement.

Acupressure is generally safe to use and has little or no side effects. It is always best that people with severe medical issues, such as cancer, heart disease or a chronic condition, consult their local doctor or TCM practitioner before performing acupressure or any other complementary therapy.

Nevertheless, there are certain situations where it is best to avoid acupressure:

- If you have had surgery recently — it is advisable to wait for acute inflammation to resolve. Do not perform acupressure over the surgery area.
- If you have recently suffered a heart attack or stroke
- If you have been diagnosed with cancer
- Burns, wounds, and skin infections — acupressure is contraindicated over wounded, or infected skin
- Varicose veins — pressure over varicose veins can cause severe pain and worsen the problem.
- Bone fractures — do not apply acupressure directly on a fracture spot. Slight pressure on the perimeter can be useful to increase blood flow and promote healing
- If you notice an undiagnosed lump or mass — speak to a physician first to find out what the mass is
- Pregnancy — special precaution, there's a series of points that should not be used in pregnancy for they may put the pregnancy at risk or induce labor

The author does not accept any responsibility for any liabilities resulting from any health decisions made by purchasers of this book.

Preface

First and foremost, the suggestions in this book are intended as adjunctive therapies and are not a substitute for proper medical care. If you are suffering from hypertension or any related medical conditions, it is important to receive a proper diagnosis and treatment from a licensed physician. Never stop taking prescribed medication without consulting your doctor first.

While writing this book, I initially began with the intention of mixing Western natural therapies with Eastern therapies as one body of work. But as the book progressed, I realized that there will be many readers that are simply interested in Eastern (TCM) natural therapies.

With that in mind, I divided the book into two parts:

Part 1: Reversing High Blood Pressure the Natural Way – A Western Viewpoint

Part 2: Reversing High Blood Pressure the Natural Way – An Eastern Viewpoint
(Remember to add link to chapter)

If you happen to be well informed on your condition and simply want to learn about hypertension relief from an Eastern (TCM) point of view, click straight to part 2 of this book. Then afterwards, proceed to part 1 as there are a number of facts and remedies; suppressed by the pharma industry that you probably don't know about.

If you are a member of the Natural Synergy system, then it is recommended to use the bio-acoustic meridian frequencies in tandem with your acupressure routine. This can be found in the Natural Synergy App.

Introduction

“Trust is like blood pressure. It's silent, vital to good health, and if abused it can be deadly.”

Frank K. Sonnenberg

High blood pressure, or hypertension, is one of the most common medical conditions affecting adults today.

Worldwide, over 1 billion people are affected. In the US, 75 million people suffer from this serious condition – which equates to 1 in 3 Americans. It leads to serious conditions such as heart attacks and strokes and causes millions of premature deaths every year.

In severe cases it can cause symptoms such as headaches, dizziness, nausea, blurred vision, chest pain or fatigue. However, in the vast majority of cases, high blood pressure has no symptoms at all, leading to it sometimes being known as the “Silent Killer”.

Due to our increasingly sedentary lifestyles, poor diet and increased pressure in the workplace, hypertension has become even more of a problem in recent years, putting unnecessary strain on healthcare systems across the globe as well as on our hearts!

Thankfully, high blood pressure is very treatable and in many cases can even be kept under control without the need for medication.

Part 1 – High Blood Pressure – A Western Viewpoint

Chapter 1 - What is High Blood Pressure?

“If you don't know your blood pressure, it's like not knowing the value of your company.”

Dr Mehmet Oz

Blood pressure, simply put, is a measurement of the force that your blood exerts on the walls of your arteries. Arteries are the vessels which carry the blood away from the heart to the other organs of the body, the muscles and the limbs.

The heart is a muscle. When it contracts, it pumps the blood through the arteries. This action is called a systole.

When it relaxes, the heart expands and fills with blood. This is called a diastole.

Systolic and diastolic are the names given to the numbers that are used to measure blood pressure.

When you have your blood pressure checked, the reading is given as two figures, for example 120/80 or 120 over 80.

The first figure is called the systolic reading and indicates the force of your blood when the heart is contracting.

The second figure, the diastolic reading, refers to the force of your blood as the heart relaxes and refills.

The technical name for a blood pressure monitor is a sphygmomanometer, and it measures blood pressure in millimeters of mercury (mmHg).

This unit of measurement dates back to when sphygmomanometers consisted of a cuff, a manual pump and a column of mercury which gave the blood pressure reading.

Nowadays, digital blood pressure monitors are more commonly used, but the mmHg unit remains the same.

A blood pressure reading of 90/60 to 120/80 mmHg is considered normal for a healthy adult.

Below 90/60 mmHg is classed as low blood pressure, and above 140/90 mmHg is classed as high blood pressure, also known as hypertension.

A reading between 120/80 and 140/90 mmHg is classed as pre-hypertension and is an early warning sign that it's time to start looking at different ways to keep your blood pressure under control.

Of course, prevention is always better than cure, and even if you have healthy blood pressure now, it's never too soon to start taking steps to keep it down and prevent problems from developing in the future. Especially if you are nearing middle age and/or hypertension runs in your family and/or if you are overweight.

- **Why is High Blood Pressure a Problem?**

“My doctor’s concerned about my high blood pressure”... I told him; “Next time don’t leave me sitting in the waiting room for two hours!”

Rodney Dangerfield

High blood pressure is often symptom free, so why do we need to worry?

Over time, high blood pressure, also known as hypertension, damages the blood vessels and causes the heart to become enlarged, which can eventually lead to heart failure.

The risks associated with high blood pressure are:

- Heart disease
- Heart attack
- Heart failure
- Stroke
- Aneurysms
- Vascular dementia
- Peripheral artery disease
- Kidney disease

There are four stages of hypertension.

The first is pre-hypertension. This is a blood pressure reading of 120/80 to 140/90 mmHg. This is the time to start thinking seriously about making lifestyle changes to get your blood pressure under control.

Stage 1 hypertension is a reading of 140/90 to 160/100 mmHg.

Stage 2 hypertension is a reading of 160/100 to 180/110 mmHg.

If you are diagnosed with stage 1 or 2 hypertension, your doctor will most likely prescribe one or more medications to help reduce your blood pressure, along with recommending that you make some lifestyle changes.

Stage 3 hypertension is a reading of 180/110 mmHg and above. This is a medical emergency and treatment should be sought immediately to reduce the risk of serious complications.

- **Who is at Risk?**

There are several risk factors which may mean you are at higher risk of developing hypertension.

Age

High blood pressure is more common in those over 65 years of age, although it is becoming increasingly common in younger people and even children. It is recommended that anybody over the age of 40 has their blood pressure checked regularly.

Ethnicity

High blood pressure is more common in those of African, African-Caribbean or South Asian descent.

Genetic Factors

If a close relative has developed high blood pressure, you will be at greater risk too.

Weight

Overweight and obese people are at much higher risk of developing hypertension.

Diet

Too much salt, too much alcohol, too much caffeine and not enough fruit and vegetables in the diet can all lead to high blood pressure.

Lifestyle

Lack of exercise and lack of sleep are both contributing factors to high blood pressure.

Smoking

Hypertension is just one of the many health issues that can be caused by smoking. If you smoke and would like to give up, there are many options available to help you. Ask for advice from your doctor or other healthcare professional.

Medication

Some prescription and over-the-counter medications can increase the risk of high blood pressure. For example, the contraceptive pill, steroids, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as ibuprofen, decongestants and cold medications.

Recreational drugs such as cocaine and amphetamines can also cause an increase in blood pressure.

Other Medical Conditions

High blood pressure is often associated with other medical conditions. These include diabetes, kidney disease, underactive or overactive thyroid, Cushing's disease, acromegaly and certain types of tumor.

Pregnancy

Hypertension can also occur during pregnancy. This is called pre-eclampsia and needs to be monitored carefully to prevent it from becoming more serious and endangering both mother and baby.

Stress

Stress can also cause your blood pressure to rise temporarily in response to the hormones adrenaline and cortisol, which increase your heart rate and narrow the blood vessels in preparation for our evolutionary “fight or flight” responses. Stress is a killer because if you mix it a number of other HBP risks, you increase your chances of some serious health issues.

Chapter 2 - The Physiology of Hypertension

“One way to get high blood pressure is to go mountain climbing over molehills.”

Earl Wilson

High blood pressure can be classified in two ways.

The first and most common type is primary hypertension. Also known as essential hypertension, this type of high blood pressure has no obvious underlying cause.

Secondary hypertension is high blood pressure which is caused by another condition such as heart disease, kidney disease or endocrine (hormonal) diseases.

There are a number of reasons why high blood pressure occurs. To understand this, we first need to understand how blood pressure is regulated when the body is healthy.

- **The Nervous System – Blood Pressure and the Brain**

The blood vessels contain special receptors which can detect rises and falls in blood pressure. These receptors send a signal via the nervous system to the brain, which in turn releases neurotransmitters; the body's chemical messengers, to return the blood pressure to normal.

If blood pressure is too low, the brain will release chemicals which increase the heart rate and the amount of blood being pumped in the arteries to raise it.

If it is too high, the brain will slow the heart down, reducing its pumping action and the volume of the blood, lowering the pressure.

When this communication between the blood vessels, the brain and the heart gets interrupted, blood pressure is not controlled and can easily become too high or too low.

This can happen for a number of reasons; such as age, genetics or any number of diseases.

- **Healthy Blood Vessels – The Highways of the Body**

The blood is kept flowing freely by the elastic walls of the arteries which, when healthy, stretch and contract as the blood passes through.

One cause of high blood pressure is the hardening and narrowing of these blood vessels. They cannot stretch as well as they should, which leads to increased pressure.

Like a highway, when traffic is flowing freely, everyone can get to where they're going quickly and easily. When something blocks the way, traffic gets backed up, increasing the potential for accidents and delays.

The arteries harden and narrow naturally with age but also as a result of smoking or a diet high in saturated fats which clog the vessels. This speeds up the process and increases the risk of serious complications.

- **The Renin – Angiotensin – Aldosterone System – Regulating Water**

Another common problem which leads to high blood pressure is a breakdown in the renin – angiotensin – aldosterone system.

This system is a series of hormonal changes triggered by the kidneys that has a massive impact on the blood pressure.

Renin, angiotensin and aldosterone are the three hormones which play a crucial role in regulating blood pressure.

Together they form a feedback loop which tells the body whether blood pressure is at the right level and if not, to either increase or decrease it accordingly.

If they are not functioning correctly, then the feedback loop breaks down, and blood pressure can begin to spiral out of control.

These hormones work by maintaining a constant concentration of water and sodium (salt) in the blood. To understand how this affects blood pressure just remember that wherever sodium goes, water follows.

More sodium in the blood means more water. This means a higher volume in the arteries, and that means hypertension.

This is why a low sodium diet is key to reducing blood pressure.

Problems with the renin – angiotensin – aldosterone system can occur due to endocrine diseases such as diabetes, under or overactive thyroid, Cushing's syndrome, acromegaly or tumors which affect the hormonal balance of the whole body.

It is also thought that being overweight contributes to this system malfunctioning as excess fatty tissue can throw the body's hormone levels completely out of balance.

The Renin – Angiotensin – Aldosterone System

The kidneys monitor the blood pressure by gauging the amount of water in the blood.

If they detect low blood pressure, the kidneys release a hormone called renin.

Renin is transported to the liver where it causes another hormone called angiotensin, to change into angiotensin I.

In the lungs, angiotensin I is converted to angiotensin II, which causes the arteries to narrow, increasing the blood pressure.

In the kidneys, angiotensin II also causes the release of a third hormone, aldosterone. Aldosterone stimulates the reabsorption of sodium, and therefore water, by the kidneys.

The increased level of water in the blood causes blood pressure to increase further.

When the kidneys detect normal blood pressure, they stop releasing renin, thus closing the feedback loop.

So, by decreasing the amount of salt in your diet, you are also decreasing the amount of water reabsorbed into your blood by the kidneys. Therefore, your blood pressure will go down.

Chapter 3 - Monitoring Your Blood Pressure at Home

If you have been diagnosed with hypertension or pre-hypertension, it is important to check your blood pressure regularly. You can easily do this at home, keeping inconvenient visits to the doctor's to a minimum.

There are many different blood pressure monitors available to choose from. You may opt for a manual sphygmomanometer, also known as an aneroid sphygmomanometer, or a digital monitor.

If you choose the manual method of checking your blood pressure, you will also need a stethoscope to listen to your pulse.

With this type of blood pressure monitor, you need to manually inflate the cuff until the dial reaches 180 mmHg.

At this point the cuff will become very tight. You then slowly release the valve while using the stethoscope to listen to your pulse at a point on the outer end of the elbow crease.

By looking at the dial while deflating the cuff and listening to the pulse, you get your blood pressure reading.

When the cuff is fully inflated to 180 mmHg, there will be no sound. The point at which you start to hear your pulse again gives you the systolic reading and the point at which the sound stops gives you the diastolic.

Manual sphygmomanometers are the most accurate way to measure blood pressure. However, they can be difficult to use without proper training, so the most reliable way to measure blood pressure at home is usually with a digital monitor.

With this type of monitor you simply position the cuff correctly, push a button and wait. It couldn't be easier!

- **Getting an Accurate Reading**

As simple as using a digital blood pressure monitor is, there are a few things you need to remember in order to get an accurate reading.

Whether you are using a manual or digital monitor to check your blood pressure, the first thing you need to ensure is that the cuff fits properly.

The cuff should fit snugly yet comfortably around your upper arm, around an inch above the elbow. In this position, you should still be able to slide a finger between the cuff and your arm. If your arm is especially thin, if you are overweight or very muscular, you may need to order a replacement.

Sit in a comfortable position with your back supported, legs uncrossed in front of you and your arm resting on a table with the elbow about level with your heart.

It is important to feel relaxed so check your blood pressure at a time when you don't have to rush. Don't eat; drink alcohol or caffeine or smoke for 20 minutes before checking your blood pressure.

Check your blood pressure morning and evening and be sure to note down the results along with the date and time.

You should also make a note of any changes that you've made to your diet, exercise regime or medication so that you can see their effects in your readings.

Chapter 4 - What Can I Do to Reduce My Blood Pressure?

The good news about high blood pressure is that there are many ways in which you can naturally bring it down and prevent it from becoming a serious problem.

Your doctor will prescribe you medication. But if you wish to be medication free, you will need to practice relaxation, be conscious of what you eat and use acupressure to take control of the situation and keep hypertension at bay.

Because everybody is different, there is no 'one size fits all' approach when combating hypertension.

In later chapters you will learn how to identify your own symptoms to discover which acupressure techniques are best for you.

- **Common Blood Pressure Medications**

“I don’t need drugs to have a good time. I need them to focus, avoid depression, endure winter, fall asleep, and control my blood pressure.” George Carlin

Blood pressure medications are some of the most frequently prescribed drugs in the developed world.

There is an overwhelming assortment for doctors to choose from – you may need to compare opinions. I say this as most doctors are influenced by pharmaceutical representatives and your doctor might be reluctant to prescribe a different pharma company's product. So, it may take a while to find the right doctor to provide you with the right balance of effectiveness and minimal side-effects.

If you choose to take medication for hypertension, it is very important to be aware of what you are taking. Sure, the doctor will do his job properly and make sure it doesn't conflict with any other meds you may be taking, but doctors rarely tell you how serious of the side effects. Or the long-term effects of drugs.

Many doctors simply want to prescribe you a drug and move you on so they can see the next patient. The doctor will often give you a leaflet - written by the pharma companies that have purposely minimized the side-effects with clever wording.

Below are just a few of the most common examples of anti-hypertensive medications. It is by no means a comprehensive list and you should talk to your doctor if you have any questions about your personal prescription.

Caution: Some of these drugs can cause serious short term and long-term effects. If you are on prescription blood pressure medication, always take the time to do your own research.

Diuretics

Diuretics work by increasing the amount of urine produced by your body, and therefore reducing the amount of water in your blood. As they make you go to the toilet more often, they are best taken early in the morning.

Some common diuretics include furosemide, bendroflumethiazide and amiloride.

Caution: taking diuretics with ACE inhibitors or angiotensin II receptor blockers will damage your kidneys.

Side effects: Muscle cramps, frequent urination, lethargy, weakness, dizziness, blurred vision, dehydration, abnormal heart rhythm, sweating, restlessness, skin rash, constipation, excessive dryness of the mouth, unexplained bleeding, bruising

Beta Blockers

Beta blockers work by blocking the action of adrenaline and slowing the heart rate in order to reduce the amount of blood being pumped into the arteries and decrease the blood pressure.

