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# Acupuncture for COVID-19 and Long COVID

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# COVID-19

COVID-19 (coronavirus 2019) is an infectious respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2) virus. SARS-CoV-2 is a coronavirus family variant with similarities to the 2003 outbreak of SARS-CoV.

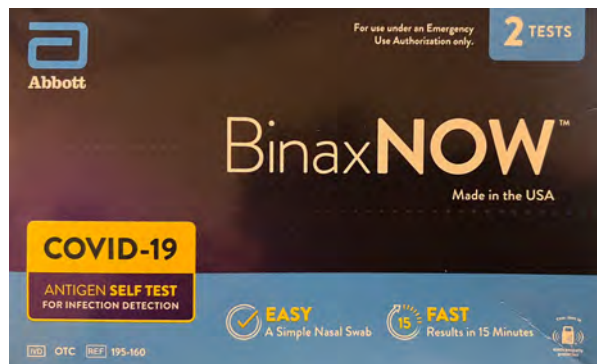
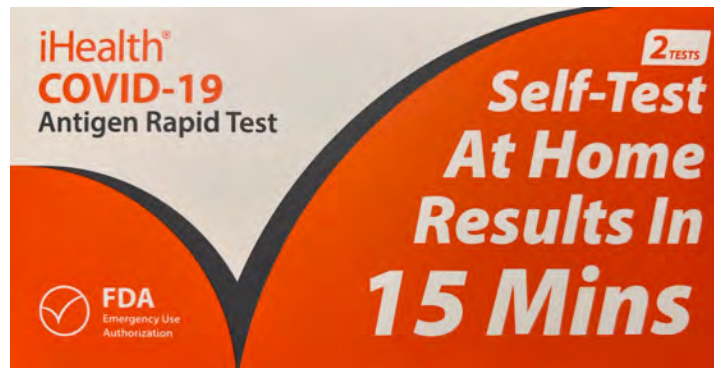
SARS-CoV-2 is one of several coronaviruses that infects humans. SARS-CoV-2 has mutated into different strains, including types A, B, C, L, and S. In addition, mutations are responsible for the emergence of varying subtypes.

Responsible for a global pandemic, COVID-19 has caused hundreds of thousands of deaths worldwide. We will examine the treatment of acute and chronic (Long COVID) cases in this educational material with a focus on acupuncture.

Diagnostic challenges for COVID-19 include prolonged incubation periods of SARS-CoV-2 and asymptomatic presentations of the disease. PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) testing, a type of nucleic acid amplification test, even when combined with antigen tests (available for self-test home use), are not 100% accurate. There is a relatively low incidence of false positive and false negative results and testing has contributed to identification of the disease.

Community and individual contributions to the prevention of COVID-19 include proper ventilation of enclosed areas, handwashing availability, healthy lifestyle routines, protective gear (e.g. masks), and the availability of testing kits.

### Examples of self-test kits



## Advantages of Traditional Medicine

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle with qi gong, tai ji, a balanced diet and exercise program, adequate rest, avoiding excessive fatigue, attention to personal hygiene, acupuncture, herbal medicine, cupping, and tuina massage contribute to healthy qi. This provides added resistance to infection by supporting wei qi (defensive qi). In addition, if exposed and infected with the virus, healthy patients tend to have significantly better outcomes.



Herbal medicine has a distinct advantage in that it may be administered for suspected cases, mild, and moderate cases without requiring direct physical contact with a patient. With the advent of telemedicine, licensed acupuncturists and herbalists are able to provide medicine to patients in isolation or in remote locations.



## Cytokine Storm

COVID-19 has the ability to cause a cytokine storm (also termed cytokine release syndrome). This inflammatory condition is usually due to an excessive immune system response to either infection or immunotherapy.

Cytokines are substances such as tumor necrosis factor, interferons, interleukins, chemokines, lymphokines, and monokines. They are secreted by immune system cells and act as signaling proteins (chemical messengers) that regulate inflammation. Cytokines signal cells to produce many functions including cell activation, cell differentiation, and cell proliferation.

There are both pro-inflammatory and anti-inflammatory cytokines. Excess production of pro-inflammatory cytokines are responsible for cytokine storms, which may be life-threatening. Cytokine storms may lead to uncontrolled inflammatory response syndrome (SIRS), thereby causing multiple organ failure, intravascular coagulation, and other potentially fatal disorders.

There is scientific data showing that acupuncture regulates pro-inflammatory cytokines. For example, Harvard Medical School neuroscientists determined that acupuncture reduces bacterial infection related inflammation. The neuroscientists demonstrated that acupuncture reduces the intensity of pro-inflammatory cytokine storms. Their laboratory research shows that acupuncture increases survival rates and prevents disease progression.<sup>1</sup> Research also indicates that acupuncture and herbal medicine are helpful in preventing cytokines storms for viral infections, such as SARS-CoV-2.<sup>2</sup>

- 
1. Liu, Shenbin, Zhi-Fu Wang, Yang-Shuai Su, Russell S. Ray, Xiang-Hong Jing, Yan-Qing Wang, and Qiufu Ma. "Somatotopic Organization and Intensity Dependence in Driving Distinct NPY-Expressing Sympathetic Pathways by Electroacupuncture." *Neuron* (2020).
  2. Wang, Lifen; Hu, Xiyu; Geng, Lianqi; Li, Ningcen; Chen, Yong; Zhang, Jingyu; Yuan, Xinru; Huang, Lihong; Ba, Dongsheng; Lian, Jinyu; Lyu, Xiaoyan; Chen, Zelin; Zhang, Yue; Chen, Bo. Multi-effective characteristics and advantages of acupuncture in COVID-19 treatment. *Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine* 3(2):p 83-95, June 2023.



## Wen Yi & Li Qi

In traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), COVID-19 is a wen yi (瘟疫) illness because it is an epidemic illness, one that is highly contagious and spreads quickly. Wen yi is often translated as pestilence, plague, or epidemic.

SARS-CoV-2 is the li qi (疠气), which is the specific pathogen that causes COVID-19. According to TCM principles, highly contagious wen yi requires treatment, isolation, and preventative measures to prevent spreading throughout the populace.

COVID-19 is transmissible by people with asymptomatic and symptomatic presentations. The incubation period ranges from 1–15 days, but is usually 3–7 days. Infected individuals are contagious within approximately 2–3 days after exposure and remain contagious for approximately 7–10 days after onset of symptoms.

The main route of infection is inhalation of respiratory droplets. Droplets are spread by infected individuals when talking, sneezing, and coughing. Healthy individuals in proximity become infected by inhalation.

COVID-19 is also spread by residual droplets on surfaces. If a healthy individual's mouth, nose, or eyes come into contact with infected droplets, the virus may be spread. As a result, frequent handwashing is highly recommended, especially when in public areas.

It is possible to contract COVID-19 by aerosol (suspension of droplets in the air) exposure. Some estimates show that long-range aerosol transmission rates are low, but SARS-CoV-2 has a half-life of over an hour in aerosol form. As a result, proper ventilation of enclosed spaces (maximizing outdoor air or using high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) cleaners), is encouraged as a preventative measure.

According to the NIH (National Institutes of Health, USA), COVID-19 "is stable for several hours to days in aerosols and on surfaces." The data from the NIH is from the CDC, UCLA, and Princeton University. The following is the official data, SARS-CoV-2 is detectable:

- 3 hours in aerosols
- 4 hours on copper
- 24 hours on cardboard
- 2–3 days on plastic and stainless steel

## Risk Factors

Symptoms in children are often mild. According to the US CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), COVID-19 is especially high-risk for a severe outcome for the elderly, during pregnancy, smokers, and for those with limited physical activity. The CDC also notes that high-risk applies to people with underlying physical conditions such as:

- Asthma
- Hematologic malignancies
- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- People receiving dialysis (kidney disease)
- Cerebrovascular disease
- Bronchiectasis
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Interstitial lung disease
- Pulmonary embolism
- Pulmonary hypertension
- Cirrhosis
- Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease
- Alcoholic liver disease
- Autoimmune hepatitis
- HIV
- Obesity

## Epidemic Damp-Toxin

Differential diagnostics vary among patients, populations, and throughout the duration of the disease. Overall, COVID-19 is categorized as an epidemic damp-toxin, with some translations using the term damp-toxin pestilence. Damp pathogens are yin pathogens characterized by insidious onset that lingers combined with difficulty recuperating from the illness.