Commonly prescribed beta blockers include atenolol, bisoprolol and propranolol.

Side effects: fatigue, depression, insomnia, constipation, erectile dysfunction, headache, shortness of breath, depression, upset stomach, dizziness.

ACE Inhibitors

ACE (angiotensin converting enzyme) inhibitors interrupt the renin - angiotensin – aldosterone system and enlarge the blood vessels so that blood can flow more freely.

The most common examples are enalapril, lisinopril, perindopril and ramipril.

Side effects: Insomnia, hives, headache, dry cough, trouble breathing, dizziness, drowsiness, diarrhea, lack of energy.

Hibiscus Tea: A Natural A.C.E inhibitor

Studies show that drinking 3 cups of Hibiscus tea for only 12 days can lower your systolic blood pressure by 12% (on average) and your diastolic blood pressure by 11% (on average)

However, your blood pressure will begin to creep back up if you stop drinking the tea.

Hibiscus tea as well as pomegranate juice contains certain bioactive phytochemicals that act as natural A.C.E inhibitors.

If pomegranate juice sounds more appealing than tea, health experts recommend drinking 6 ounces of pomegranate juice (unsweetened) every day.

Angiotensin II Receptor Antagonists

Like ACE inhibitors, these reduce blood pressure by blocking the renin – angiotensin – aldosterone system. This class of drugs includes candesartan, losartan and valsartan.

Side effects: headache, leg pain, fainting, back pain, nasal congestion, dizziness, fainting, drowsiness, fatigue, indigestion.

Calcium Channel Blockers

Calcium channel blockers have the effect of relaxing the muscles surrounding the arteries allowing them to widen, and also the heart muscle so it beats with less force. Common calcium channel blockers include amlodipine, felodipine and nifedipine.

Side effects: Sexual dysfunction, increased appetite, drowsiness, bleeding of the gums, swelling of the feet and ankles, gastro reflux disease, weight gain, skin rash, breathing difficulties.

Grapefruit – Not so Great?

Grapefruit and grapefruit juice interact with a number of prescription medications including calcium channel blockers and some medications commonly prescribed to reduce cholesterol.

If you are taking any medications from your doctor to help reduce your blood pressure, be sure to read the information leaflet carefully to avoid any problems and speak to your doctor or pharmacist if you're unsure about anything.

- **Fighting Free Radicals - A Cause of High Blood Pressure**

Research from the University of California at Irvine College of Medicine concludes that the oxidizing effect of free radicals can cause high blood pressure.

Free radicals can be formed in the body naturally or from our environment. Free radical build up in the body can come from smoking, air pollutants, pesticides found in food, as well as over processed foods.

Free radicals are a toxic, unstable molecule that attacks and steals molecules from healthy molecules. Free radicals reduce the body's nitric oxide levels which causes HBP.

Free radicals also oxidize the body which causes premature aging, cell damage, Alzheimer's disease and cancer.

To fight build-up of free radicals you need to consume foods or supplements that are high in antioxidants.

Although some dietary professionals disagree on which is the "the best" antioxidant, here is a list of the most potent sources:

Ground Cloves - arguably the highest concentration of all antioxidants.

Astaxanthin - naturally found in wild caught salmon, lobster, shrimp, crab, red trout, and krill. This powerful antioxidant is capable of fighting multiple forms of free radicals simultaneously.

Health care professionals recommend taking 12mg of astaxanthin daily for heart health.

Ground Cinnamon – this popular spice is incredibly high in antioxidants.

Oregano – incredibly high in antioxidants.

Turmeric – very high in antioxidants.

Acai Berry – high in antioxidants

Cocoa, dry powder, unsweetened – high in antioxidants

Dried Parsley – high in antioxidants

Basil – high in antioxidants

Phytonutrients - are anti-oxidizing nutrients found in plants that protect the plant from damaging environments such as pests, toxins, and excess ultraviolet radiation.

Fruit and vegetables high in phytonutrients: peppers, tomatoes, squash, carrots, mangos, melons citrus fruits, berries, garlic, onions, nuts, seeds, legumes and dark chocolate.

- **Controlling Blood Pressure with Diet – The DASH Approach**

“Calories (noun): Tiny creatures that live in your closet and sew your clothes a little bit tighter every night!”

One of the major steps you can take towards reducing your blood pressure and keeping it down is making adjustments to your diet.

For some people this is tough... especially if your doctor has already told you to quit smoking.

It could be tempting to throw caution into the wind and carry on eating how you like. But the phrase: “Your health is your wealth” can’t really be properly comprehended until it has been taken away from you.

So try to read on with an open mind.

One diet which is strongly advocated is the DASH diet. DASH stands for Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension, and this diet is helpful for a number of conditions including high blood pressure, heart disease, kidney disease, stroke and diabetes.

The main aim of this diet is not weight loss, although you may lose weight as a side-effect. Its focus is to help you make healthier choices every day, in a way that is sustainable over a long period of time.

For men, the recommended intake of calories to maintain your weight is around 2,500 cal (10,500 kilojoules) a day. The recommended intake of calories to lose weight is around 2000 cal (8,400 kilojoules) a day.

For women, the recommended daily intake of calories to maintain your weight is around 2000 cal (8,400 kilojoules). The recommended daily intake of calories to lose weight is around 1500 cal (6275 kilojoules).

This measurement of calories (and kilojoules) is an average and is not the same for everyone as the exact science runs on height, muscle mass and weight.

The key to losing weight is by not excessively restricting your calories. This will cause your body to switch to “starvation mode” and will try to burn less energy (less fat). The recommended healthy way to lose weight is to reduce your recommended intake of calories by 500 (2100 kilojoules) a day.

If you have been told by your doctor that your weight is contributing to your HBP and you are looking to shed a few pounds then this method is the best way to reduce stress on the heart.

On the DASH diet you will increase your intake of fresh fruit and vegetables and other foods high in vitamins and minerals essential for controlling your blood pressure. At the same time you decrease your intake of harmful foods such as sodium and saturated fats.

Grains and Cereals

One of the main components of the DASH diet is grains and cereals. Try to choose wholegrain varieties such as brown rice and whole meal bread which are higher in fiber and will keep you feeling fuller for longer.

A high fiber diet is great for weight loss and lowering your blood pressure.

Wholegrain bread contains the whole grain kernels – which hold all the nutrients and fiber. White bread has had all of the fiber and nutrients removed.

Brown rice also contains the whole grain which retains all of its fiber and nutrients. White rice has been processed to remove the bran and germ (nutrients) – leaving white rice with little nutritional value.

The fibrous bran found in brown bread and rice is also very high in antioxidants which fight HBP and premature aging (explained in later chapters).

Eat More Fiber, Lower Your Blood Pressure:

Researchers counted up the conclusions of 25 different studies that tested the effects of a high-fiber diet on blood pressure.

All the data pointed to one strong conclusion – eating more fiber has a powerful effect on lowering blood pressure.

How much fiber is too much? There is no upper limit - as it is very difficult to eat fiber to the point where it is dangerous for your health. Eating too much in one sitting can have uncomfortable temporary side effects such as stomach cramps, bloating and gas. Drinking at least eight glasses of water daily will also help combat the risk of the mild side effects.

Your body will become accustom to the extra fiber you are taking, so start off slowly and then build up your tolerance.

A general guideline is to get 14 grams of fiber for every 1,000 calories in you eat daily.

Dairy Products

The DASH diet also includes eating some dairy products every day. Dairy products include milk, yogurt, butter and cheese and are a good source of protein, calcium and vitamin D. Stick to low-fat varieties and take care with cheese which can also be high in salt.

Dairy is full of nutrients including magnesium, calcium and potassium which are essential minerals for fighting high blood pressure (more details in later chapters). But remember to keep everything in moderation. Dairy can make your body produce extra phlegm which can be detrimental (this will be explained in Part 2 of this book).

Lean Meat and Fish

You can include some lean meat such as chicken or turkey, grilled or baked with the skin removed, in your DASH diet.

Fish is a good source of protein. Oily fish, for example salmon, mackerel or tuna is especially good as it contains heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids.

Red meat can be eaten occasionally but is best limited to a couple of times a week.

Omega -3 Reduces Blood Pressure

University results from a randomized controlled trial concluded that daily doses of fish oil reduced blood pressure.

Fish oils contain Omega-3 fatty acids – if you are a vegetarian or vegan, you can alternatively get your Omega-3's from vegetables like Brussels Sprouts, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Kale, Chia Seeds, Walnuts and Spinach. Alternatively you will find vegan supplements in a health store.

Dieticians recommend taking a gram a day of fish oil - if you are trying to lower your blood pressure then you may take up to 4 grams. Although fish oil will lower your blood pressure, its benefits are not strong enough to manage your blood pressure alone.

Nuts, Seeds and Legumes

Nuts and seeds are packed with nutrients, Omega-3's and fiber. Nuts and seeds are great added to salads or stir fries as well as being a filling snack. However, they are high in fat and calories so keep servings small and limit to a few portions a week.

Legumes such as beans and lentils are high in fiber, Magnesium and antioxidants - and low in fat, making a good meat substitute for meals.

The best nuts and seeds for lowering HBP:

- Almonds – consuming almonds naturally lowers the “bad” cholesterol in your body. LDL cholesterol (the bad kind) causes blockages in your arteries which in turn, causes high blood pressure...
- Walnuts – Firstly, walnuts are great because they don’t need salt (excess salt is bad for HBP), but secondly, walnuts contain the “good fats” we need for our body to create alpha-linoleic acid which fights blockages in our arteries.
- Pistachios – We all know that stress is a big contributing factor to high blood pressure. Recent studies have concluded that eating pistachios normalizes blood pressure during stressful situations. If you have a stressful job, it is recommended to consume 1.5 ounces of pistachios before you go to work.
- Peanuts – as well as peanut butter is loaded with heart healthy “good fats” that fight “bad cholesterol” that cause artery blockages.
- Sunflower Seeds – are rich in HBP fighting nutrients such as Vitamin E, Magnesium, as well as fiber and folic acid. Caution: be sure to look for the unsalted variety.

Vegetables - Natures Cure to Hypertension

“I hate it when I think I’m buying organic; but when I get home I realize they’re just regular doughnuts!” Joan Rivers.

More Reasons to Add Onions to Every Meal

Onions are rich in the compound quercetin.

Research from the University of Utah concluded that participants suffering from HBP who took quercetin supplements saw a decrease of 7 mmHg in their systolic blood pressure, and 5 mmHg in their diastolic blood pressure.

When buying vegetables, fresh is always best. Beware of added sodium if using canned. It's always worth rinsing canned vegetables with fresh water before use to remove any extra salt. Unfortunately, with canned, many of the vegetables nutrients have been lost in the brine – but canned vegetables are better than none at all.

Many non organic vegetables are laden with toxic pesticides and free radicals that can't be washed off. These chemicals are the root cause of various serious diseases like: Alzheimer's disease, early onset dementia, tumors, cancers, developmental issues in children and auto-immune diseases to name just a few.

Because these chemicals can take years or decades to manifest into disease, it is very difficult to blame the pesticides being entirely at fault.

Corporate giants like Monsanto who own these pesticides have multi-million dollar legal teams to defend their product. This is why it's still legal to use these chemicals on our food – despite the numerous studies that prove how deadly long-term pesticide exposure can be to people.

Try Organic: There are two main reasons why people don't buy organic... The first is the price; organic costs more. The second; people think that going organic means a lifetime commitment or else it's a waste of time and money.

By switching the “worst offending” vegetables for organic, you will be detoxifying you, and your family for a host of health benefits in the long run.

The long term effects will drastically reduce your body's build up of free radicals and will certainly contribute to lowering your blood pressure.

Beware the “worst offending” supermarket vegetables for toxic pesticides:

- Celery: Loaded with an arm's length list of cancer causing carcinogens and toxins.
- Cucumbers: Sprayed with dozens of different pesticide residues that contain known carcinogens, hormone disrupters, neurotoxins and developmental toxins.
- Potatoes: Exposed to high doses of pesticides that contain known carcinogens, hormone disrupters, and developmental toxins
- Lettuce: Sprayed with dozens of different pesticide residues that contain known carcinogens, hormone disrupters, neurotoxins and developmental toxins.
- Cherry Tomatoes: Exposed to high amounts of pesticides including known carcinogens, hormone disrupters and neurotoxins
- Spinach: Sprayed with dozens of different pesticide residues that contain known carcinogens, hormone disrupters, neurotoxins and developmental toxins.

Beat Hypertension with Beet Juice

A trial carried out at Queen Mary University of London (funded by the British Heart Foundation) was first published in The Journal of Nutrition in 2013. Research discovered that inorganic nitrate found in beets resulted in a significant reduction in hypertension

During the study participants consumed 8 ounces of beet juice a day for 4 weeks. The double blind study showed that participants who took beet juice resulted in a reduction in blood pressure of 8/4 mm Hg compared to the placebo group who saw no difference.

After the study finished, the participants who ceased taking beet juice saw their blood pressure rise back to unhealthy levels.

Choosing the Best Fruits for High Blood Pressure

“Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit; wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.”

Miles Kington

Fruit is a healthy and convenient snack, but remember that some fruits can also be very high in sugar which can lead to weight gain.

Not all fruits are equally beneficial. Ideally, you want to choose fruits that are high in potassium, magnesium and fiber, lower in sugar, and less exposed to industrial pesticides. Berries and exotic fruits are a great choice as they are higher in fiber.

Tomatoes Proven To Combat Hypertension

Tomatoes are rich in lycopene. Lycopene has been proven to play an active role in reducing HBP.

The University of Adelaide in Australia concluded that daily doses of 25mg of lycopene (one cup of tomato juice) can reduce “bad” cholesterol by 10% and a significant reduction in blood pressure.

Fruits that are high in vitamin C like citrus fruits are wonderful options. Vitamin C has a diuretic effect on the body which helps relax blood vessel walls around the heart. Dieticians recommend a daily vitamin C intake of 500mg.

“Worst offending” fruits for toxic pesticides:

- Apples: Not only sprayed with a host of pesticides during production, apples are sprayed with chemicals again to make them last for months in cold storage. Toxins found on apples range from known carcinogens, hormone disruptors, neurotoxins and developmental toxins.
- Peaches: Because peaches have a soft, furry skin, they absorb more toxins from pesticides. Peaches are exposed to a long list of pesticides that include known carcinogens, hormone disruptors, neurotoxins, and developmental toxins.

- Strawberries: High pesticide residues found on strawberries that include; known carcinogens, hormone disruptors, neurotoxins and developmental toxins
- Nectarines, Pears, Plums: High pesticide residues found on these stone fruits that include; known carcinogens, hormone disruptors, neurotoxins and developmental toxins
- Grapes: High pesticide residues found on grapes include; known carcinogens, hormone disruptors, neurotoxins and developmental toxins

Watermelon May Save Your Life.

Watermelon is the richest natural source of L-citrulline – an amino acid proven to reduce cardiac stress.

This fruit is particularly helpful for high risk hypertension sufferers and those who are obese and have hypertension. This group of people are particularly at risk when the heart may be overloaded by stress, cold weather or strenuous exercise.

If you don't have year round access to watermelon, health supplement stores offer a watermelon extract consisting of L-citrulline and L-arginine.

Fats and Oils

Fats and oils can be included but try to limit those which come from animal sources and are high in saturated fat.

Many common vegetable oils are actually toxic and contain between 0.56 to 4.2% trans-fats. A lot of different vegetable oils have been labelled as "healthy" but new data has revealed that these oils are laden with free radicals and are linked to diseases like high blood pressure, heart disease and cancer.

The worst offenders list is:

- Canola Oil: High in trans-fats, canola oil used to be called “rapeseed” oil until studies showed that it caused heart damage with animal testing. Rapeseed crops are nearly exclusively GMO crops which means they have be subjected to heavy doses of pesticides.
- Sunflower Oil
- Rapeseed Oil: See Canola Oil
- Sesame Oil
- Soybean Oil: More often than not, when you see something labelled: “vegetable oil” it is actually oil made from soybeans. Soybeans are rich in the fatty acid Omega-6, which is good for you in moderation. But because of the abundance of Omega-6 in processed foods, we are getting too much of it which can cause cardiovascular disease, cancer and a host of auto-immune diseases. Soybeans are naturally high in estrogens which are a female hormone that will decrease testosterone in older men. The soybean industry is dominated by the company Monsanto – which has one of the worst records for sacrificing people’s health for profit
- Cottonseed Oil: This oil is the worst cooking oil of all. The oil of cotton seed is a by-product of textile cotton. Because of this, it has been subjected to toxic chemicals. Thankfully, this oil is not stocked in food stores anymore.
- Rice bran Oil
- Grape seed Oil
- Corn Oil: Is also high in Omega-6 fatty acids and is highly processed through an extraction process using hexane. Corn oil is almost exclusively produced using GMO corn which means the corn has been subjected to powerful pesticides that are toxic to your health.
- Safflower Oil

Instead choose extra virgin olive oil or coconut oil for cooking or dressings.