The damp-toxin may combine with cold, heat, blood stasis, dryness, deficiency, and other patterns. This is dependent upon the strain of COVID-19, season, overall constitution of the patient, and severity. Initial symptoms are often fatigue, headache, dizziness, low fever, loss of appetite, loss of taste, loss of smell, and shortness of breath. Early stages of the disease often present as wind-cold attacking the lung channel. Spleen dampness is often discernible by a greasy coating on the tongue with a slippery, rapid or slippery, soggy pulse.

Slippery and soggy pulses often indicate dampness. The slippery pulse is smooth, like small pearls flowing beneath the fingers. The soggy pulse is relatively weak, floating, thready, and soft like a silk thread in water. Dampness is also reflected in autopsy reports showing that very significant mucous exudation has occurred in the lungs.

Even with advanced stages of COVID-19, the epidemic damp-toxin may reside in deep respiratory passages and therefore may evade diagnosis. For example, nasal swab testing may show negative results but deep cough sputum testing shows positive results.

There are mild (e.g. nasal symptoms, sore throat, fatigue, low fever, normal body temperature), moderate (e.g. non-severe pneumonia), and severe (e.g. difficulty breathing, lungs lesions, phlegm and blood stasis blocking the lungs) presentations. The epidemic damp-toxin of COVID-19 typically attacks the lungs first and then the spleen and stomach. For severe cases, the heart and kidneys are affected. In severe cases, there are significant respiratory tract and alveolar lesions.

The epidemic damp-toxin is often evident by examination of the lungs, showing viscous secretions emanating from the alveoli.

## Signs & Symptoms

COVID-19 may be afebrile or may be completely asymptomatic. According to the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), there are a wide range of symptoms, from mild to severe. CDC reporting states that symptoms may appear within 2–14 days after exposure to the virus and common symptoms are:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Additional common signs & symptoms are:

- low energy levels with difficulty maintaining exertion
- dizziness
- dry throat
- bitter taste in the mouth
- expectoration
- low appetite
- conjunctivitis
- palpitations

- chest tightness
- insomnia

The CDC notes that emergency medical attention is required when the following present:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Pale, gray, or blue-colored skin, lips, or nail beds, depending on skin tone

In mild and moderate cases, there is a red tongue with a thin yellow or white coating and a floating and rapid pulse. The tongue coating is often greasy. With proper treatment, mild and moderate cases often recover within approximately 7–15 days. Untreated, there is a risk for progression of the disease.

Severe cases present with dyspnea or hypoxia (low oxygen reaching tissues), often within a week of onset. Blood oxygen levels are determined with a blood draw test or with pulse oximetry (using an oximeter). The tongue is red with a greasy yellow coating. There is a rapid slippery, and surging pulse. The surging pulse is one that starts strong, broad, and large, and then falls away without force.

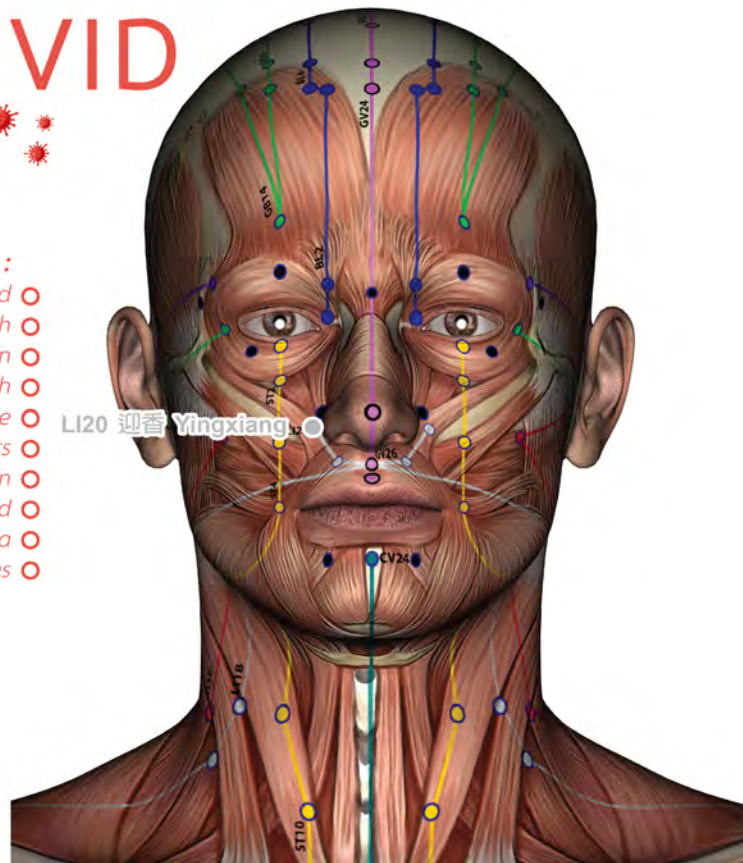
The most severe cases may lead to septic shock, coagulation disorders, and multiple organ failure. The tongue is dry, deep red or purple and there is a deep, rapid, thin, or floating pulse. Even in the most severe cases, there may be a low fever or no fever at all.

# Long COVID

Remaining symptoms after contracting COVID-19

*Most Common Symptoms :*

- Tired ○
- Shortness of breath ○
- Muscle pain ○
- Cough ○
- Headache ○
- Sore joints ○
- Chest pain ○
- Perception of smell has changed ○
- Diarrhea ○
- Taste Changes ○



## Long COVID

Since COVID-19 is a damp-toxin, which has the quality of lingering and resisting recuperation, long-term COVID (Long COVID) may persist. Many cases have been reported with long-term fatigue and loss of taste and olfactory function.

The CDC notes:

Some people who have been infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 can experience long-term effects from their infection, known as Long COVID or Post-COVID Conditions (PCC). Long COVID is broadly defined as signs, symptoms, and conditions that continue or develop after acute COVID-19 infection.

While most people with Long COVID have evidence of infection or COVID-19 illness, in some cases, a person with Long COVID may not have tested positive for the virus or known they were infected.

There is no test that determines if your symptoms or condition is due to COVID-19. Long COVID is not one illness.

People with Long COVID may experience health problems from different types and combinations of symptoms that may emerge, persist, resolve, and reemerge over different lengths of time.<sup>3</sup>

In China, the National Institute of Health and Nursing differentiates acute and chronic symptoms as the following:

- **Acute COVID-19:** signs and symptoms for up to 4 weeks
- **Continuous COVID-19:** signs and symptoms 4–12 weeks
- **Post-COVID-19 syndrome:** signs and symptoms greater than 12 weeks

## Long COVID Symptoms

The CDC notes the following are common Long COVID symptoms:

### General

- Tiredness or fatigue that interferes with daily life
- Symptoms worsen after physical or mental effort (post-exertional malaise)
- Fever

### Respiratory and heart symptoms

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Cough
- Chest pain

<sup>3</sup>. [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/long-term-effects/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/long-term-effects/index.html)



- Fast-beating or pounding heart (palpitations)

### **Neurological symptoms**

- Difficulty thinking or concentrating (brain fog)
- Headache
- Sleep problems
- Dizziness when you stand up (lightheadedness)
- Pins-and-needles feelings
- Change in smell or taste
- Depression or anxiety

### **Digestive symptoms**

- Diarrhea
- Stomach pain

### **Other symptoms**

- Joint or muscle pain
- Rash
- Changes in menstrual cycles

Importantly, the CDC includes a special section on varying presentations of Long COVID:

People with Long COVID may develop or continue to have symptoms that are hard to explain and manage. Clinical evaluations and results of routine blood tests, chest X-rays, and electrocardiograms may be normal. The symptoms are similar to those reported by people with myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS) and other poorly understood chronic illnesses that may occur after other infections. People with these unexplained symptoms may be misunderstood by their healthcare providers, which can result in a delay in diagnosis and receiving the appropriate care or treatment.