Polyphenols Found in Extra Virgin Olive Oil Are Potent Antioxidants that fight HBP

Research reveals mild sufferers of HBP who replace dietary fats for extra virgin olive oil are able to reduce their blood pressure medication by 50%

Avoid highly processed spreads like margarine. Butter has been demonized in the past but it is a natural food with nutrients such as vitamin A, and E. Butter also has healthy fatty acids that improve gut health and inflammation. But of course, use sparingly!

Sweets and Desserts

“I don’t stop eating when I’m full. The meal isn’t over when I’m full. It’s over when I hate myself” Louis CK

You don't need to cut out sweets and desserts completely from your diet, but try to keep them to a minimum.

Choose lower fat options such as sorbet rather than ice cream - or even better, stick with dark chocolate or fresh fruit!

Beware of artificial sweeteners:

People drink diet soda in an effort to cut down on sugar. Ultimately, this is because too much sugar causes an insulin spike that triggers weight gain.

But when you drink diet soda, your body recognizes sweetness, but can't find the sugar it wants for producing energy. So your insulin levels spike - which cancels out the slimming benefits (with exception to the natural sweetener stevia).

Studies have reported that consumers who drank diet soda were two times more at risk of developing metabolic syndrome. Metabolic syndrome is a group of ailments clustered together: hypertension, pre-diabetes, type-2 diabetes, high cholesterol levels, excess belly fat.

A French study examined the risks of artificial sweeteners and discovered the risk of developing hypertension was significantly higher for people who regularly consumed diet beverages compared to non-consumers.

University Studies across the World Conclude: Dark Chocolate Lowers Your Blood Pressure

Chocolate lovers can breathe a sigh of relief.

Dark chocolate is rich in heart healthy flavonoids that cause dilation of the blood vessels.

Participants of the study consumed a small daily amount of dark chocolate with a cocoa percentage of 70%. After 18 weeks, researchers found participants systolic blood pressure had dropped by almost 3 points and their diastolic blood pressure by almost 2 points on average.

- **Ease up on the Sodium**

“The beach: the only place where salt lowers your blood pressure.”

Limiting sodium or salt intake is an important part of any healthy diet.

Some sodium is essential for the healthy functioning of muscles and the nervous system, but it does have the effect of raising blood pressure and too much can be lethal if you are already suffering from hypertension.

The current recommended intake of sodium is around 1500mg per day, with an upper safe limit of 2300mg. You might be shocked to learn that the average adult in the developed world consumes around 3200mg of sodium daily. Almost a third higher than recommended!

If you are a smoker, chances are that your taste buds have been desensitized. This usually causes smokers to add too much salt to their food in an attempt to improve the taste of their “bland dinner”. This is another way smoking can contribute to high blood pressure and heart disease which is another reason to quit.

If you are an avid salt lover and can't bear the thought of drastically lowering your salt intake, start reducing slowly. In the beginning, make an effort to be mindful about how much you are using. Then try to reduce it week after week until you have lowered your intake to a safe level.

The easiest way to reduce sodium is by not adding any extra to your food as you cook – only at the table. That way you can carefully monitor how much you are actually using.

You can ensure your food is still tasty by replacing salt with spices or fresh herbs while you cook or adding a dash of lemon juice, vinegar or balsamic to salads.

Some foods are obviously salty such as cheese, olives, pickles and fast food. However, many foods contain hidden sodium, including many everyday items such as processed meats, bread, breakfast cereals, instant noodles, ready-made soups, sauces and dressings.

Processed foods, restaurant and take away meals are usually laden with salt so never add any extra when it's served. Always opt for fresh over processed. How can you tell? Usually, if the food item comes in a packet, then it is processed.

By preparing your own meals, you can control exactly how much salt goes in and ensures your dinner is not a disaster for your blood pressure!

You can make your own ready meals by cooking a large batch at the weekend or when you have time, dividing it into portions and freezing to use later in the week. This is a time-saving and convenient way to eat healthily, keep your sodium intake to a minimum and save money too!

If you need to buy ready-made meals, always read the label and opt for low-salt versions where possible.

Low salt foods should contain less than 0.3g of salt (0.1g of sodium) per 100g. Any food with 1.5g of salt (0.6g of sodium) is considered high salt and should definitely be avoided!

Alcohol and Caffeine

“Alcohol may be man’s worst enemy, but the bible says love your enemy.” – Frank Sinatra

Alcohol and caffeine both have the effect of raising the blood pressure and should be kept to a minimum. But if you just have to have a drink after work; alcohol should be limited to two to three drinks a day.

A great reason to make red wine your drink of choice:

The American Heart Association states that drinking 2 glasses of red wine regularly can increase the body’s high density lipoprotein which removes plaques from your arteries, thus lowering blood pressure.

Red wine contains resveratrol which is an antioxidant. Antioxidants fight free radicals which are related to heart disease and HBP

Coffee can be replaced by decaffeinated versions or naturally lower caffeine options such as herbal teas like Hibiscus or green tea which studies have proven to be beneficial on blood pressure.

Daily Suggested Servings According to the DASH Diet

This chart is based on the 2,000 calorie-a-day model.

Grains and Cereals	6-8 servings daily e.g. 1 slice of whole meal bread, ½ a cup of cooked rice or pasta
Fruit and Vegetables	4-6 servings daily e.g. 1 medium piece of fruit, ½ a cup of chopped fruit or veg, 1 small glass of fruit juice
Dairy Products	2-3 servings daily e.g. 1 cup of skimmed milk or low-fat yogurt
Lean Meat and Fish	6 ounces or less daily
Nuts, Seeds and Legumes	4-5 servings per week e.g. a small handful of nuts, 2 tablespoons of seeds, ½ a cup of cooked peas or beans.
Fats and Oils	2-3 servings per day e.g. one teaspoon of olive oil, 2 tablespoons of low-fat dressing
Sweets and Desserts	5 servings or less per week. Or 1-2 squares of dark chocolate (70%+) a day

- **Essential Minerals – A Fine Balance**

There are several minerals involved in the regulation of blood pressure. These are sodium, potassium, calcium and magnesium.

When these minerals are present in the body at the correct levels, blood pressure is kept under control. When they become out of balance is when problems occur.

Sodium

We already know that too much sodium is bad for your blood pressure.

When too much sodium is in the blood, the water volume also increases. This causes blood to push against the arteries with greater force causing damage and putting you at risk of heart attacks and strokes.

Some sodium in the diet is essential for healthy nerves and muscles, but a normal diet will easily provide you with more than enough and there's certainly no need to add any extra!

To avoid excess sodium and putting yourself at risk of hypertension and other health issues, avoid high sodium foods such as:

- Chips or crisps
- Pickles and chutneys
- Olives
- Anchovies
- Processed meats
- Cheese
- Instant noodles
- Ready-made soups and stocks
- Fast food
- Processed foods and ready meals

Potassium

Along with sodium, potassium plays an important role in regulating the amount of water in your blood. It counters the effects of sodium and reduces the amount of water reabsorbed into the blood.

It also helps to relax the walls of blood vessels meaning blood can flow smoothly and reducing the risk of hypertension.

You may need to increase the amount of potassium in your diet to bring it to a useful level.

This is especially important if you are taking diuretic medications, which can cause more potassium to be lost from the body than normal.

The recommended daily intake of potassium is 3500mg. You may choose to take a supplement, or to increase your intake of high potassium foods.

Foods high in potassium include:

- Avocados
- Pineapple
- Tomatoes
- Oranges
- Kiwifruit
- Cantaloupe
- Bananas
- Squashes such as acorn or winter squash
- Sweet potatoes
- Green vegetables such as spinach and broccoli
- Mushrooms
- Beans and lentils
- Yogurt
- Fish
- Figs
- Prunes

- Raisins
- Papaya
- Coconut Water
- Salmon

Wild Salmon Vs Farmed Salmon

With salmon being a popular fish on the menu at most restaurants, it makes sense for a sufferer of hypertension to choose salmon because it is both high in Omega-3's and Potassium.

The sad news for salmon lovers is that there are dangers to this tasty fish that people need to be aware of. With an ever growing demand for this precious limited resource, farmed salmon may seem like a great idea.

But farmed salmon may do you more harm than good. The flesh of farmed salmon is an unnatural brown color due to the lack of its natural food source - Krill.

Since consumers expect a red color; fish farmers add the chemical Canthaxanthin to the salmon's feed pellets to give the flesh of the farmed salmon a natural red hue. Because large numbers of farmed salmon are kept in small quarters, disease runs rampant. Farmers combat this with an array of different antibiotics and pesticides that essentially end up on your plate.

Toxins found in farmed salmon range from Dibutyltin (a chemical used in plastic), Dioxins (a cancer causing agent), Canthaxanthin (makes the salmon red) and Polybrominated Diphenyl (endocrine disruptors that can cause cancer).

Because of this, farmed salmon is one of the most toxic foods in the world. Unless stated otherwise, all salmon served at restaurants is farmed.

Calcium

Calcium has an effect on the nerves and the relaxation of smooth muscle surrounding the circulatory system. A sufficient level of calcium in the body keeps the blood vessels open, the heart pumping rhythmically and the blood flowing smoothly.

The recommended daily intake of calcium is 1000mg. If you decide to take a calcium supplement, choose one that also contains vitamin D as this helps calcium to be absorbed by the body.

Foods high in calcium include:

- Dairy products including milk, yogurt and cheese
- Green leafy vegetables
- Small fish with bones e.g. sardines
- Almonds
- Soya products e.g. tofu
- Oranges and orange juice
- Broccoli
- Sesame seeds
- Asparagus
- Figs
- Kale

Coenzyme Q10

Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10) molecule found throughout the body that plays a crucial role in energy production within cells.

It is also a very powerful antioxidant that fights free radicals (free radicals cause heart disease)

Since the heart is constantly pumping, it has a high energy demand. CoQ10 makes sure there is plenty of energy for any added exertion to the heart.

Coenzyme Q10 can be generated by the body, but concentrations decrease with age. This is why high blood pressure is an ailment usually reserved for seniors.

Researcher conducted by the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Boise, Idaho revealed that Coenzyme Q10 has the power to reduce systolic blood pressure by up to 17 mm/Hg and diastolic blood pressure by 10 mm/Hg – all without side effects.

Dietary sources of CoQ10 can be found in:

- Beef and Chicken
- Organ Meats Like Kidney and Liver
- Fatty Fish
- Cauliflower
- Broccoli
- Spinach

CoQ10 supplements can be found in health stores but dosages may vary. Because CoQ10 has a wide range of other health benefits such as weight loss, anti-aging, migraines, male infertility, lowering cholesterol, treating heart failure improve blood vessel widening - dosages will vary.

This depends on the potency of the supplement and what the manufacturers intend the supplement to be used for.

Health experts recommend an oral dosage of Coenzyme Q10 ranging between 60 – 360 milligrams a day for 8-12 weeks.

Magnesium: One mineral to rule them all

Magnesium plays a crucial role in the healthy functioning of nerves and muscles. Other than aiding regular blood pressure it plays a role in over 300 biochemical reactions in the body.

It has a beneficial effect on the blood pressure by relaxing blood vessels as well as helping to regulate levels of the other vital minerals sodium, potassium and calcium.

Because of this regulatory function, magnesium is one of the most important minerals in the control of high blood pressure.

What is the best way to boost your Magnesium levels?

Consuming Magnesium through fresh foods (ideally organic as they tend to be richer in Magnesium) is always the best way to ensure you are absorbing minerals and vitamins into your body properly.

The recommended daily intake of Magnesium is 400mg (for men) and 310mg (for women)

Natural foods that are rich in Magnesium are:

- Bananas: 1 medium sized 33 mg/Mg
- Whole Grains: 2 Slices of Whole Grain Bread 78mg/Mg

- Dark Leafy Greens: Spinach, 1 Cup 156ml/Mg (all green vegetables are high in Mg)
- Avocados: 1 Medium Size 60ml/Mg
- Beans: Black Beans ½ Cup 60ml/Mg
- Legumes: Green Peas 100g 33ml/Mg
- Nuts: Cashews, Almonds 28g 80ml/Mg
- Seeds: Pumpkin Seeds 1/8 Cup 90ml/Mg
- Fish: Sardines, Canned 100g 39ml/Mg
- Dark Chocolate: 2 Squares 190ml/Mg
- Low Fat Dairy: Yogurt 1 Cup 50ml/Mg
- Dried Fruit: Figs ½ Cup 50ml/Mg

As well as eating magnesium rich foods, pay attention to your cooking methods. Boiling vegetables causes them to lose some of their magnesium content so choose steaming or stir-frying instead.

Also try to avoid high fat foods and drinks containing high levels of phosphates (many soft drinks) as these can both block magnesium absorption.

Magnesium is such an important mineral - that if you can't fit enough of it into your diet, then the only other option is to use Magnesium supplements.

It is important to know that magnesium is not easily absorbed into the body unless it has been combined with some sort of delivery system. Because of this, supplement manufacturers have "chelated" magnesium with amino acids. The quality of the supplement depends on its bioavailability. A bioavailable supplement is easily absorbed into the digestive system. Chelated forms of magnesium are less concentrated, but the magnesium in them can be absorbed into the body much easier.

Some health experts believe that "Nebulizing" Magnesium is the best way to deliver the mineral into the body for treating high blood pressure. This is delivered using a

nebulizing machine – where a user mixes Magnesium chloride oil mixed with filtered water and the mineral is inhaled as a vapor.

Other health experts recommend rubbing Magnesium Chloride oil into the skin for easy absorption into the body.

When you look for a Magnesium supplement, you will quickly become confused about which type of Magnesium you should take...

Unfortunately, many doctors have conflicting opinions on the best form of Magnesium for lowering blood pressure. And when you mix those opinions with different merchants trying to promote their own Magnesium products – the facts become muddy. This is yet another reason to try and consume your Magnesium through fresh vegetables.

Here are some common types of magnesium on the market:

Magnesium Citrate: This form of magnesium has a lower concentration than other types of magnesium, but has a high level of absorption at around 90%. Many health experts recommend this form of Mg for lowering blood pressure.

Magnesium Orotate: Is a very effective form of magnesium for absorption into the body. Unfortunately, a possible side effect of magnesium orotate supplements is impaired kidney function over a long period of time.

Magnesium Sulphate: Also known as Epsom salt, this type of magnesium has a low level of absorption. This type of magnesium is not recommended for hypertension.

Magnesium Glycinate: This form of Mg has a high absorption rate and is less likely to cause a laxative effect. Many health experts recommend this form of Mg for lowering blood pressure.

Magnesium Lactate: This type of mineral is most commonly used for treating digestive issues. Magnesium Lactate should be avoided by people with kidney related problems.

Magnesium Oxide: This mineral is often used for relief from constipation and acid reflux. It has a high concentration of magnesium but poor absorption into the body

Important: talk to your doctor first before taking any new supplements like magnesium – especially if you have kidney problems.

One of the side-effects of too much magnesium is diarrhea. If you find that this is a problem, try a different salt, you may be able to tolerate it better.

- **Super Herbs and Spices That Fight High Blood Pressure**

Fighting HBP naturally can be easier than you think. There are a host of common herbs and spices that you probably already have in your cupboards that can start reversing your hypertension right now.

There is such a wide selection, there is room for being choosy on which you prefer.

Ginger – A Commonly Used Herb in Chinese Medicine

Ginger naturally thins the blood while relaxing the blood vessel walls, making it easier for your heart to pump blood. Ginger works similarly to calcium channel blockers – a popular HBP medication.

Caution: Don't take ginger supplements without consulting your doctor first. Pregnant women shouldn't take more than 1g of ginger a day.

Turmeric – A Super Herb That Also Fights HBP

Turmeric is known for a host of different health benefits. As far as HBP goes, it acts as a wonderful anti-inflammatory with anti-blood clotting properties, as well as artery dilating properties similar to ginger.

An active ingredient curcumin protects artery walls from cell damage, resulting in a smoother blood flow.

When taking curcumin in supplement form, it is recommended to use a supplement that uses some form of oil as a delivery system such as fish oil, garlic oil or coconut oil.

Cinnamon – An Ancient Spice Once Valued Higher Than Gold.

Commonly used in Eastern medicine for hundreds of years, cinnamon has been hailed for numerous health benefits.

Cinnamon helps regulate insulin. Apart from the associated weight loss benefits, cinnamon has been reported to significantly relieve hypertension for people with diabetes (especially type 2).

The University of Toronto concluded that daily doses of cinnamon (1,200 milligrams) lowered systolic blood pressure on average 5 mmHg, while diastolic blood pressure was reduced on average 2.6 mmHg.

Above all other benefits; cinnamon has nearly the highest levels of antioxidants than any other food in the world – 2nd only to the common clove.

Caution: Cinnamon can come with side effects such as gastrointestinal upset, gingivitis, hot flashes, and uterine problems with pregnant women. Consult with a doctor before taking cinnamon.

Cayenne Pepper – A Life Saving Remedy worth Remembering

“Cayenne is most effective for heart and blood circulation problems, and for angina pectoris, palpitations, and cardiac arrhythmias. It's a miracle for congestive heart failure. It is a specific for anyone who has any type of circulatory problems, such as high or low blood pressure, elevated cholesterol, triglycerides and fats, even varicose veins.”

Richard M. Schulze

Cayenne pepper is such a powerful weapon against HBP that it can fight a heart attack within 90 seconds. A heaped teaspoon of cayenne pepper mixed with warm water may just save your life.

Cayenne peppers and other members of the hot pepper family contain a compound called “capsaicinoids”.

Capsaicinoids are natural COX-2 (cyclooxygenase-2) blockers.

The enzyme COX-2 causes the arteries to restrict and contract – restricting blood flow, and causing the heart to work harder.

The capsaicin found in cayenne (and other peppers) helps relax the arteries which lowers your blood pressure.

If hot peppers are not your thing, there are plenty choices on the market for capsaicin supplements.

Cardamom

This heart healthy spice is high in magnesium and potassium which are key minerals in the battle against HBP.

Flaxseed

A study published in the Natural Medical Journal in March 2014 reports that flaxseed substantially lowers blood pressure.

Study participants ate a variety of different foods containing 30g of milled flaxseed for 12 months. Results concluded significant decreases in blood pressure—15 mm Hg in systolic and 7 mm Hg in diastolic.

Garlic – a Potent Weapon against High Blood Pressure

Garlic lowers cholesterol while simultaneously acting as a blood thinner.

This super food is also high in antioxidants. The antioxidants in garlic fight free radicals. Free radicals are toxic particles that accumulate in your body as you get older. These free radicals cause heart disease, cancer, Alzheimer's disease and premature aging.

Garlic also contains allicin, a powerful compound clinically proven to lower blood pressure.

The compounds in garlic also act as natural ACE (Angiotensin Converting Enzyme) inhibitors. ACE inhibitors are a prescription of choice to many doctors – Unfortunately, with lab created ACE inhibitors; you can expect a host of nasty side effects.

In a trial by the British Journal of Clinical Practice; 47 hypertensive patients showed that garlic significantly decreased the mean systolic blood pressure by 12 mmHg and the mean supine diastolic blood pressure by 9 mmHg versus placebo.

Do: Keep your garlic potent in allicin by chopping your garlic as finely as possible - this releases more allicin.

Don't: Never microwave your garlic as this destroys the allicin.

Hawthorn

Hawthorn has been used in Chinese medicine for thousands of years.

Hawthorn is rich in two potent antioxidants: oligomeric procyanidins and flavonoids which play a vital role in lowering HBP.

Celery/Celery seed

The high blood pressure fighting compound found in celery and their seed is called 3-n-butylphthalide, or 3nB.

Studies revealed that a daily dose of 3nB (150mg) over a period of 6 weeks resulted in a decrease in systolic blood pressure by 8.2 mmHg and a decrease in diastolic blood pressure by 8.5 mmHg.

Cats Claw

Cats Claw contains an alkaloid Rhynchophylline which has been proven to stop platelet aggregation and thrombosis.

This prevents formation of blood clots in the arteries, heart and brain - while increasing circulation and lowering blood pressure.

Blond Psyllium (Common Name: Indian Plantago)

Research shows that taking the Plantago species of Blond psyllium supplement (15 g daily) can modestly lower systolic blood pressure by about 8 mmHg and diastolic by 2 mmHg.

Annona muricata (leaf of Prickly Custard Apple)

Native to South America, This leaf extract decreases peripheral vascular resistance and has been proven to modestly lower HBP.

Salvia Miltiorrhiza

Known as Dashen in China, this dried root has been used in traditional Chinese medicine for hundreds of years. Research from the University of Hong Kong concludes that Dashen acts as a natural ACE inhibitor – which relaxes blood vessels and alleviates high blood pressure.

- **Exercise – A Little Every Day**

“Exercise?” I thought you said “extra fries!”

Exercise is one of the very best ways to reduce your blood pressure and keep it down.

If you haven't exercised for a while, start off slowly. It is much better to do a little exercise over a longer period of time than to rush in with unrealistic targets and risk at best, your motivation and at worst, serious injury.

Walking is one of the most effective exercises for reducing blood pressure. Aim for 20 to 30 minutes of brisk walking daily and if you feel up to it, build up to longer.

Swimming is another good option as it is low-impact and takes the weight off your back and knees which is especially helpful if you are overweight.

Little things like choosing the stairs over the elevator or walking home from the bus one-stop early will make a significant difference over a long period of time.

If you are not very motivated to exercise alone, join a tai chi or qi gong class. Tai chi and qi gong are both gentle and relaxing forms of exercise which are good for stretching the muscles and reducing stress levels alike.

- **Meditation and Relaxation Techniques – Breathe, and Bring your Blood Pressure Down**

“Meditation is one of the most therapeutic things that one can do for the body and mind. Specifically, studies demonstrate a reduction in blood pressure, heart rate, and other stress marker indicators.” Tim McCarthy

When you become stressed, your body releases the hormones adrenaline and cortisol. Too much cortisol can signal your body to increase production of blood platelets, which can then clump together to form dangerous clots. These hormones also prepare the body for “fight or flight” by increasing the heart rate and narrowing the arteries. Both of these actions increase blood pressure.

Learning to relax and deal with stressful situations can be a really useful tool to help keep your blood pressure stable.

Eating properly, taking regular exercise and getting enough sleep are all important factors in improving your mood.

In addition, you can try relaxation techniques such as meditation. Meditation is the practice of sitting or lying quietly, letting go of your worries and emptying your mind. When you make meditation a habit, the peaceful tranquility that goes with it will continue to affect you for the rest of the day. Overall, this will have a big impact in your high blood pressure.

The benefits of meditation go far beyond lowering your blood pressure.

“Tension is who you think you should be. Relaxation is who you are.” Chinese Proverb

This long list of benefits may surprise you.

Reduced stress, reduced anxiety, increased cognitive retention, increased self-esteem, improved sleep, decreases worry, helps you stop smoking, treatment for epilepsy, extended longevity, increases skin resistance, psoriasis treatment, fibromyalgia relief, reduced risk of Alzheimer's disease, treatment for menopause symptoms, help prevent asthma, boosts immunity, reduces the risk of heart disease and stroke, improves mood, improves memory, increases energy, relieves strong pain, increased focus, improved cellular health, slows the aging process.

So start practicing meditation for your blood pressure, and keep the practice up for all the added benefits.

Meditation can be difficult at first so try for a short time such as 10 minutes, and then extend it to 20 minutes. Although some people will meditate for an hour, studies have shown that 20 minutes of meditation daily can reap tremendous benefits.

In the beginning, you will probably find that thoughts keep popping into your mind. As this happens, don't try to fight them. Simply acknowledge them and that they are normal, then let them drift away.

Some people find it easier to empty their mind by staring at the mesmerizing flickering flame of a candle.

It will feel very unnatural at first but if you persevere, it will become easier as you persist. Try to focus on your breathing and the feeling of your physical body to distract you from what is going on in your mind.

Many people find guided meditations helpful, and these can be found easily online. They can range from anywhere between 10 minutes to an hour or more, so there really is something to suit every schedule.

Even if you don't want to try meditation, take a time-out every day to do something which you enjoy and find relaxing. Whether it's taking a bath, reading, doing a crossword, working on a hobby or simply putting your feet up for half an hour. Anything that turns your mind off from worry and stress.

Remind yourself that your health is your wealth and you have permission to do something just for yourself. In our hectic lives it can be all too easy to forget this sometimes – especially if you are a busy parent.

While you are meditating as well as stressful situations, try to focus on your breathing. Breathe in for a count of seven and exhale slowly while counting to eleven. This helps to slow your mind and body down and will do wonders for your blood pressure.

Focusing on your breathing not only stops thoughts popping into your mind, but it also slows your heart rate. You can test this out for yourself – measure your heart rate before doing breathing exercises, then re-check your heart rate afterwards.

In-turn, when you slow your heart rate, your brain waves slow down to a “theta state” – which is ideal for meditation.

Below are some great breathing techniques to incorporate with meditation.

- **Breathing Techniques**

“My doctors told me this morning my blood pressure is down so low that I can start reading the newspapers.” Ronald Reagan

Different breathing techniques are a great way to focus your mind and help you to relax.

These breathing techniques are a great go-to if you become stressed or if you are having trouble getting to sleep.

Focusing on your breathing is great for meditation as it slows the heart rate, increases circulation while keeping your mind from wandering.

When practicing breathing techniques, try to clear your mind and focus on the physical sensations within your body.

Breathe deeply, all the way down to your belly button. You can practice this by resting your hand lightly on your belly as you take a few deep breaths. You should feel your belly rise and fall as you inhale and exhale.

Extend this breath up into your shoulders so that they raise slightly. Breathing down into your belly and up into your shoulders ensures that the lungs are completely filled with air.

You should try to breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. However, if this is uncomfortable, breathe both in and out through your mouth.

Here are some simple breathing exercises to get you started:

4-4 Breathing

This is a very simple technique. Breathe in whilst slowly counting to four, then out, again slowly counting to four.

This should be done as one smooth movement, without holding the breath in between. While breathing in and out, focus on the feeling of the breath within your body. Feel your belly and shoulders rise and fall.

As you breathe out, imagine all your negative thoughts and worries slipping away. As you breathe in, visualize light and healing entering your body.

Repeat this exercise until you feel completely calm and relaxed.

2-6 Breathing

Breathe in fairly quickly and very deeply to the count of two. Then without holding your breath, exhale slowly to the count of six.

Again, concentrate on your physical sensations and as you slowly breathe out, feel your muscles relax and release tension from your body and mind.

1-4 Breathing

This is a great invigorating technique.

Breathe in quickly and deeply through your mouth and without holding the breath, exhale completely to the count of four.

This technique can require some practice and you should stop immediately if you start to feel dizzy.

Chapter 5 - 10 Tasty Blood Pressure Lowering Kitchen Cures

As stated earlier in this book, choosing fresh fruit and vegetables over lab-created vitamin supplements is the best way to know for sure that you are helping your body combat hypertension.

Supplement pills and powders are still very effective, but the less processed option is always better.

Health supplements are popular because they are convenient and easy. So with that in mind, it may be worth considering a convenient and easy HBP smoothie routine.

Smoothies and HBP lowering beverages are delicious, easy, and convenient - while benefiting from the fresh factor.

Depending on the severity of your high blood pressure; by making a habit of consuming these DASH/Heart Smart kitchen cures, you will be able to say goodbye to prescription BP meds.

The ingredients in these recipes have been chosen specially for their HBP lowering abilities and have been previously mentioned in this book. Any ingredient with a * beside it signifies a strong high blood pressure lowering capability.

Virgin Bloody Mary – Virgin Bloody Caesar

The difference between a bloody Mary and a bloody Caesar is a bloody Caesar uses “clamato juice” (tomato & clam juice) instead of tomato juice. If you are a bloody Caesar fan – this beverage may be slightly better for high blood pressure because of the Omega-3 factor in the clam juice.

If you just have to indulge in a drink after work, choose a bloody Mary (or Caesar). But don't use your high blood pressure as an excuse to drink 6 of them.

Ingredients:

300ml of Tomato Juice or “Clamato” Juice *

1 Quarter of a Lemon *

1 Garlic Clove *

1 Splash of Tabasco Sauce or Habanera Sauce *

1 Splash of Worcestershire Sauce

1 Pinch of Pepper

1 Pinch of Ground Celery Seed *

Ice

Method: Add ice to an empty highball glass and add your Tabasco sauce, Worcestershire sauce, ground celery seed, pepper, squeezed lemon-quarter and a finely chopped garlic clove.

Add tomato /clamato juice while slowly stirring.

Caution: Be mindful of the high salt content in Worcestershire sauce.

Honey fights high blood pressure

Honey’s medicinal purposes have been cherished for thousands of years throughout numerous cultures. Its high blood pressure lowering properties have been used in Russia as a standard home remedy for a long time.

Recognizing this, several studies have revealed that honey is packed with vitamins and nutrients needed to fight high blood pressure such as Vitamin E.

Honey possesses all the minerals needed to fight HBP: Magnesium, Potassium, Calcium and Phosphorous as well as a host of dietary minerals such as zinc, iron, and selenium.

But most importantly, research concluded that honey contains antioxidants proven to lower blood pressure.

Honey never spoils. Archaeologists once discovered 3000 year old jars of honey in an Egyptian mummy's tomb. Once heated, and returned back to liquid form, the honey was as good as the day it was harvested.

Only buy "raw honey" as processed/pasteurized honey has been heat treated to give the product a smoother texture – unfortunately; the pasteurization process kills all of the vitamins, minerals and nutrients.

Be sure to use honey sparingly if you are trying to lose weight as honey is very high in calories/kilojoules.

New Zealand's "Manuka Honey" is considered the most potent in nutrients.

Beet, Celery, and Orange Smoothie

Beets (beetroot) works as a natural ACE inhibitor (ACE inhibitors are popular HBP drug prescription).

Celery contains an artery relaxing phytochemical called phthalides - by relaxing the arteries, it means less pressure on the heart. Celery contains a high blood pressure fighting called 3-n-butylphthalide, or 3nB. Celery is also rich in magnesium, potassium and fiber (DASH endorsed).

Oranges are high in vitamin C as well as antioxidants that support heart health.

Ingredients:

1 Medium Sized Beet (stem trimmed and washed)

½ Celery Stick

½ Cup of Orange Juice

½ Cup of Ice

½ Cup of Water

Method: Add ingredients to your blender until smooth..

Be sure to drink as much pulp as you can as it is full of fiber (fiber fights HBP).

Hibiscus Tea with Honey, Lemon and Cinnamon

Hibiscus tea works as a natural ACE inhibitor as well as a diuretic (diuretic's absorb sodium from the blood stream).

This cranberry flavored flower creates a popular tea that has been clinically proven significantly lower high blood pressure.

Be sure to flavor your beverage with the powerful antioxidants found in honey, lemon and cinnamon.

Whey Protein Fights HBP

In November 2010, the International Dairy Journal reported that participants suffering from high blood pressure who consumed daily doses of whey protein (26g) for 6 weeks saw significant decrease in their blood pressure.

The study also reported a significant drop in LDL cholesterol – the bad cholesterol that causes narrow arteries resulting in pressure from the heart.

Avocado and Cacao Smoothie

Avocado is rich in vitamin E – a vitamin proven to reduce thinning arteries (thin arteries cause HBP).

Cacao is high in high blood pressure lowering flavonoids that dilate the arteries and antioxidants to fight free radicals. Cacao comes in powder or as cacao nibs. Cacao is naturally quite bitter and strong flavor – so use sparingly.

Add a sprinkle of cinnamon for flavor and also for the high antioxidants it contains.

Figs are high in calcium and magnesium (DASH endorsed).

Ingredients:

½ Avocado*

1 Fig*

1 tbsp of cacao powder*

1-2 Scoops of Whey Protein Powder*

1 Pinch of Cinnamon*

1 cup of water

½ a Cup of Ice

Method: add ingredients into a blender and whizz until smooth.

Cacao Banana Walnut Smoothie

Studies prove that eating two bananas a day can reduce HBP by 10 percent.

Walnuts contain the “good fats” we need for our body to create alpha-linoleic acid which fights blockages in our arteries.

Cacao contains flavonoids that dilate the arteries as well as being high in antioxidants.

Ingredients:

1 Banana*

3 tbsp Walnuts*

1 tbsp of Cacao Powder*

1-2 Scoops of Whey Protein Powder*

1 tsp Honey*

1 Cup of Water

Method: add ingredients into a blender and whizz until smooth.

French Chicken Soup

French style chicken soup is a delicious diet friendly comfort food that is hard to grow tired of.

Its heart/DASH endorsed, and it's a great soup to have frozen in portions to whip out anytime you need a quick meal.