Some people, especially those who had severe COVID-19, experience multiorgan effects or autoimmune conditions with symptoms lasting weeks, months, or even years after COVID-19 illness. Multi-organ effects can involve many body systems, including the heart, lung, kidney, skin, and brain. As a result of these effects, people who have had COVID-19 may be more likely to develop new health conditions such as diabetes, heart conditions, blood clots, or neurological conditions compared with people who have not had COVID-19.<sup>4</sup>

In *Diagnosis And Treatment Of Covid-19 With Integrated Chinese And Western Medicine*,<sup>5</sup> common symptoms of of Long COVID are similar to those listed by the CDC and are the following:

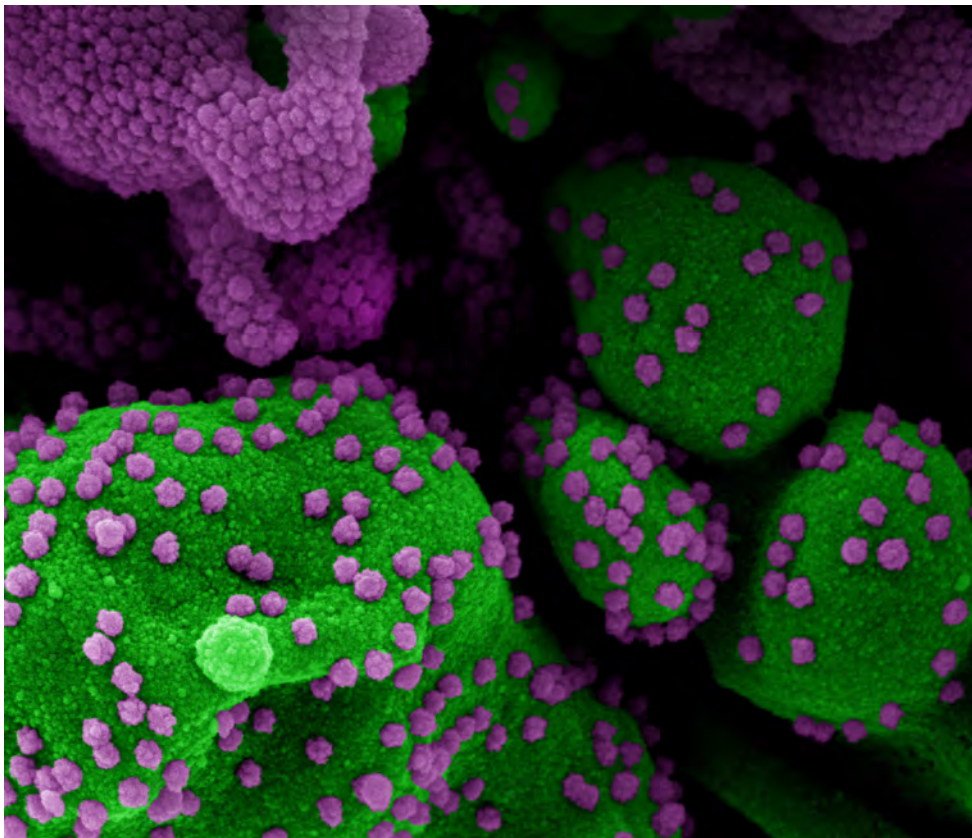
- Fatigue
- Dyspnea
- Mental health disorders (including anxiety and depression)
- Neurocognitive disorders
- Sleep disorders
- Persistent cough
- Pain
- Low-grade fever
- Chest pain or chest compression
- Palpitations
- Myalgia
- Arthralgia
- Headaches
- Vision changes
- Hearing loss
- Ear pain
- Tinnitus

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4. [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/long-term-effects/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/long-term-effects/index.html)

5. Zhang, Boli, and Qingquan Liu. *Diagnosis And Treatment Of Covid-19 With Integrated Chinese And Western Medicine*. World Scientific, 2023.

- Sore throat
- Taste/smell loss
- Difficulty in mobility
- Limb numbness
- Dizziness
- Tremors
- Memory Loss
- Mood changes
- Skin rashes
- Gastrointestinal symptoms
- Delirium affecting the elderly



*Colorized electron micrograph of an apoptotic cell (green) heavily infected with SARS-COV-2 virus particles (purple), isolated from a patient sample.*

# Acupuncture

Handwashing, proper room ventilation, patient isolation areas, and air filtration help to prevent the spread of the virus. Use personal protective equipment (PPE) when caring for patients with either confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19:

- Face shield or goggles
- N95 or higher face mask or respirator
- Protective gloves
- Isolation gown

## Prevention, Treatment, Recovery Stages

The China Association of Acupuncture and Moxibustion issued *Acupuncture Treatment Guidelines for COVID-19*.<sup>6</sup> According to the guidelines, the following acupoints can be stimulated with acupuncture, moxibustion, or massage. If acupuncture is used, needles are manipulated with the mild reinforcement and attenuation (Ping Bu Ping Xie) technique during the 20–30 minute needle retention time. If moxibustion is applied, moxa warms the points for 10–15 minutes. Treatment is administered once daily. The guidelines have been divided into three stages: prevention, treatment, and recovery.

### Prevention Stage

For the prevention stage, acupuncture is administered to strengthen zheng qi (healthy energy) and to benefit lung and spleen functions to combat foreign pathogens. The primary acupoints selected for this stage are categorized into 3 groups and 1–2 acupoints are selected from each group, based on diagnostics, during each acupuncture session:

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6. Acupuncture Treatment Guidelines for COVID-19 (2nd Ed.). Chinese Acupuncture and Moxibustion:1-2, 2020-03-21.

- **Group 1:** BL12 (Fengmen), BL13 (Feishu), BL20 (Pishu)
- **Group 2:** LI4 (Hegu), LI11 (Quchi), LU5 (Chize), LU10 (Yuji)
- **Group 3:** CV6 (Qihai), ST36 (Zusanli), SP6 (Sanyinjiao)

A secondary set is added dependent upon individual symptoms. For fever, the following acupoints are added:

- GV14 (Dazhui)
- CV22 (Tiantu)
- LU6 (Kongzui)

For nausea, loose stools, enlarged tongue with greasy coating, and soft (soggy) pulse, the following acupoints are added:

- GV14 (Zhongwan)
- ST25 (Tianshu)
- ST40 (Fenglong)

For fatigue and poor appetite, the following acupoints are added:

- CV12 (Zhongwan)
- CV9 (Shuifen)
- CV7 (Yinjiao),
- KD16 (Qizhousixue)
- BL20 (Pishu)

For clear nasal discharge, sore and painful back, pale tongue with white coating, and moderate pulse, the following acupoints are added:

- BL10 (Tianzhu)
- BL12 (Fengmen)
- GV14 (Dazhui)

## Treatment Stage



In the treatment stage of an **active case** of COVID-19, acupuncture is applied to interrupt disease progress based on the Pei Tu Sheng Jin (bank up earth to engender metal) principle and to relieve low mood. The primary acupoints recommended for this stage are categorized into 3 groups. For mild to moderate cases, 2–3 acupoints are selected from groups 1 and 2 during each acupuncture session. For severe cases, an additional 2–3 acupoints are recommended from group 3.