You will notice in the ingredients list - a larger than “normal” portion of garlic. This is because of garlic’s powerful HBP fighting capabilities. You will be surprised that there is not an overly strong garlic flavor to your soup. This is because it has been thoroughly cooked and has developed a mild sweet taste.

Take note of this and try to add more garlic to every meal.

This soup not only tastes wonderful but all the ingredients have powerful high blood pressure lowering capabilities.

The vegetable combination – celery/onion/carrot/garlic makes a deliciously distinctive flavor combination and should be the cornerstone of your stir-fry’s.

There is two different ways to serve this soup – smooth or “chunky”. If you like a smooth texture, then you will wait for the soup to cool, and then pour it into a blender.

The “chunky” version tastes different. So you may want to experiment to see which you prefer.

Ingredients:

3 Cups of Chicken Stock (mushroom stock if you are a vegetarian)

1 Medium Sized Carrot*

1 Large Onion (or 2 medium ones)*

2 Large Stalks of Celery*

1 Large Bulb of Garlic*

1 tsp of Cumin*

1 tsp of Cayenne Pepper* (optional)

1 Splash of Olive Oil*

1 Large Chicken Breast, Finely Diced

Method: If you want the smooth textured version, cut your vegetables very roughly (because they will blend at the end). If you don't plan to blend, then cut your vegetables very finely.

Excluding your stock; add all your ingredients into a large pot, and stir over a medium heat.

Once the vegetables begin to soften, add a little stock into the pot until it begins to boil, and then add a little more, and continue to do so until you have added all of your stock.

Once the soup begins to boil, cover your pot with a lid, and turn the heat down to low.

After an hour, your soup will be ready for the chicken.

If you like a smooth texture to your soup; blend until smooth and return to the pot before adding the chicken.

We add the chicken last because we are using chicken breast. To ensure the chicken is soft and tender; stir the finely diced raw chicken to the boiling soup for 2 minutes before serving.

Chicken, Zucchini and Cauliflower Soup

This soup is very similar to the French chicken soup. The difference is the great flavor that cauliflower and zucchini make together combined with the savory "umami" flavor of the mushrooms.

When creating different soups it is important not to use the same vegetables and spices for every dish, otherwise all of your soups will begin to taste the same. For that reason, resist the temptation to add extra ingredients.

Ingredients:

3 Cups of Chicken Stock
1 Large Onion (or 2 small ones)*
1 Large Zucchini*
½ Head of Cauliflower
1 tsp of Crushed Celery Seeds*
1 Large Bulb of Garlic*
8 Button Mushrooms
1 tsp of Cumin*
1 tsp of Oregano*
1 Splash of Olive Oil*
1 Large Chicken Breast, Finely Diced
Pepper to Taste

Method: This soup needs to be a smooth texture. So cut your vegetables very roughly (except the cauliflower) because they will be blended at the end.

When cutting the cauliflower, cut off the florets (the flowery bits) and discard the stems.

Excluding your stock; add all your ingredients into a large pot, and stir over a medium heat.

Once the vegetables begin to soften, add a little stock into the pot until it begins to boil, and then add a little more, and continue to do so until you have added all of your stock.

Once the soup begins to boil, cover your pot with a lid, and turn the heat down to low.

After an hour of cooking, turn off the heat. Once the soup has sufficiently cooled, blend the soup until smooth. Return the soup to the pot and add the diced chicken to the boiling soup 2 minutes before serving.

Wheatgrass Kicks Ass!

Wheatgrass is a super-food that contains all the vitamins, minerals, amino acids and enzymes the body needs to fight HBP.

Juicing wheatgrass is a great source of antioxidants that promotes heart health.

Wheatgrass is high in Chlorophyll which cleanses cells, kidneys, liver and your colon while purifying the blood. Chlorophyll also dilates the arteries which reduces strain on the heart.

This super food alkalizes the body. Wheatgrass juice detoxifies by eliminating harmful heavy metals and toxins that get stored in body from eating non-organic and exposure from general pollution.

Fresh wheatgrass is best, but unfortunately a household juicer won't have the juicing power to separate the nutrient rich juice from the fibrous cellulose.

Instead, you need either a slow-press juicer or a specifically designed wheatgrass juicer.

The easier choice is to try the freeze dried option.

Freeze dried wheatgrass powder is very mild in flavor in comparison to fresh WG juice, so you can add a teaspoon to most smoothies without even tasting it.

Wheatgrass Pomegranate Smoothie

Pomegranate fights high blood pressure the same way beet juice does – It is a powerful natural ACE inhibitor. So if you can't source pomegranate juice, then choose beets instead. If you do choose beets, you will need to add a little orange juice to thin out the smoothie.

Ingredients:

1 Cup of Pomegranate Juice*

1 tsp of Freeze Dried Wheatgrass powder*

1 Dash of Orange Juice* (to taste)

Ice

Method: add wheatgrass powder to your glass first, and then add pomegranate juice slowly as you stir.

Add ice once satisfied the wheatgrass is dissolved.

Add a dash of orange juice to taste.

Strawberry, Mango Banana & Wheatgrass

Strawberry, Mango and Banana are a taste combination made in heaven. They are also highly endorsed by the DASH diet.

By adding a little wheatgrass powder, you turn a tasty/healthy smoothie into a high blood pressure lowering super-smoothie.

Ingredients:

1 Small Banana*

½ Mango* (or a handful of frozen cubes)

4 Strawberries* (Fresh or Frozen)

1-2 Scoops of Whey Protein Powder*

1 Pinch of Ground Cinnamon* (optional)

1 tsp Honey* (optional)

½ Cup of Ice

½ Cup of Water

Method: Excluding water, add all the ingredients into a blender and process until smooth. Slowly add water until you come to a desired consistency.

Beetroot Carrot & Tomato Juice

This HBP lowering super juice tastes great too. Your heart and your taste buds will thank you.

Ingredients:

1 Medium sized Beet*

½ Carrot*

1 tsp of Wheatgrass powder* (optional)

1 Cup of Tomato Juice*

1/3 tsp Cumin

1/3 tsp Cayenne Pepper*

1 Dash of Worcestershire Sauce

½ cup of Ice

Method: Add all ingredients into a blender and process until smooth.

Part 2 – High Blood Pressure – An Eastern View Point

Chapter 6 - Yin and Yang - Excess and Deficiency

“Yin and Yang are the source of power and the beginning of everything in creation.”

HUANG-TI, The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine

Eastern medicine prefers to treat the root cause of what's causing an ailment.

So for an ailment like hypertension, Chinese medicine will treat the meridians that are causing the high blood pressure.

So for self-treatment in acupressure, it helps to be able to identify symptoms of meridian imbalances - so you can create a more effective acupressure routine.

In Chinese medicine, your state of health relies on the balance of yin and yang.

Yin and yang are the two complementary and opposing forces of nature which are also present inside the human body.

Yin represents the feminine, night-time, water, coolness, stillness.

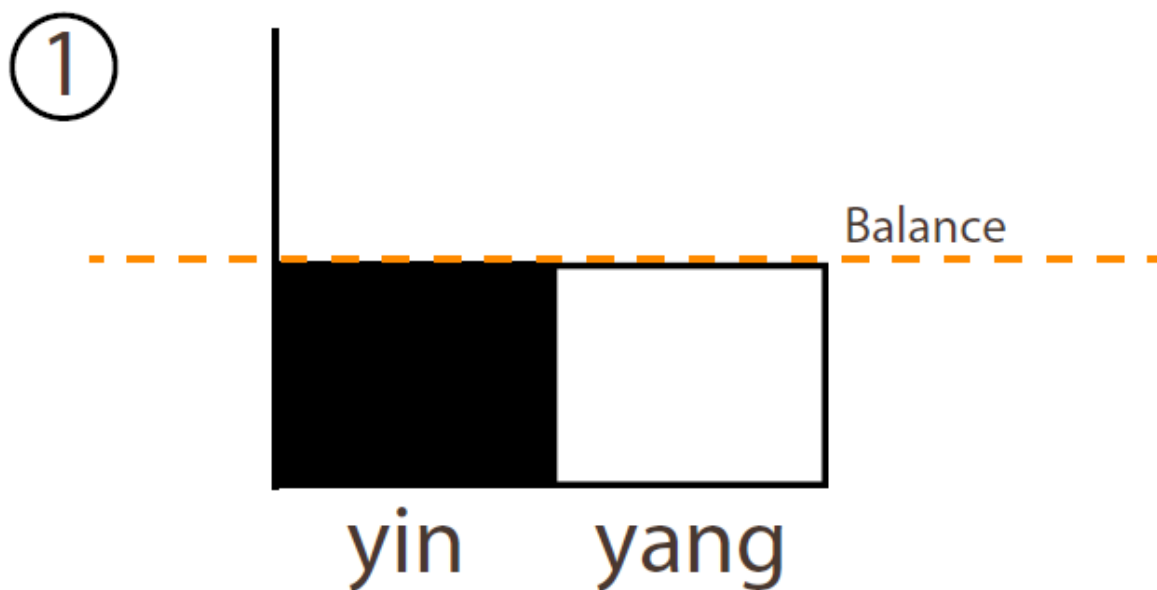
Yang represents the masculine, daytime, fire, heat, motion.

The Chinese characters show the shady side and the sunny side of a hill. This shows that the two cannot exist without one another and nothing can ever be completely yin or completely yang.

阴 阳

Yin Yang

When yin and yang are in balance, the body is healthy and free from disease. When one or the other becomes excessive or deficient, is when problems begin to occur.



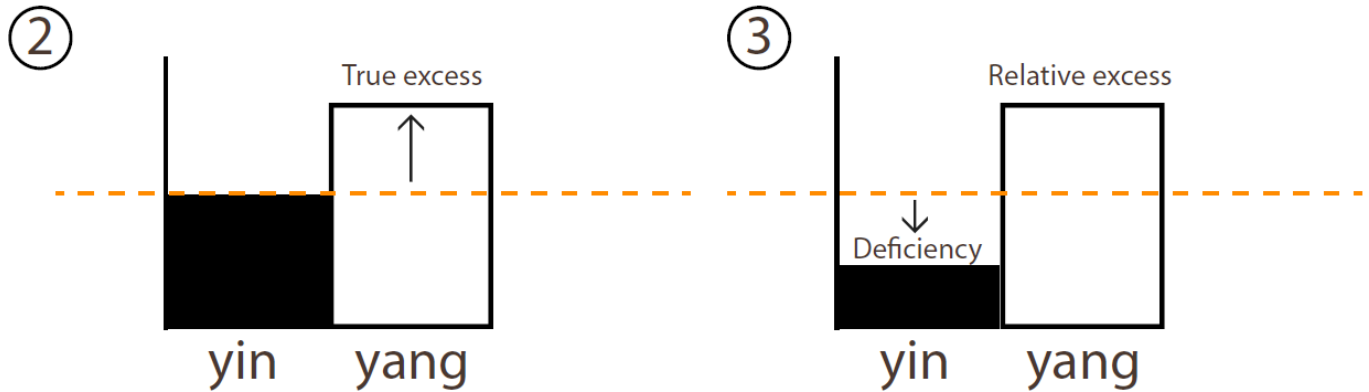
High blood pressure can be caused by both excess and deficiency patterns with yin and yang.

It is easy to imagine hypertension as an excess; the heart pumping forcefully, the blood pushing against the walls of the arteries. But how about deficiency?

Sometimes a deficiency in either yin or yang can lead to symptoms of seeming excess in the other.

However, this is not a true excess, it is merely that there is not enough of the opposite force to counterbalance it.

Take the example of yin deficiency leading to excess yang symptoms. In diagram 2 below, yang is in true excess. In diagram 3, the level of yang is normal, but due to the deficiency of yin, it is in a state of relative excess. This can lead to similar symptoms as a true yang excess pattern.



Symptoms of an excess yang, whether it be true or relative, can include feelings of heat in the body, redness of the face, thirst or dry mouth, scant urination, constipation, difficulty relaxing or sleeping, rapid pulse and hypertension.

Therefore when treating high blood pressure using traditional Chinese medicine, the aim of treatment is either to reduce the levels of yang or increase the levels of yin, and restore balance to the whole body.

Key Signs of Yin Deficiency/Yang Dominance

- Usually feels hot
- Irritability, easy to anger
- Inability to relax
- Difficulty sleeping
- Larger upper body, small/weak hips and legs
- Red complexion/flushing

Lifestyle Changes to Restore Balance

- Eat more foods which are yin in nature such as leafy greens, citrus fruits, melons and squashes, tofu, dairy products
- Use yin cooking methods such as boiling or steaming
- Avoid stimulants such as caffeine and alcohol and spicy food
- Ensure you have some quiet time every day when you can relax and unwind

Lifestyle Changes to Restore Balance

- Eat more yang foods such as meat, poultry, shellfish, whole grains, nuts, mild spices
- Use yang cooking methods such as stir-frying, roasting or baking
- Avoid cold or raw foods and cold drinks
- Take some gentle exercise on a daily basis

Key Signs of Yang Deficiency/Yin Dominance

- Usually feels cold
- Depression
- Lack of energy
- Low sex drive
- Larger lower body, small chest and shoulders
- Pale skin

Chapter 7 - Using Acupressure to Relieve High Blood Pressure

“I have been a big fan of Chinese medicine for a long time because it works.”

Gwyneth Paltrow

Like western medicine, in Chinese medicine there are several organs involved in the regulation of blood pressure. These are the Heart, the Kidneys and the Liver.

In this book, there will be some references to “qi”. Qi (pronounced “chi”) can be roughly translated as “vital energy” or “life force”. Qi is called “ki” in Japan, “prana” in India, and “mana” in some Polynesian cultures.

It flows through our meridian system, allowing our lungs to breathe, our muscles to move and our hearts to beat. It is what animates us and keeps us alive.

Our state of well-being is highly dependent on the state of our qi, and this is what we are trying to influence when we use acupressure or acupuncture.

The Meridian System – Your Personal Communications Network

According to Chinese medicine, your qi flows around your body through fine channels called meridians.

These meridians are like rivers, and your qi should move through them freely, nourishing every cell, muscle and tissue as it goes.

However, sometimes, like a river, the meridians can become blocked or dry. Perhaps a physical injury has prevented the smooth flow of qi or maybe there is simply not enough qi to move as it should. This is when disease occurs.

There are twelve main meridians, one for each of the organs. As well as having a deep pathway connecting with their respective organ, each meridian is accessible from the

surface of the body, at the acupressure points. This forms a complex communications system throughout the entire body.

These special points along the meridians are the places where we can access and influence our own qi, restoring its smooth flow and returning our bodies to a state of health.

Heart vs. heart

You may wonder why I used capital letters at the start of the words when talking about the organs in Chinese medicine.

This is to distinguish between the organ in western medicine, which refers only to the physical organ itself, and the organ in Chinese medicine, which also includes its meridian channel, acupoints and related functions.

- **The Heart – Much more than a Pump**

“When the Heart is at ease, the body is healthy.” Chinese proverb

The Heart's association with blood pressure may seem an obvious one. As in western medicine, the heart is responsible for the blood and circulation. However, in Chinese medicine, the Heart is so much more.

The Heart is considered to be the emperor of the body, and as well as its physical functions, it is thought to house the shen.

Shen is the most intangible of all the body's vital substances and can be roughly translated as “spirit” or “mindfulness”. When the shen is disturbed, it can result in conditions such as depression, anxiety and insomnia.

As well as controlling the flow of blood around the body, the Heart also plays a role in the formation of blood, stamping it with shen as it passes through its chambers and making it our own.

When the Heart meridian is out of balance, this can cause not only physical problems with the circulatory system, but also psychological and emotional problems too.

Symptoms arising from Heart imbalances can include depression, anxiety, insomnia, dream disturbed sleep, poor memory, palpitations, shortness of breath and fatigue.

One of the best ways to nourish the Heart is through proper rest and relaxation. There are also several acupressure points which can help.

These acupressure points will not only nourish the heart, but will bring it back to a state of homeostasis resulting in a safer, healthy blood pressure.

- **Acupressure Points to Harmonies the Heart**

Each of these points should be stimulated for one minute, using a thumb or forefinger to apply medium to firm pressure.

Heart 6 – Yin Xi – Yin Cleft



Location: On the inner forearm, on the side of the little finger. The point is one finger width up from the wrist crease and Heart 7, in the groove alongside the tendon exposed when the ring finger and little finger are bent together.

Functions: Regulates the Heart and blood, benefiting circulation and reducing blood pressure.

Calms the mind and relieves stress.