- **Group 1:**  
LI4 (Hegu), LV3 (Taichong), CV22 (Tiantu), LU5 (Chize), LU6 (Kongzui), ST36 (Zusanli), SP6 (Sanyinjiao)
- **Group 2:**  
BL11 (Dashu), BL12 (Fengmen), BL13 (Feishu), BL15 (Xinshu), BL17 (Geshu)
- **Group 3:**  
LU1 (Zhongfu), CV17 (Danzhong), CV6 (Qihai), CV4 (Guanyuan), CV12 (Zhongwan)

A secondary set is added dependent upon individual symptoms. For persistent fever, the following acupoints are added:

- GV14 (Dazhui)
- LI11 (Quchi)
- EX-UE11 (Shixuan)

- EX-HN6 (Erjian)

For chest tightness and shortness of breath, the following acupoints are added:

- PC6 (Neiguan)
- LU7 (Lieque)
- CV14 (Juque)
- LR14 (Qimen)
- KI6 (Zhaohai)

For coughing with sputum, the following acupoints are added:

- LU7 (Lieque)
- ST40 (Fenglong)
- EX-B1 (Dingchuan)

For diarrhea with loose stools, the following acupoints are added:

- ST25 (Tianshu)
- ST37 (Shangjuxu)

For cough with yellow and sticky sputum and constipation, the following acupoints are added:

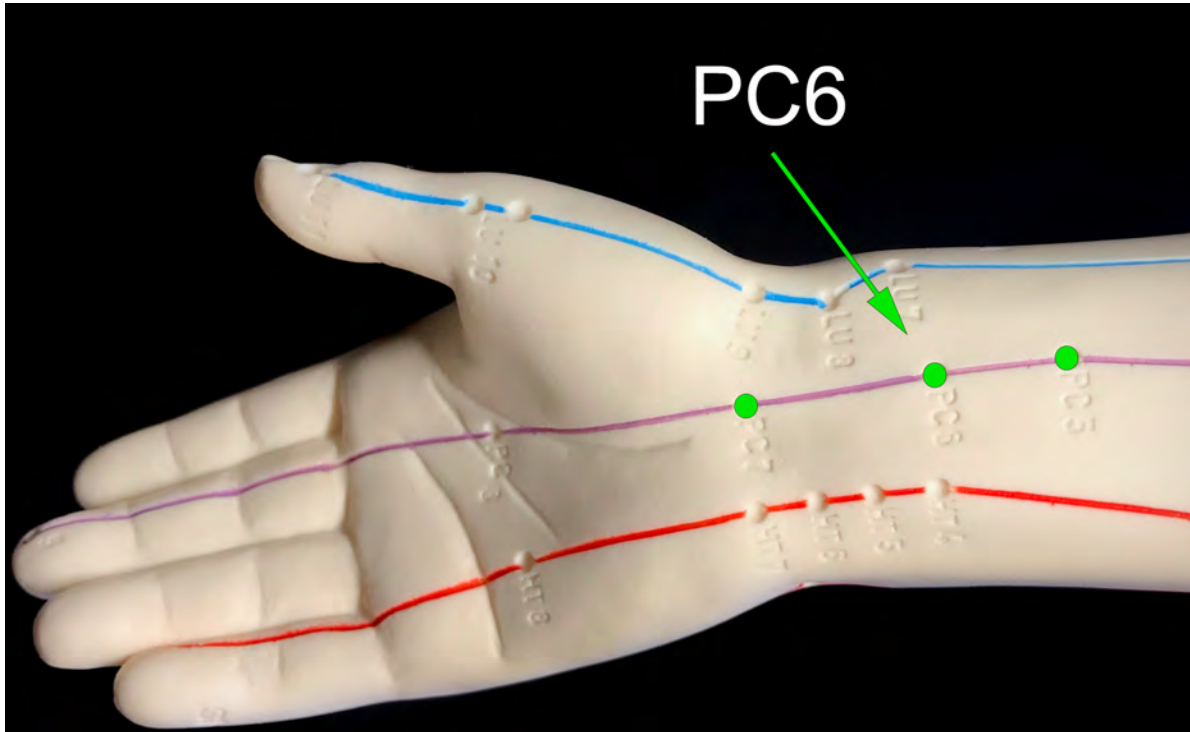
- CV22 (Tiantu)
- TB6 (Zhigou)
- ST25 (Tianshu)
- ST40 (Fenglong)

For low grade fever, nausea, loose stools, and a pale-red tongue with a white-greasy coating, the following acupoints are added:

- BL13 (Feishu)
- ST25 (Tianshu)
- SP14 (Fujie)
- PC6 (Neiguan)



## Recovery Stage



In the recovery stage, acupuncture is applied to eliminate pathogens from the body and to recover lung and spleen functions. The following primary acupoints are recommended by the China Association of Acupuncture and Moxibustion (*Acupuncture Treatment Guidelines for COVID-19*):<sup>7</sup>

- **PC6 (Neiguan)**
- **ST36 (Zusanli)**
- **GV14 (Zhongwan)**
- **ST25 (Tianshu)**
- **CV6 (Qihai)**

7. Acupuncture Treatment Guidelines for COVID-19 (2nd Ed.). Chinese Acupuncture and Moxibustion:1-2, 2020-03-21.

A secondary set of acupuncture points are added dependent upon individual symptoms and differential diagnostics as follows:

## Lung and Spleen Qi Deficiency

For lung and spleen qi deficiency, sets of points are added for specific conditions during the recovery stage:

If lung symptoms (e.g., chest tightness, shortness of breath) are pronounced:

- CV17 (Danzhong)
- BL13 (Feishu)
- LU1 (Zhongfu)

If spleen symptoms (e.g., poor appetite, diarrhea) are pronounced:

- CV13 (Shangwan)
- SP9 (Yinlingquan)

## Qi and Yin Deficiency

For patients with qi and yin deficiency, the following acupoints are recommended for specific presentations:

If there is fatigue and shortness of breath:

- CV17 (Danzhong)
- Moxa at: CV8 (Shenque)

If there is dry mouth and thirst:

- KD3 (Taixi)
- TB4 (Yangchi)

If there are palpitations:

- BL15 (Xinshu)
- BL14 (Jueyinshu)

If there is profuse sweating:

- LI4 (Hegu)
- KD7 (Fuliu)
- ST36 (Zusanli)

If there is insomnia:

- HT7 (Shenmen)
- EX-HN3 (Yintang)
- EX-HN 19 (Anmian)
- KD1 (Yongquan)

## **Sputum & Stasis Blocking Channels with Lung & Spleen Deficiency**

For patients with sputum and stasis blocking the channels with underlying lung and spleen deficiency, the following acupoints are recommended:

For patients with lung, spleen and heart symptoms (e.g., chest tightness, shortness of breath):

- BL13 (Feishu)
- BL20 (Pishu)
- BL15 (Xinshu)
- BL17 (Geshu)
- LU1 (Zhongfu)
- CV17 (Danzhong)

If sputum is unproductive:

- ST40 (Fenglong)
- EX-B1 (Dingchuan)

## Clear Toxin Treatment

Renowned Chinese medicine physician Prof. Shui Wae, L.Ac. used GV14 combined with GV13 and GV12 for the treatment and prevention of external pernicious influences, including bacterial infections, viral infections, and other exteriorly contracted illnesses. GV14, GV13, and GV12 are often combined with LI11, LI4, and ST36 for wellness visits and the treatment of febrile diseases. This applies to preventative medicine, active external pernicious influences, clearing lingering pathogenic factors, and recovery from chronic externally contracted illnesses (including COVID-19). The following highlights these acupoints:

### GV12 (Shenzhu, Body Pillar, 身柱)



## Location

GV12 is on the midline of the back, below the spinous process of the 3rd thoracic vertebra. Standard needling is oblique and upward insertion, approximately 0.5 to 1.0 cun. **Caution:** the spinal canal is approximately 1.25–1.75 cun deep to the skin surface.

## Functions & Indications

GV12 clears heat from the lungs and heart (including clearing heat from the chest), calms the spirit, quells internal wind, and expels external wind. Indications for treatment include mania, delirium, excess heat, anger, seizures (including infantile convulsions and epilepsy), asthma, coughing, back pain, and boils due to heat.

## 3rd Thoracic Vertebra Level

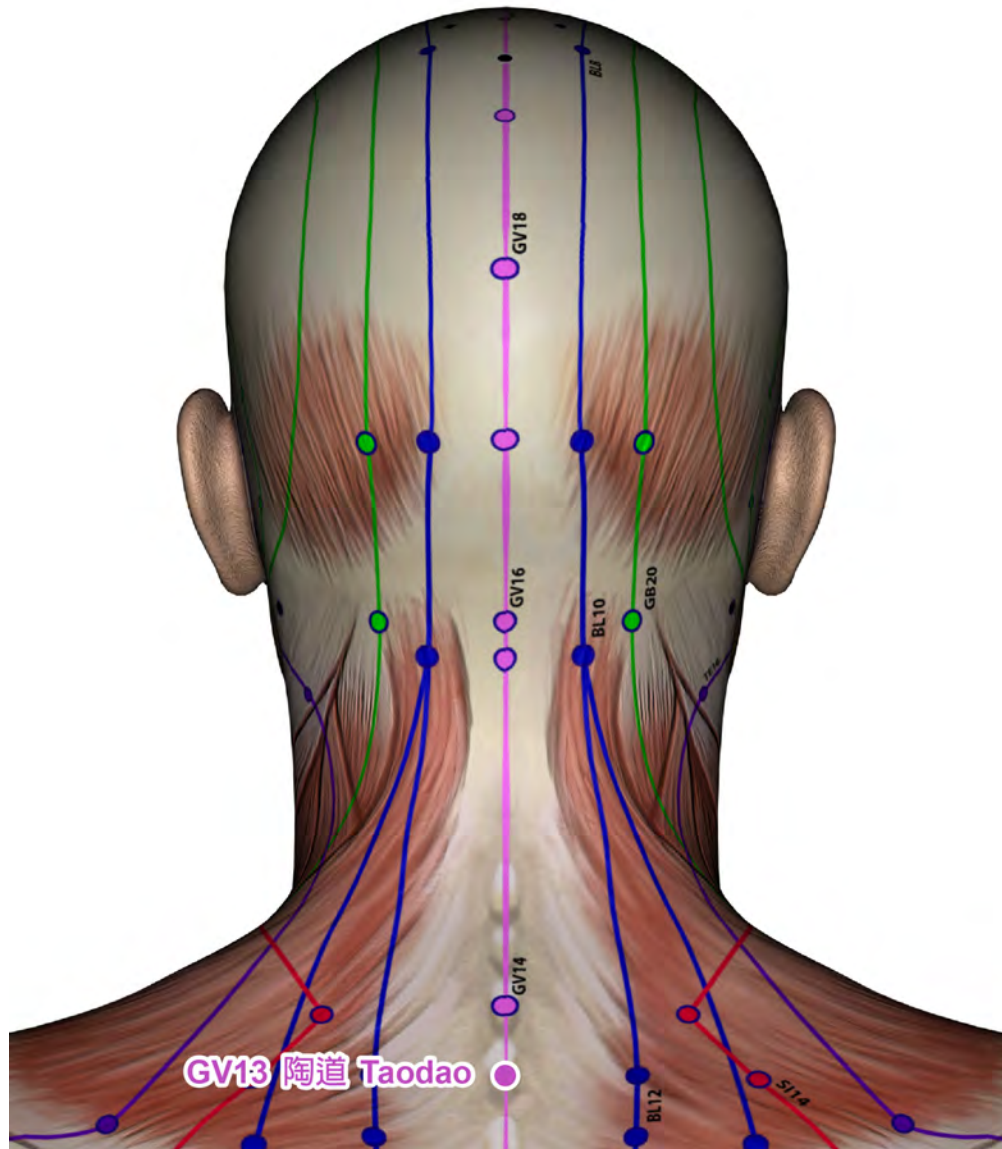
GV12 is below the spinous process of the 3rd thoracic vertebra and is therefore at the same vertical level as BL13 (Feishu), which is the lung back-shu point. As a result, this acupoint shares similar functions and indications, including clearing heat from the lungs and for the treatment of dyspnea and coughing.

The same is true for the lung's relationship to the heart because both are in proximity to each other in the upper jiao (burner). As a result, this acupoint benefits the heart and heart spirit (shen), especially for the treatment of mental disorders.

## GV13 (Taodao, Kiln Path, 陶道)

### Location

GV13 is on the midline of the back, below the spinous process of the 1st thoracic vertebra. Standard needling is oblique and upward insertion, approximately 0.5 to 1.0 cun. **Caution:** the spinal canal is approximately 1.25–1.75 cun deep to the skin surface.



## Taodao (陶道)

Taodao (陶道) may be translated as pottery kiln path, the way of happiness, or the path of Tao. A kiln is fiery hot. This translation emphasizes treating deficiency or excess fire. This point is also translated as a happiness path, because GV13 nourishes kidney yang



and calms the spirit. This acupoint is specifically indicated for the treatment of unhappiness.

## Meeting Point

This point is the meeting point of the governing vessel with the bladder channel.

## Primary Functions

GV13 regulates the governing vessel, clears heat, relieves exterior conditions, and calms the spirit.

## Indications

Indications include steaming bone syndrome, chills, fever, headaches, heaviness of the head, blurry vision, spasms or stiffness of the spine, anhidrosis (absence of sweating), unhappiness, disorientation, and malaria.

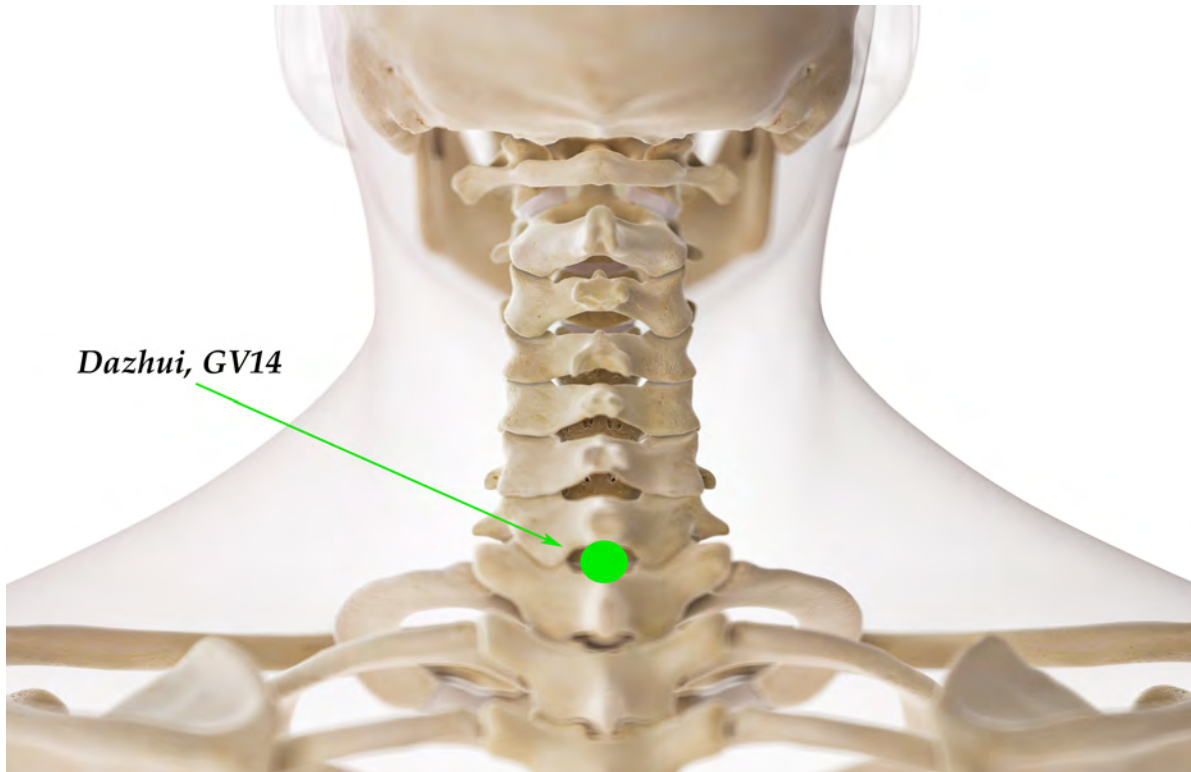
## Deficiency Fire: Steaming Bone

Steaming bone syndrome is a deficiency fire condition. Patients often experience one or more of the following:

- sensation of heat in the bones but the skin is a normal temperature
- afternoon tidal fever
- chronic low-grade fever
- severe night sweats
- dark red cheeks



## GV14 (Dazhui, Great Vertebra, 大椎)



### Translation

The name great vertebra (Dazhui) refers to the size of C7.