Heart 7 – Shen Men – Spirit Door



Location: On the inner forearm, on the side of the little finger. The point is at the wrist crease, between the tendon and the small, prominent bone of the wrist (the pisiform).

Functions: Regulates and benefits the Heart, helping it to function efficiently and smoothly.

Calms the mind and relieves stress.

Pericardium 6 – Nei Guan – Inner Pass

PC6/Nei Guan (translated name “Inner pass” or “Inner Gate”) is a common high blood pressure lowering acupressure point. This point should always be incorporated into your HBP acupressure regime.



Location: On the center of the inner forearm, three finger widths up from the wrist crease. In the groove between the two tendons exposed when a tight fist is made.

Functions: Regulates qi, especially in the chest, allowing the Heart and Lungs to function efficiently.

Regulates the Heart and circulation allowing blood to flow smoothly. Calms the mind. Clears heat which is a common cause of increased pulse rate and high blood pressure. Relieves nausea.

Conception Vessel 14 – Ju Que – Great Gateway



Location: On the midline of the body, eight finger widths above the navel. This point may feel tender, if this is the case, just be gentle, you only need to use light to medium pressure to stimulate this point.

Functions: Regulates the Heart and relieves chest pain.

Opens the chest allowing Heart and Lungs to operate freely.

Calms the mind.

Resolves phlegm, which can cause the channels to become blocked and result in hypertension.

- **The Kidneys – Nourishing the Source**

The Kidneys, along with the Bladder are responsible for the regulation of water within the body. This has a direct effect on the volume of the blood and blood pressure.

Having more or less water in the blood affects its volume, and the pressure that it exerts on the artery walls. Therefore keeping your Kidneys healthy and in balance is one key way to keep your blood pressure in check.

To keep your Kidneys and the rest of your body functioning healthily, you should aim to drink around two liters, that's three and a half pints, every day.

The Kidneys are also the source of all yin and yang in the body. Remember, keeping yin and yang in harmony is vitally important in preventing all types of disease.

As we age, our Kidney yin is depleted. This is especially true for women as they reach menopause. Depleted Kidney yin leads to a relative excess in yang. This is the reason why the symptoms of menopause result in hot flushes, feelings of heat, especially in the afternoon, inability to relax, and insomnia.

Kidney yin deficiency is one of the major patterns involved in hypertension. Symptoms of Kidney yin deficiency include feeling hot, especially in the afternoon or at night, flushing of the skin, anxiety and feeling unable to relax or insomnia.

The Kidneys can be nurtured by taking appropriate rest and exercise, and eating a healthy, balanced diet rich in beans and legumes, nuts, and dark green vegetables. Meat should be cooked slowly on the bone to infuse it with nutrients which further benefit the Kidneys.

Using self-acupressure is also a useful way to nourish the Kidneys and boost Kidney yin.

- **Acupressure Points to Nourish the Kidneys**

Stimulate each of these points for one minute using medium to firm pressure.

Kidney 1 – Yong Quan – Gushing Spring



Location: On the sole of the foot, one third of the distance between the base of the second toe and the heel, in a depression between the second and third metatarsal bones.

Functions: Kidney 1 is the only point on the sole of the foot, and is therefore the lowest point on the body.

It has the effect of drawing qi downwards, clearing the head and relieving symptoms such as dizziness, headaches and hypertension.

Kidney 3 – Tai Xi - Greater Stream



Location:

On the inner ankle, in the hollow between the prominence of the ankle bone and the Achilles tendon.

Functions:

Nourishes the Kidneys allowing them to function at their optimum point.

Balances Kidney yin and yang, restoring harmony throughout the entire body.

Kidney 6 – Zhao Hai – Illuminated Sea



Location:

On the inner foot, below the prominence of the ankle bone, in a groove between the two ligaments.

Functions:

Nourishes the Kidneys, especially Kidney yin which is important in maintaining the balance between yin and yang and controlling blood pressure.

Clears heat which has arisen as a symptom of yin deficiency and relieves symptoms of hot flushes, irritability, insomnia and hypertension.

Conception Vessel 4 – Guan Yuan – Gate of Origin



Location:

On the midline of the abdomen, around four finger widths below the umbilicus and three finger widths above the pubic bone. CAUTION: Do not use during pregnancy.

Functions:

Nourishes the Kidneys helping them to function efficiently.

Benefits the Bladder and helps with the regulation of water within the body.

- **The Liver – Smoothing the Flow**

The Liver is primarily responsible for the smooth flow of qi within the body. It also plays an important role in the formation and storage of blood.

Smoothly flowing qi is important for the proper functioning of all your body systems.

Your nerves, your digestion, your breathing and your circulation all rely on the smooth flow of qi to operate correctly. When qi does not flow as it should, is when disease occurs.

The Liver is badly affected by emotional stress and anger. When the Liver becomes stressed, it is unable to circulate qi smoothly around the body.

When qi is not flowing smoothly, the circulation of blood also becomes sluggish and eventually blood can become stuck resulting in a condition known as blood stasis. This is obviously not good for your blood pressure!

A Good Night's Sleep

A good night's sleep is really important for keeping the blood and blood vessels healthy.

The Liver is at its peak between 1am and 3am. During this time the blood returns to the Liver to be refreshed and renewed.

If you are active at this time rather than lying down in bed, this cannot happen as the blood is being used elsewhere in the body. Over time, this can lead to a whole host of problems with the blood and circulation.

The Liver also has a tendency to an excess of yang when it becomes imbalanced. When Liver yang flares up, it can cause symptoms such as dizziness, vertigo, headaches, blurred vision, irritability, insomnia.

According to Chinese medicine theory, Liver yang excess is also one of the major causes of increased blood pressure.

The best way to keep Liver yang in check is to try and stay on an even keel emotionally. As far as possible, avoid stressful situations and try to talk over problems as they arise rather than keeping them bottled up inside.

Gentle exercise such as yoga and tai chi is great for keeping the Liver qi flowing smoothly and many people find meditation a really helpful way of reducing stress and staying positive.

- **Acupressure Points to Soothe the Liver**

Stimulate these points for one minute each, using medium to firm pressure.

Liver 2 – Xing Jian – Moving Between



Location: On the top of the foot, between the first and second toes.

Functions: Clears and calms the Liver, preventing yang from becoming excessive and reducing blood pressure.

Allows the smooth flow of qi and prevents blockages so that blood can flow freely.

Clears heat, one of the major causes of hypertension.

Liver 3 – Tai Chong – Great Rushing



LV3/Tai Chong (translated name “Great Rushing” or “Bigger Rushing”) is a potent acupressure point that is vital to your high blood pressure lowering regime.

Location: On the top of the foot between the first and second metatarsal bones. If you run your finger up from Liver 2, it will fall into a large hollow at the junction of the bones. This is Liver 3.

Functions:

- Spreads Liver qi in the body, preventing stagnation and symptoms such as irritability.
- Clears heat from the Liver, preventing an excess of yang and hypertension.
- Clears the head, preventing dizziness and headaches.
- Nourishes yin, restoring balance throughout the whole system.
- Nourishes blood, keeping it healthy and circulating freely.

Gallbladder 34 – Yang Ling Quan – Yang Mound Spring



Location: On the outer aspect of the lower leg, just below the knee. If you run your finger up the leg from ankle to knee, you will find a bony prominence which is the head of the fibula. The point is in a hollow just below the flare of the bone.

Functions: The Gallbladder is paired with the Liver and they work together, enhancing one another's functions.

This point is particularly helpful for spreading Liver qi throughout the body, preventing stagnation and hypertension.

It also plays an important role in relaxing the muscles and relieving pain.

- **Acupressure Points to Relieve Stress and Calm the Mind**

The Liver responds badly to stress. It is one of the major causes of Liver qi stagnation or excess yang, which in turn leads to symptoms such as headache, dizziness, digestive issues and hypertension.

By finding ways to release emotional tension, we can keep the Liver functioning smoothly and prevent a whole host of unwanted problems.

These points can be stimulated whenever you feel yourself getting hot and bothered.

Use gentle to medium pressure on the points for one minute, coupled with some deep breathing until you begin to feel more relaxed.

Many of the acupressure points on the Heart meridian channel, including those listed earlier in this chapter have the effect of calming the mind, but there are a few extra points that you can include to really enhance their effects.

Remember that stress is a big contributing factor to high blood pressure. So be sure to use these exercises in your acupressure regime.

Extra Point – Yin Tang – Seal Hall



Location:

On the face, between the inner ends of the eyebrows.

Functions:

Relieves stress and calms the mind.

Governing Vessel 20 – Bai Hui - One Hundred Meetings



GV20/Bai Hui (translated name “One hundred meetings” or “one hundred convergences”) is a potent acupressure point for hypertension regulation. This point should always be incorporated into acupressure sessions when you are short on time.

Location: On the top of the head on the midline. This point can be found by running the fingers up from the tips of the ears to the top of the head.

Functions: Calms the mind.

Clears the head, relieving headaches and dizziness.

Pathogenic Factors

In Chinese medicine, pathogenic factors are things which invade the body either from outside or within and contribute to the development of disease.

The two main pathogenic factors involved in hypertension are heat, which causes the pulse rate to increase, boosting blood pressure, and phlegm which sticks to and clogs the vessels preventing smooth circulation.

- **Heat – When your Blood is Hot and Bothered**

Heat is one of the most straightforward concepts to understand in Chinese medicine. It is simply a buildup of excess heat in the body. Some people are naturally hotter than others, but an excess of heat can also be caused by external factors such as environment and diet.

Heat has a negative impact on blood pressure as it causes the heart rate to increase. The heart beating faster means more blood being pumped into the arteries and higher blood pressure.

Too much heat in the blood causes excessive bleeding, for example heavy menstruation, nosebleeds and bruising.

The best way to keep cool and stop an excess of heat building up in the body is simply to avoid situations where you get too hot and bothered. Keep your showers and baths at a moderate temperature, avoid saunas or sitting too long in the sun.

Eat cooling foods such as salads, steamed vegetables and citrus fruits, and avoid spicy or fatty foods as well as red meat which all warm the body and could contribute to hypertension.

- **Acupressure Points to Clear Heat and Cool the Blood**

Some of the acupressure points listed for the Heart, Kidneys and Liver also have the effect of clearing heat from their respective organs. Some more points specifically for clearing heat from the entire system are as follows.

Stimulate each point for one minute using medium to firm pressure.

Large Intestine 11 – Qu Chi - Crooked Pond



LI11 is one of the most potent acupressure points that is always used when combating high blood pressure. Be sure to always add this pressure point to your HBP lowering routine.

Location: At the elbow at the outer end of the elbow crease, midway between the large tendon and the elbow bone. Locate with the arm folded across the body at a 90° angle.

Functions: Clears heat and cools the body, reducing heart rate and relieving hypertension. Cools blood and prevents excess bleeding. Regulates qi and blood and benefits circulation.

Spleen 10 – Xue Hai – Sea of Blood



Location: On the thigh, three finger widths above the inner and upper corner of the knee, in a hollow on the bulge of the muscle. This point may feel tender to pressure.

Actions: Improves circulation and reduces blood pressure.

Cools the blood and stops bleeding.

Regulates menstruation, relieving heavy and painful periods.

- **Phlegm – A Sticky Situation**

Phlegm is another pathogenic factor which can affect the blood pressure. Phlegm is formed over time by a combination of factors including a natural predisposition, poor diet and poorly functioning digestive organs.

In Chinese medicine, in addition to being what you cough up when you have a cold, phlegm also refers to any thick, sticky, unhealthy substance within the body.

Phlegm stops qi and fluids from flowing smoothly, clogging up the vessels and causing blood pressure to rise.

Fats also fall into the category of phlegm. Eating a diet high in fatty foods is a primary cause, and being overweight or obese is considered a classic sign of retention of phlegm.

Symptoms of phlegm retention include dizziness, a feeling of heaviness in the limbs, nausea, greasy stools, productive cough, lumps or boils on the skin, palpitations and in severe cases mental illness.

Since phlegm is usually formed either as a result of poor diet or poor digestion, the acupuncture points to resolve phlegm are those which influence the Stomach and Spleen, the two digestive organs of Chinese medicine.

- **Acupressure Points to Resolve Phlegm**

Use medium to firm pressure to stimulate each point for one minute.

Stomach 40 – Feng Long – Abundant Splendor



Location: Midway between the knee crease and the outer prominence of the ankle bone, two finger widths outwards from the bony ridge of the tibia.

Functions: Clears phlegm from the body removing blockages and allowing the channels to flow freely. Relieves headaches and dizziness.

Spleen 9 – Yin Ling Quan – Yin Mound Spring



Location: On the inner aspect of the lower leg, just below the knee. If you run your finger up the leg from ankle to knee, you will find a bony prominence which is the head of the tibia. The point is in a hollow just below the flare of the bone, on a level with Gallbladder 34.

This point may feel tender to pressure which is a good indicator that there is some excess phlegm stuck in the system.

Functions: Removes phlegm and clears the channels to improve circulation.

- **More Points to Reduce Blood Pressure**

As mentioned earlier in this book, Eastern medicine prefers to treat the root cause of what's causing an ailment... rather than simply using acupressure points to reduce blood pressure. That being said, there are some effective acupressure points that help to regulate HBP.

These should be used in addition to any points selected on the Heart, Kidney or Liver channels. They should be stimulated for one minute using medium to firm pressure.

Stomach 36 – Zu San Li – Leg Three Miles



ST36/Zu San Li (translated name “Leg Three Miles” or “Leg Three Li”) is another potent acupressure point that is vital to your high blood pressure lowering regime.

Location: On the calf, in a hollow formed alongside the prominent bony ridge at the top of the tibia. You can locate this point by holding your thumb out at 90° from the fingers and resting across the top of your knee. In this position, your middle finger should fall onto Stomach 36.

Actions: This is a great “cure-all” point that can play an important part in most acupressure routines. It builds qi and benefits the immune system as well as strengthening the entire body and protecting against disease.

Stomach 36 is useful in the treatment of any chronic disease, including hypertension. It can also be used by healthy individuals as a preventative

measure against developing serious

conditions later on in life.

Stomach 9 – Renying - Man's Welcome



ST9/Renying (translated name “Man’s Welcome” or “Man’s Prognosis”) is a powerful acupressure point that is important to your high blood pressure lowering regime.

Location: On the neck, on either side of the Adam’s apple (or where one would be if you were male). Press your index finger on the muscular area where the pulse of the carotid artery is felt. Do not press both index fingers on the areas at once. Use one index finger at a time.

Functions: Relieves high blood pressure. Regulates blood and qi. Alleviates Asthma.

Gallbladder 20 – Feng Chi – Wind Pond



GB20/Feng Chi (translated name “wind pond” or “wind pool”) is one of the most potent acupressure points for hypertension. This point should never be missed in your HBP lowering regimen.

Location: At the base of the skull in a depression formed between two muscles. Midway between the jawbone and the midpoint of the spine.

Functions: Clears the head to relieve headaches and dizziness.

Moves qi downward and reduces blood pressure.

Extra Point – Er Jian – Apex of the Ear



Location:

Behind the ear, at the highest point. Locate with the ear folded forward.

Functions:

Relieves hypertension.

Chapter 8 - An Acupressure Routine to Successfully Reduce Blood Pressure

In Chinese medicine, the aim of treatment is always to focus on the root cause of a disease rather than just relieving the symptoms.

As previously discussed, high blood pressure is a symptom of an imbalance of yin and yang in either the Heart, the Kidneys or the Liver. It may also be caused by the pathogenic factors heat or phlegm.

To treat your hypertension in the most efficient way, you need to decide where your major imbalance lies.

This may not be easy to do as many people have a combination of two or more imbalances, but by using the following guidelines you can see which pattern of symptoms fits you best and adapt your acupressure routine accordingly.

Stimulate these points for one minute each, using medium to firm pressure.

- **Heart Yin Deficiency**

Primary Symptoms:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Insomnia
- Dream disturbed sleep
- Poor memory

- Palpitations
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue

Key Acupressure Points

Heart 6



Location: On the inner forearm, on the side of the little finger. The point is one finger width up from the wrist crease and Heart 7, in the groove alongside the tendon exposed when the ring finger and little finger are bent together.

Heart 7



Location: On the inner forearm, on the side of the little finger. The point is at the wrist crease, between the tendon and the small, prominent bone of the wrist (the pisiform).

Pericardium 6



Location: On the center of the inner forearm, three finger widths up from the wrist crease. In the groove between the two tendons exposed when a tight fist is made.

Conception Vessel 14



Location: On the midline of the body, eight finger widths above the navel. This point may feel tender, if this is the case, just be gentle, you only need to use light to medium pressure to stimulate this point.