### Location

GV14 is on the midline of the back, below the spinous process of C7. Standard needling is oblique and upward insertion, approximately 0.5 to 1.0 cun.

**Caution:** the spinal canal is approximately 1.25–1.75 cun deep to the skin surface. Deep insertion is contraindicated. If an electric or numbing sensation extends to the limbs, remove the needle immediately.

### Innervations

GV14 is at the posterior ramus of the 8th cervical nerve and the medial branch of the posterior ramus of the 1st thoracic nerve.

## Intersection of All Yang Meridians

GV14 is the meeting point of the governing vessel with the six yang channels of the hand and foot.

## Functions

GV14 releases exterior conditions, regulates and opens the yang, quells the wind, clears the brain, and calms the spirit.

## Fire & Deficiency Heat

This point governs many conditions and is powerful for the treatment of chills, fever, and malaria. It is located above the kiln (GV13): the fire from the kiln at GV13 firms and supports GV14. As a result, GV14 at the apex of the back and kiln on the yang side of the body, is useful for the treatment of any fire or heat condition, whether excess or deficiency, and is also effective for balancing emotions.

## 4 Levels & 6 Stages

GV14 is often a useful point for the treatment of taiyang, shaoyang, and yangming stages of cold induced disorders and also wei, qi, and ying level disorders.

## Indications

Indications for use include neck and shoulder pain and rigidity, seizures, epilepsy, febrile diseases (including tidal & afternoon fevers), fever with chills, paralysis and hemiplegia, mental disorders, coughing, and asthma. GV14 is also applicable for the treatment of eczema, bronchitis, pulmonary tuberculosis, blood diseases, emphysema, heat stroke, malaria, and hepatitis.

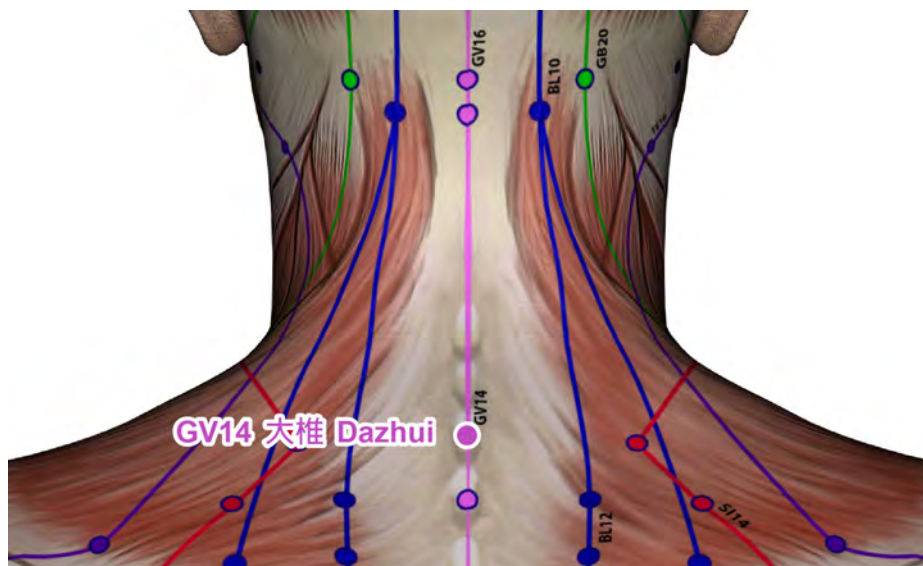
## Four Seas

There are four seas. GV14 is a sea of qi point. Notably, the governing vessel is the sea of the yang channels and GV14 is the sea of qi point on the sea of yang. This underscores the powerful healing properties of this vital acupuncture point. Texts also include ST9, CV17, GV15, and BL10 as sea of qi points. For excess, sea of qi points are used for chest pain, dyspnea, and flushed complexion. For deficiency, sea of qi points are indicated for the inability to speak. Many texts note that GV14 tonifies both qi and yang.

The sea of nourishment includes ST30 and ST36, which treat abdominal distention due to excess and the inability to eat due to deficiency.

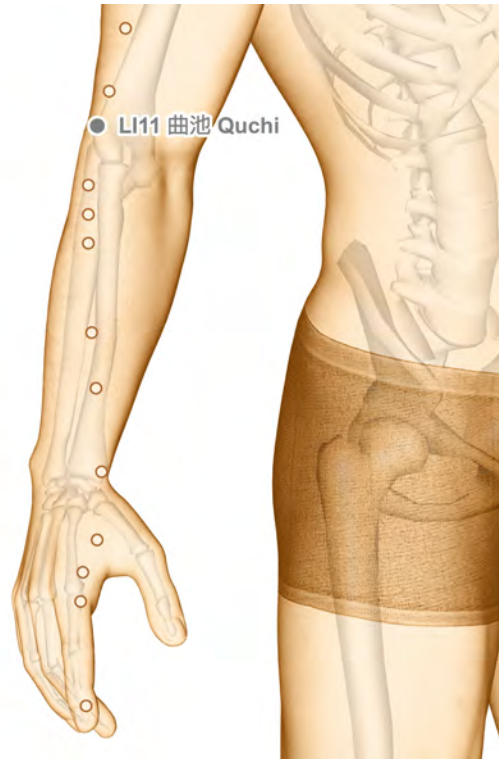
The sea of blood includes BL11, ST37, and ST39. For excess, sea of blood points treat a feeling of the body being larger than it is. For deficiency, sea of blood points treat illnesses wherein the patient feels malaise but cannot ascertain what the illness is.

The sea of marrow includes GV20 and GV16 as its acupoints. For excess, these points treat a sensation of excess energy and for deficiency treat fatigue and cramping in the lower extremities.



## LI11 (Quchi, Bending Pond) 曲池

When the elbow is flexed, the point is in the depression at the lateral end of the transverse cubital crease, midway between LU5 and the lateral epicondyle of the humerus. The point is located with the elbow flexed.



LI11 is a he-sea, earth, mother, Ma Dan-yang heavenly star, and ghost point. It eliminates wind and exterior conditions, cools heat, alleviates dampness, and regulates the blood. Common indications for use include sore throat, toothaches, red and painful eyes, scrofula, goiter, nodules of the neck, urticaria and skin diseases, upper limb paralysis, and febrile diseases. LI11 regulates the abundant qi and blood of the yangming channel to reduce heat and fevers. Additional indications are: chills with fever, coughing, constipation, irregular menstruation, local wind-damp-bi-pain (numbness and pain due to wind and dampness), headaches, and bloating of the abdomen.

## ST36 (Zusanli, Leg Three Miles) 足三里



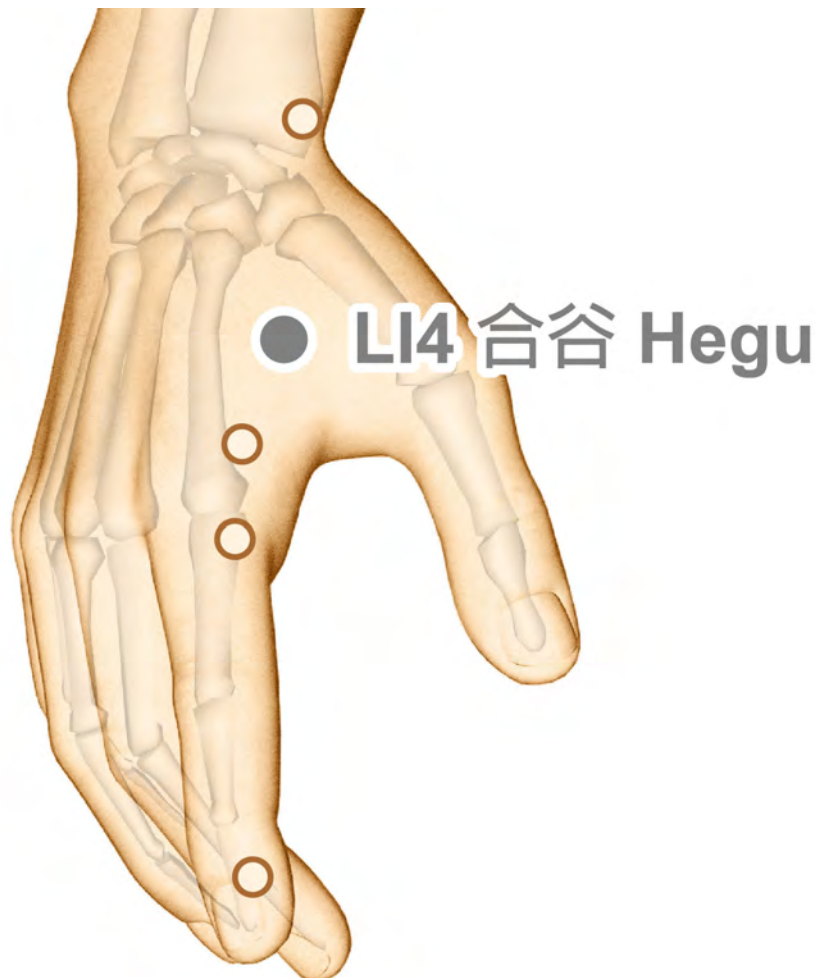
ST36 acupoint is 3 cun below ST35, one finger-breadth from the anterior crest of the tibia, in tibialis anterior. This point is lateral to a notch that is palpable on the tibia.

Zusanli (leg three measures) is a he sea, earth, lower he sea of the stomach, and sea of nourishment point. ST36 is a Gao Wu command point and a Ma Dan-Yang heavenly star point.

ST36 orders the spleen and stomach, regulates qi and blood, and tonifies qi. Common indications for usage include gastric pain, vomiting, abdominal distention, diarrhea, constipation, mastitis, breast abscess, enteritis, gastritis, edema, asthma, general weakness, emaciation, anemia, indigestion, hemiplegia, neurasthenia, and mental disorders.

## LI4 (Hegu, Gathering Valley) 合谷

LI4 is on the dorsum of the hand, between the first and second metacarpal bones, approximately at the midpoint of the second metacarpal bone on the radial side. When squeezing the thumb against the index finger, LI4 is at the highest point of the muscle bulge, approximately level with the end of the crease.

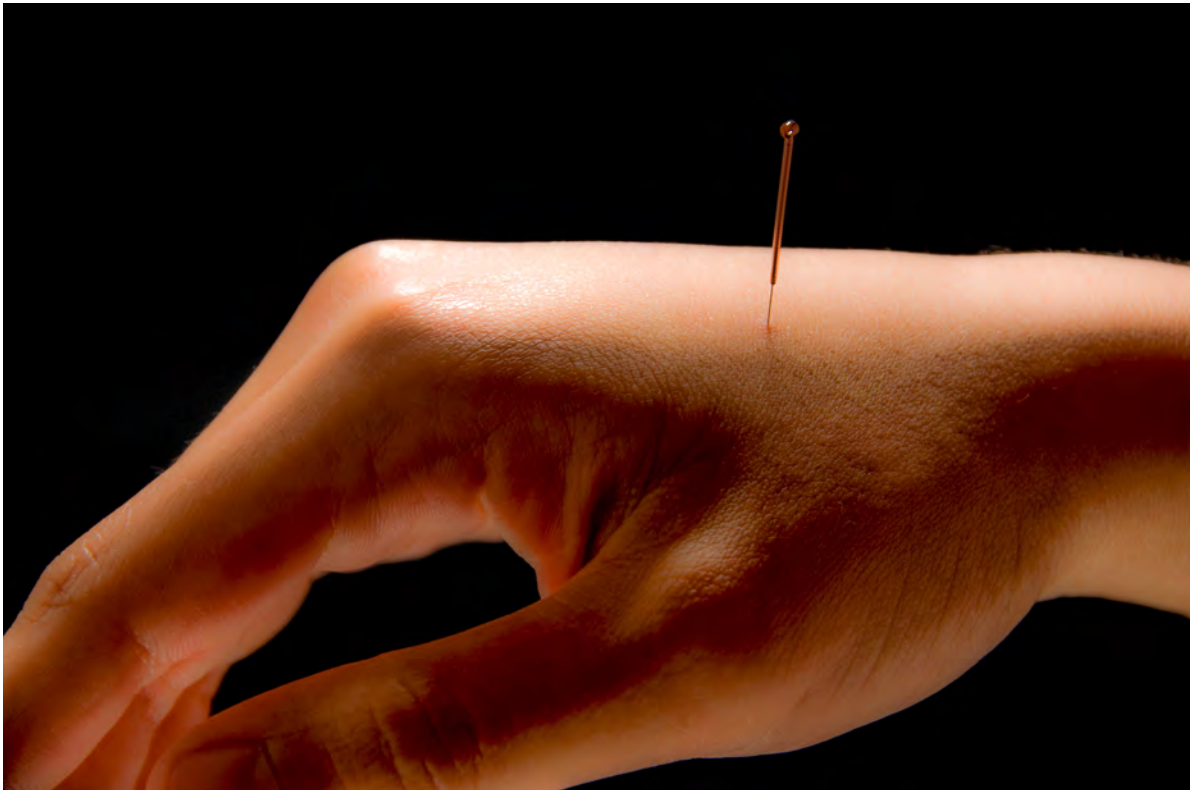


LI4 is a yuan-source point and an entry point. LI4 disperses the wind, releases the exterior, eliminates pain, and clears the channels. Traditional indications include headaches, eye pain, epistaxis, toothaches, deafness, facial edema, facial paralysis, sore throat, trismus (locked jaw), fever, delayed labor, local pain, and general pain.

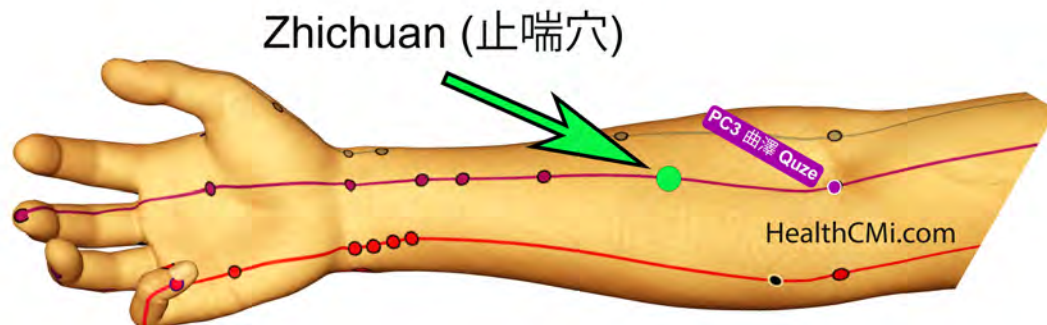


Combined with KD7, this point is used for insufficient sweating. In addition, this point is often used with SP6 with electroacupuncture for the treatment of delayed labor.

LI4 is a Gao Wu command point for the treatment of face and mouth disorders. LI4 is a Ma Dan-yang heavenly star point, indicating that this point is an important and powerful point, especially for indications such as headaches, facial swelling, malaria, fever, chills, and toothaches. This acupuncture point is contraindicated during pregnancy, especially when there is qi and blood deficiency.