- **Kidney Yin Deficiency**

Primary Symptoms:

- Hot flushes
- Feeling hot in the afternoon
- Inability to relax
- Insomnia
- Back or knee pain

Key Acupressure Points

Kidney 1



Location: On the sole of the foot, one third of the distance between the base of the second toe and the heel, in a depression between the second and third metatarsal bones.

Kidney 3



Location: On the inner ankle, in the hollow between the prominence of the ankle bone and the Achilles tendon.

Kidney 6



Location: On the inner foot, below the prominence of the ankle bone, in a groove between the two ligaments.

Conception Vessel 4



Location: On the midline of the abdomen, around four finger widths below the umbilicus and three finger widths above the pubic bone.

Reconnecting the Heart and Kidneys

The relationship between the Heart and Kidneys is key in maintaining healthy blood pressure. One way to keep these two organs connected and communicating well is to apply acupressure to Conception Vessel 4 and 14 together.

Lying on your back, locate these two points and apply medium to firm pressure using the index, middle and ring fingers of both hands. Hold for one minute while breathing normally, then release.

Do this daily while performing the rest of your acupressure routine.

- **Liver Yang Excess**

Primary Symptoms:

- Dizziness
- Vertigo
- Headaches
- Insomnia
- Irritability
- Blurred vision
- Bitter taste in the mouth

Key Acupressure Points

Liver 2



Location: On the top of the foot, between the first and second toes.

Liver 3



Location: On the top of the foot between the first and second metatarsal bones. If you run your finger up from Liver 2, it will fall into a large hollow at the junction of the bones.

This is Liver 3.

Gallbladder 34



Location: On the outer aspect of the lower leg, just below the knee. If you run your finger up the leg from ankle to knee, you will find a bony prominence which is the head of the fibula. The point is in a hollow just below the flare of the bone.

- **Heat**

Primary Symptoms:

- Feeling hot/fever
- Thirst or dry mouth
- Scant urination
- Constipation
- Heavy menstruation
- Nosebleeds
- Increased pulse rate

Key Acupressure Points

Large Intestine 11



Location: At the elbow at the outer end of the elbow crease, midway between the large tendon and the elbow bone. Locate with the arm folded across the body at a 90° angle.

Spleen 10



Location: On the thigh, three finger widths above the inner and upper corner of the knee, in a hollow on the bulge of the muscle. This point may feel tender to pressure.

- **Phlegm**

Primary Symptoms:

- Dizziness
- Heavy or aching limbs
- Nausea
- Greasy stools
- Greasy tongue coating
- Productive cough
- Lumps or boils on the skin
- Palpitations

Key Acupressure Points

Stomach 40



Location: Midway between the knee crease and the outer prominence of the ankle bone, two finger widths outwards from the bony ridge of the tibia.

Spleen 9



Location: On the inner aspect of the lower leg, just below the knee. If you run your finger up the leg from ankle to knee, you will find a bony prominence which is the head of the tibia. The point is in a hollow just below the flare of the bone, on a level with Gallbladder 34.

- **Key Points for Relieving Hypertension**

If you don't have time to self-diagnose, then apply these acupressure points at the very least.

These points are the bare minimum that should be used daily to effectively reduce your blood pressure.

In addition to the points for your individual imbalance, you should incorporate the following acupressure points into your routine. These are the key points to relax and calm the mind, clear the head and reduce blood pressure.

Stimulate these points for one minute each, using medium to firm pressure. Once you see your blood pressure drop to a healthy level, you can reduce the timeframe of each point to 30 seconds each. They are best stimulated in the following top to bottom order:

Governing Vessel 20



Location: On the top of the head on the midline. This point can be found by running the fingers up from the tips of the ears to the top of the head.

Yin Tang



Location: On the face, between the inner ends of the eyebrows.

Er Jian



Gallbladder 20



Location: At the base of the skull in a depression formed between two muscles. Midway between the jawbone and the midpoint of the spine.

Stomach 9



Location: On the neck, on either side of the Adam's apple (or where one would be if you were male). Press your index finger on the muscular area where the pulse of the carotid artery is felt.

Stomach 36



Location: On the calf, in a hollow formed alongside the prominent bony ridge at the top of the tibia. You can locate this point by holding your thumb out at 90° from the fingers

and resting across the top of your knee. In this position, your middle finger should fall onto Stomach 36.

Large Intestine 11



Location: At the elbow at the outer end of the elbow crease, midway between the large tendon and the elbow bone. Locate with the arm folded across the body at a 90° angle.

Liver 3



Location: On the top of the foot between the first and second metatarsal bones. If you run your finger up from Liver 2, it will fall into a large hollow at the junction of the bones. This is Liver 3.

Pericardium 6



Location: On the center of the inner forearm, three finger widths up from the wrist crease. In the groove between the two tendons exposed when a tight fist is made.

To self-treat with acupressure, find a comfortable position in a room where you won't be disturbed.

Using the thumbs or forefingers, apply medium to firm pressure to each of the points for one minute. You should be able to feel some sensation but not discomfort. If any of the points feels painful or tender, reduce the pressure.

For treating high blood pressure, it is best to stimulate the points in a top to bottom order, starting at the head and working down towards the feet.

If you are really serious about getting relief, practice these acupressure points at the time of day when your meridian is at its peak

- **A Thorough Blood Pressure Lowering Regimen**

If you are committed to a thorough daily blood pressure lowering regimen, follow this full routine.

To self-treat with acupressure, find a comfortable position in a room where you won't be disturbed.

Using the thumbs or forefingers, apply medium to firm pressure to each of the points for one minute. You should be able to feel some sensation but not discomfort. If any of the points feels painful or tender, reduce the pressure.

For treating high blood pressure, it is best to stimulate the points in a top to bottom order, starting at the head and working down towards the feet.

If you are really serious about getting relief, practice these acupressure points at the time of day when your meridian is at its peak

When your blood pressure lowers to a healthy range, you can switch to the “bare minimum” routine.

Heart 6



Location: On the inner forearm, on the side of the little finger. The point is one finger width up from the wrist crease and Heart 7, in the groove alongside the tendon exposed when the ring finger and little finger are bent together.

Heart 7



Location: On the inner forearm, on the side of the little finger. The point is at the wrist crease, between the tendon and the small, prominent bone of the wrist (the pisiform).

Pericardium 6



Location: On the center of the inner forearm, three finger widths up from the wrist crease. In the groove between the two tendons exposed when a tight fist is made.

Conception Vessel 14



Location: On the midline of the body, eight finger widths above the navel. This point may feel tender, if this is the case, just be gentle, you only need to use light to medium pressure to stimulate this point.

Kidney 1



Location: On the sole of the foot, one third of the distance between the base of the second toe and the heel, in a depression between the second and third metatarsal bones.

Kidney 3



Location: On the inner ankle, in the hollow between the prominence of the ankle bone and the Achilles tendon.

Kidney 6



Location: On the inner foot, below the prominence of the ankle bone, in a groove between the two ligaments.

Conception Vessel 4



Location: On the midline of the abdomen, around four finger widths below the umbilicus and three finger widths above the pubic bone.

Liver 2



Location: On the top of the foot, between the first and second toes.

Liver 3



Location: On the top of the foot between the first and second metatarsal bones. If you run your finger up from Liver 2, it will fall into a large hollow at the junction of the bones.

This is Liver 3.

Gallbladder 34



Location: On the outer aspect of the lower leg, just below the knee. If you run your finger up the leg from ankle to knee, you will find a bony prominence which is the head of the fibula. The point is in a hollow just below the flare of the bone.

Gallbladder 20



Location: At the base of the skull in a depression formed between two muscles. Midway between the jawbone and the midpoint of the spine.

Large Intestine 11



Location: At the elbow at the outer end of the elbow crease, midway between the large tendon and the elbow bone. Locate with the arm folded across the body at a 90° angle.

Spleen 10



Location: On the thigh, three finger widths above the inner and upper corner of the knee, in a hollow on the bulge of the muscle. This point may feel tender to pressure.

Stomach 40



Location: Midway between the knee crease and the outer prominence of the ankle bone, two finger widths outwards from the bony ridge of the tibia.

Stomach 36



Location: On the calf, in a hollow formed alongside the prominent bony ridge at the top of the tibia. You can locate this point by holding your thumb out at 90° from the fingers and resting across the top of your knee. In this position, your middle finger should fall

onto Stomach 36.

Stomach 9



Location: On the neck, on either side of the Adam's apple (or where one would be if you were male). Press your index finger on the muscular area where the pulse of the carotid artery is felt.

Spleen 9



Location: On the inner aspect of the lower leg, just below the knee. If you run your finger up the leg from ankle to knee, you will find a bony prominence which is the head of the tibia. The point is in a hollow just below the flare of the bone, on a level with Gallbladder

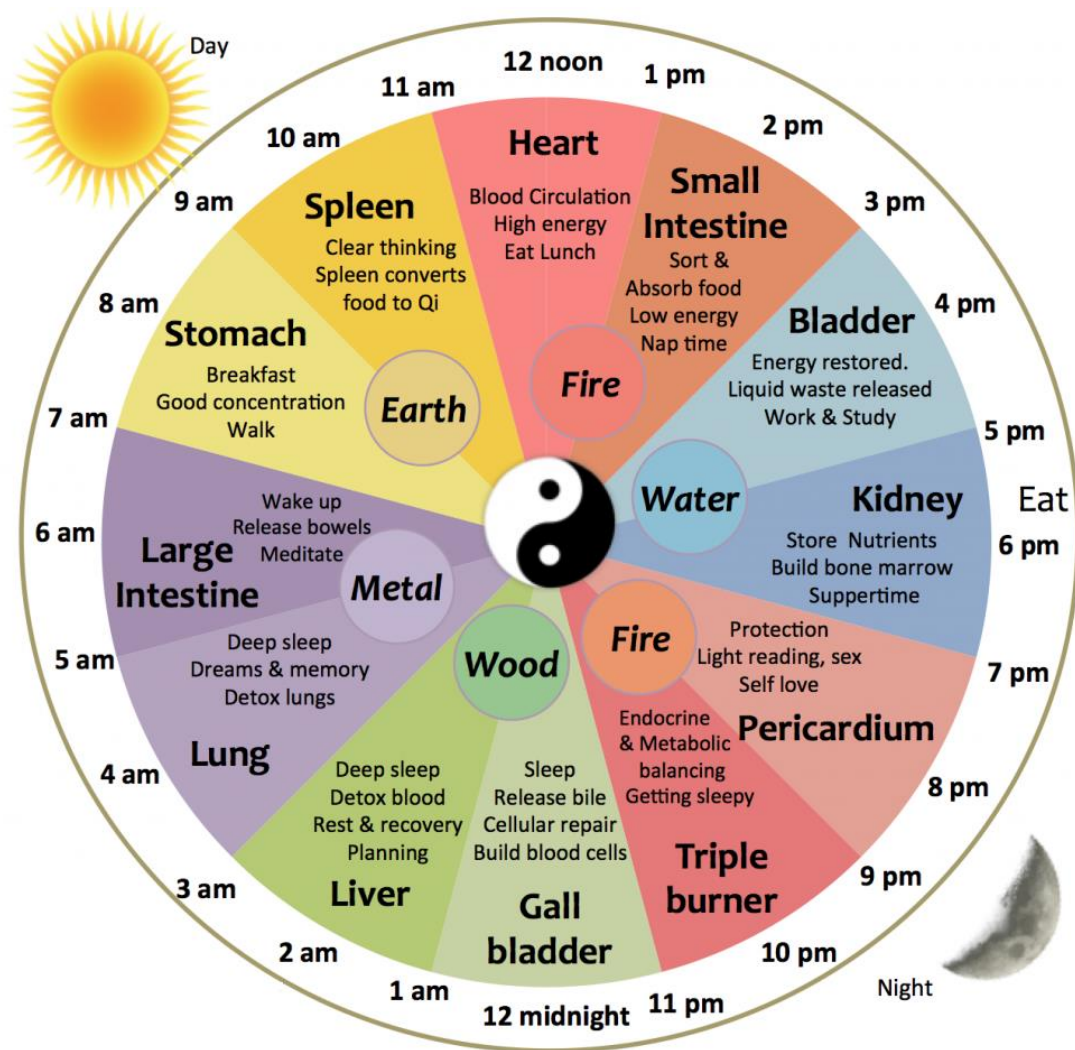
34.

For the points on the head, legs and feet, you can stimulate both sides together. However, for the arms and hands you will need to do one side and then the other. In this case it is always best to start with the left side.

When you have finished applying the acupressure, take some deep breaths and a few minutes to relax before going back to your daily routine.

Meridian Peak Times

Meridian	Peak Time
Lung	3-5am
Large Intestine	5-7am
Stomach	7-9am
Spleen	9-11am
Heart	11am-1pm
Small Intestine	1-3pm
Bladder	3-5pm
Kidney	5-7pm
Pericardium	7-9pm
Triple Heater	9-11pm
Gallbladder	11pm-1am
Liver	1-3am



Glossary of Chinese Medical Terms

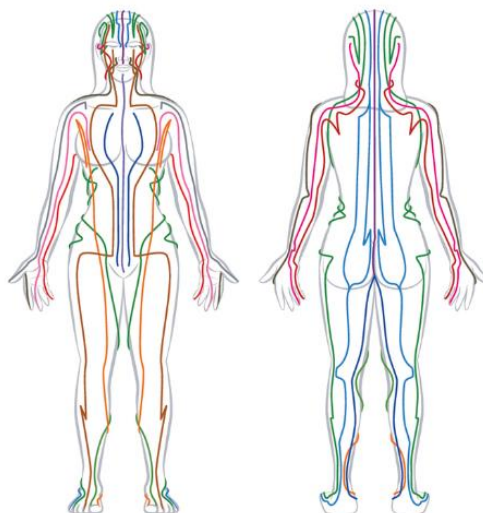
Qi – Qi can be loosely translated as “vital energy”. It flows through the meridians and is responsible for the body's overall state of health.

Shen – Shen is one of the vital substances of Chinese medicine. It resides within the Heart and loosely translates as spirit or mind.

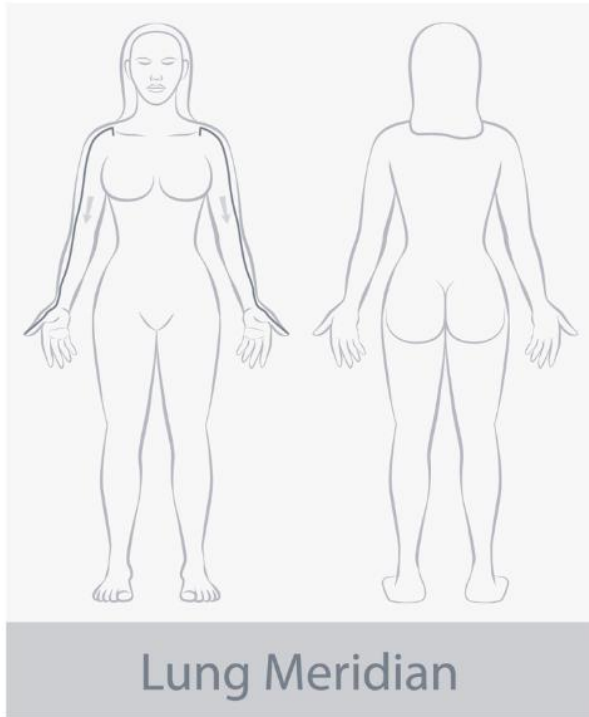
Yang – One of the two opposing forces of nature, the opposite of yin. Yang is male, daytime, heat, fire, active.

Yin – One of the two opposing forces of nature, the opposite of Yang. Yin is female, night-time, cool, water, still.

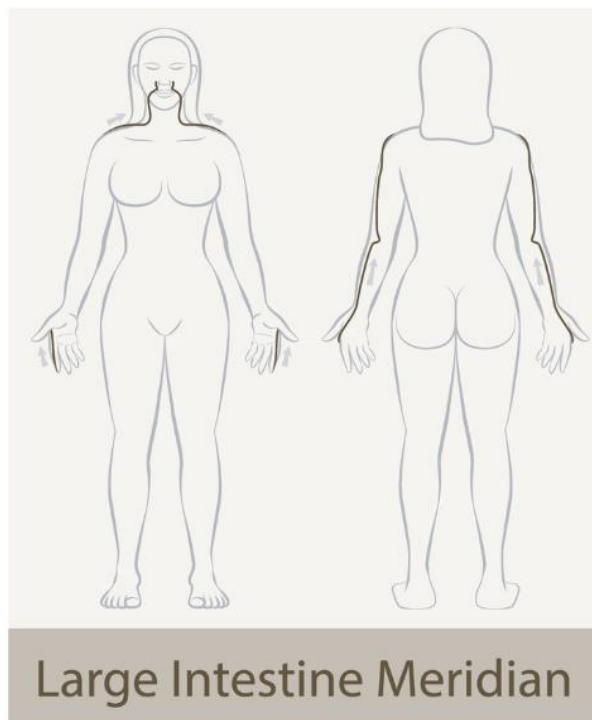
Glossary of Meridian Channels



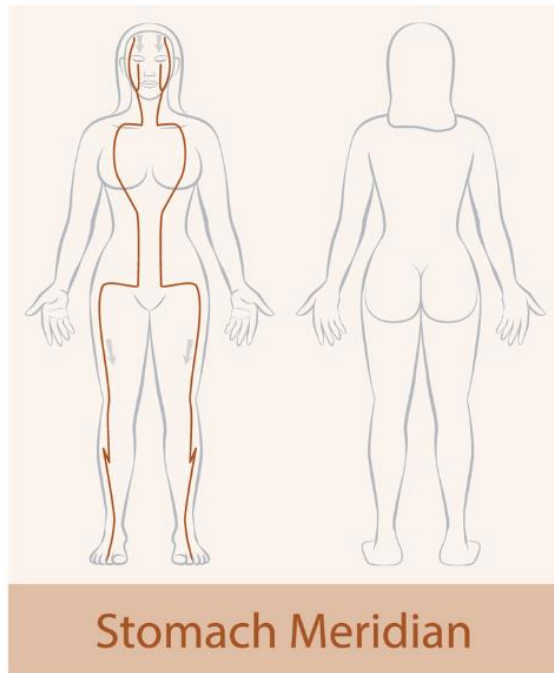
The Body Meridians



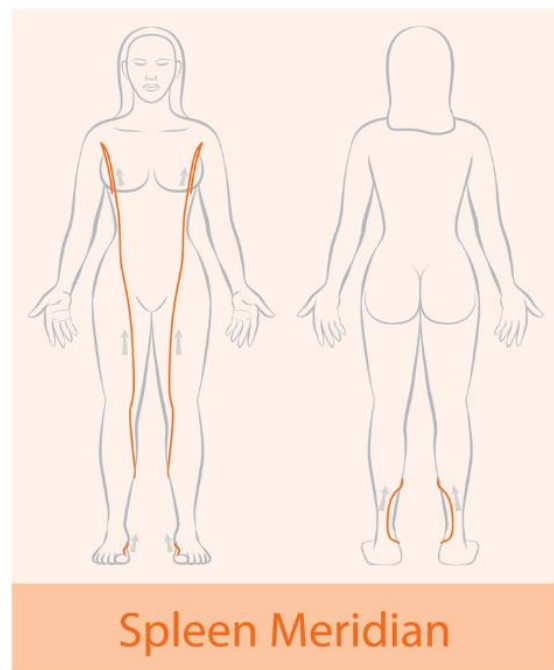
Peak time: 3am-5am



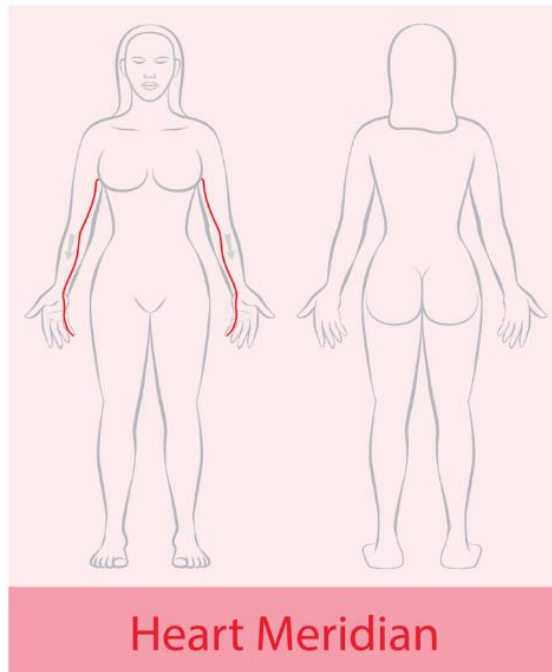
Peak time: 5am-7am



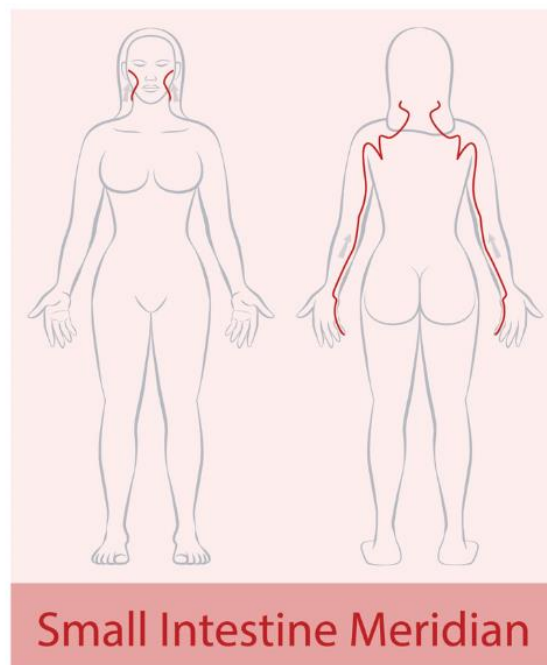
Peak time: 7am-9am



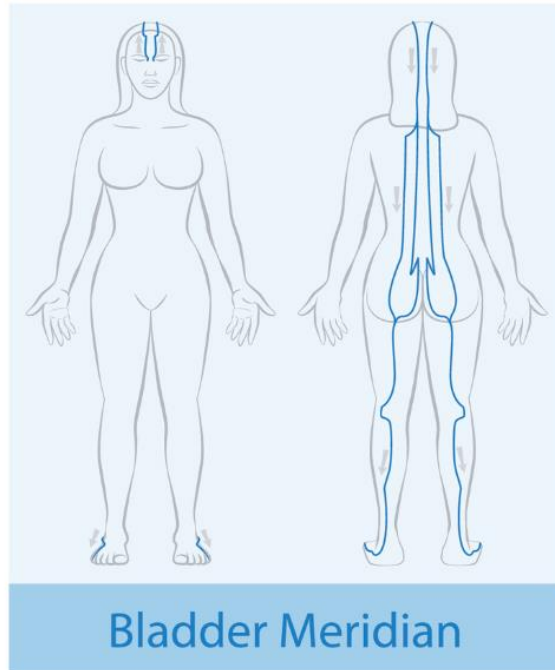
Peak time: 9am-11am



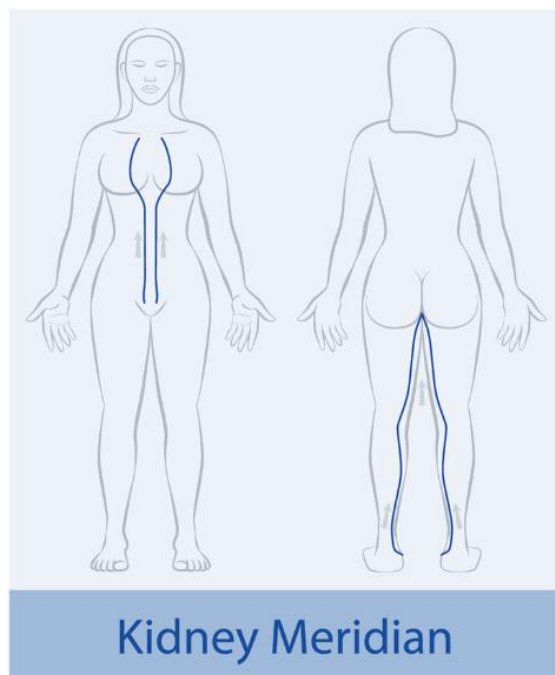
Peak time: 11am-1pm



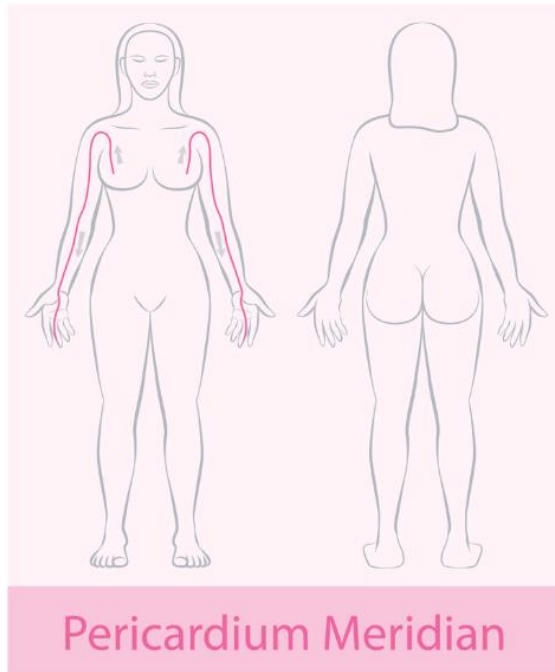
Peak time: 1pm-3pm



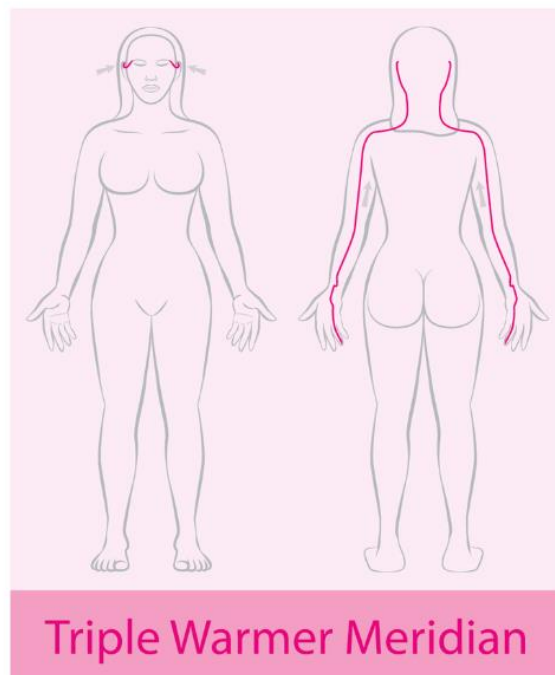
Peak time: 3pm-5pm



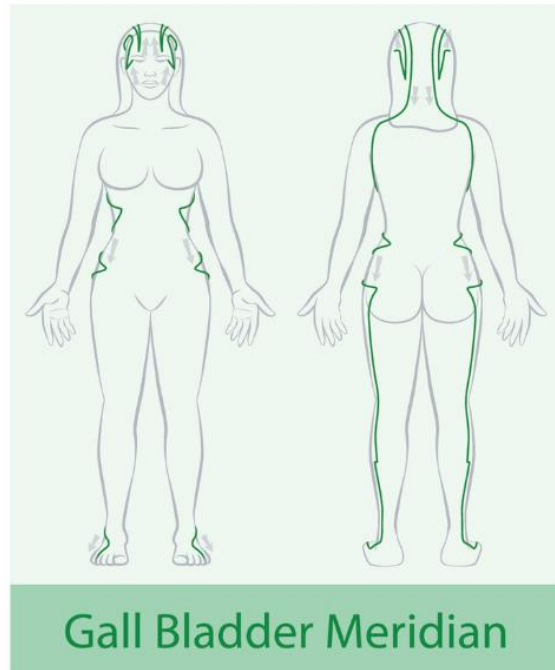
Peak time 5pm-7pm



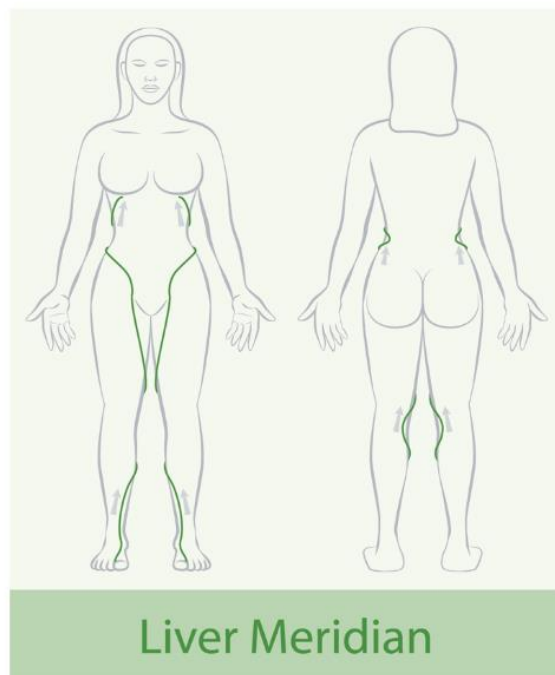
Peak time: 7pm-9pm



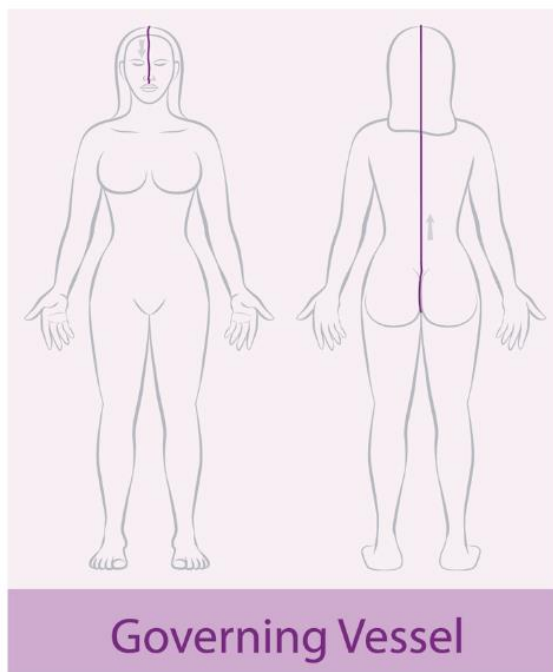
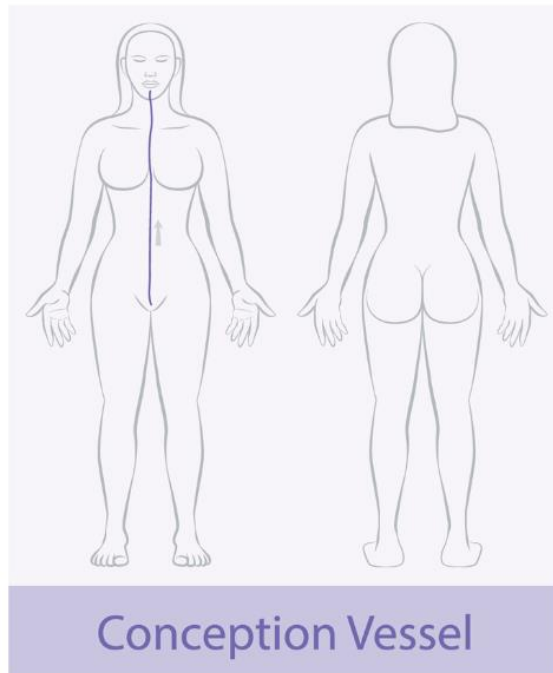
Peak time: 9pm-11pm



Peak time 11pm-1am



Peak time: 1am-3am



What's Next?

Now that you've reached the end of East/West Blood Pressure Balance, what's next?

It's important to remember to keep up with you acupressure routines... but it is equally important to keep in mind of the factors that caused your ailment to begin with - such as your lifestyle choices, diet, and your mental wellbeing.

A poor diet may have served you fine when you were in your 20's, but if you're edging closer to middle age and live on fried chicken, burgers, fries and pizza then it might be the right time to consider choosing healthier options.

Stress is often the root of common ailments. If you can take control of your mental wellbeing; your body will usually take care of the rest.

The benefits of meditation are immense. Not only will meditation greatly reduce your stress, but it will aid your sleep (allowing you to recharge on less sleep), increase memory and cognition, boosts Qi, slows the aging process and increases your happiness. Meditation can be practiced while you apply acupressure. The Natural Synergy App is packed with tools to help you relax and clear the mind.

The Natural Synergy App is more than an acupressure aid. The soothing and healing bio-acoustic frequencies, sounds of nature, Solfeggio tones and binaural tracks can be mixed to your own personal liking, and used as a sleeping aid, for your yoga regime or your next meditation session.

Creating a habit out of your acupressure routines is the most important step towards good health.

Wishing you all the best in health and happiness,

Emily J. Parker and Dr Lin Xiaoxi