## Wuhan Leishenshan Hospital Research KD3, Zhichuan, Daixie



Research supports acupuncture for the treatment of COVID-19. Wuhan Leishenshan Hospital researchers integrated acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine for the treatment of severe COVID-19. A total of 17 patients from Wuhan Leishenshan Hospital participated in a study that demonstrates significant improvements in patient outcomes.<sup>8</sup>

All patients in the study were diagnosed with severe-type COVID-19 from February 20 to March 29, 2020. There were 8 males and 9 females. The average age was  $62 \pm 13$  years. The average course of disease was  $24.8 \pm 16.1$  days.

In addition to the *Treatment Protocol for COVID-19 (Trial Version No. 7)* published by the National Health Commission, patients with severe COVID-19 also met the following inclusion criteria:

8. Yin X, Cai SB, Chen LM, Zhang ZD, Guo LH, Zou X. (2021). Combination of acupuncture and herbs medicine for the treatment of 17 severe COVID-19 cases (in Chinese). *Chinese Acupuncture and Moxibustion*, 41(05):498-500.



- *Shortness of breath, respiratory rate  $\geq 30$  breaths/min*
- *Resting oxygen saturation level  $\leq 93\%$*
- *Arterial partial pressure (PaO<sub>2</sub>)/oxygen absorption concentration (FiO<sub>2</sub>)  $\leq 300$  mmHg (1 mm Hg = 0.133 kPa)*
- *Pulmonary imaging showing significant lesion progression  $>50\%$  within 24–48 hours*

**All patients received acupuncture at the following acupoints:**

- **KD3 (Taixi)**
- **Daixie (代谢穴, Metabolic Point)**
- **Zhichuan (止喘穴, extra point)**

KD3 is a standard main channel acupoint. Zhichuan and Daixie are less common.

## Zhichuan

Zhichuan is located on the medial aspect of the forearm on a line connecting PC3 (Quze) and PC7 (Daling). Zhichuan is located at the upper third of this line, between the wrist crease and the transverse cubital crease. Indications for use of Zhichuan are myocardial disease, rapid heart rate, chest tightness, shortness of breath, and congestive heart failure.

Zhichuan is an extra point located along the pericardium channel, thus its relevance to the heart and pericardium. Its use for COVID-19 patients is based on the stages of disease progression. Initially, external pathogenic diseases often affect the lungs and the taiyang channels. Eventually, diseases may progress to the jueyin level (liver, pericardium). Acupoint Zhichuan helps to prevent the progression of the

illness to critical stages and to prevent the invasion of fire-poison from the exterior to the interior.

## Daixie

Daixie is an extra point located 8 cun above KD3, posterior to the medial border of the tibia, in the depression between the medial border of the tibia and the gastrocnemius muscle. Its close proximity to LV6 (Zhongdu), indicates a potential for preventing progression of illness to the jueyin stage. Its location between SP7 (Lougu) and SP8 (Digi) indicates a potential for benefitting the spleen qi. Since both LV6 and SP8 are xi-cleft acupoints, Daixie may be well-suited for the treatment of acute diseases.

## Secondary Acupoints

Additional acupoints were administered based on different symptoms. For fever, the following acupuncture points were added:

- LI4 (Quchi)
- LI11 (Hegu)

For turbid phlegm, the following acupuncture point was added:

- ST40 (Fenglong)

For chest tightness, the following acupuncture point was added:

- PC6 (Neiguan)

For general soreness, the following acupuncture point was added:

- TB5 (Waiguan)

Patients were treated in either the supine or seated position. Upon disinfection, a 0.25 mm x 40 mm disposable acupuncture needle was

inserted, reaching a depth of 10–20 mm. After achieving a deqi sensation, needles were manipulated using different techniques, based on differential diagnostic patterns.

For excess patterns, the tonifying (bu) technique was used. For deficiency patterns, the attenuating (xie) technique was used. For intermingling deficiency and excess, the mild tonifying and attenuating (ping bu ping xie) technique was used. The above acupuncture therapy was administered once per day until discharge.

Herbal formulas were also prescribed for different patterns. For excess patterns, either of the following formulas was given: Jie Biao Xuan Fei decoction, Jie Biao Qing Li decoction (i.e., Ma Xing Shi Gan decoction), Xue Bi Jing Injection (a Chinese patent drug), or a modified version of Da Chai Hu Tang. For deficiency patterns, Si Ni San was administered in addition to herbs that tonify the spleen and stomach and strengthen spleen qi.

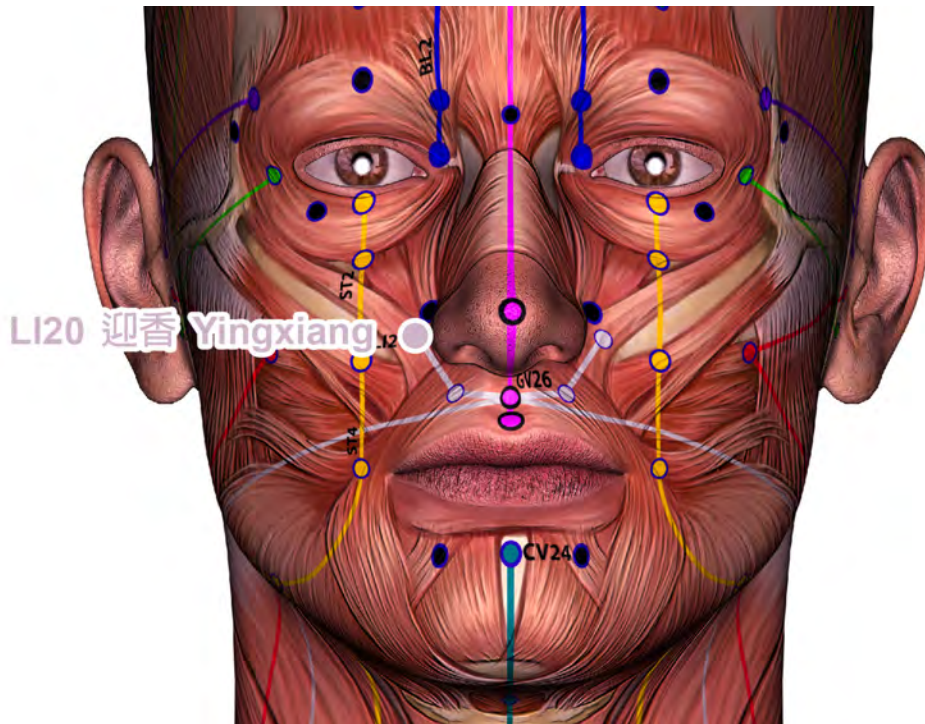
Acupuncture plus herbal medicine achieved a total effective rate of 82.4% for the treatment of severe COVID-19. After treatment, the oxygen saturation levels of all patients significantly improved compared with readings before treatment.

A total of 50–75% of the patients no longer had the following symptoms: fever, dry cough, fatigue, shortness of breath, chest tightness, cough, dry mouth, and loss of appetite. CT scans showed significant improvements in 41.2% of the patients after completion of this study. Seven out of 17 cases had complete resolution of lung abnormalities, shown on CT imaging.<sup>9</sup>

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9. Yin X, Cai SB, Chen LM, Zhang ZD, Guo LH, Zou X. (2021). Combination of acupuncture and herbs medicine for the treatment of 17 severe COVID-19 cases (in Chinese). *Chinese Acupuncture and Moxibustion*, 41(05):498-500.

## Loss Of Olfaction



A controlled clinical trial published in the *Journal of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery* finds acupuncture effective for restoring olfaction in patients with dysosmia (sense of smell dysfunction) due to viral infections.<sup>10</sup> Notably, the patients that recovered in this study with acupuncture were non-responders to pharmacologic therapy. Although this research is not specific to COVID-19, it underscores a long history of the treatment of anosmia and dysosmia with acupuncture.

Acupuncture treatments lasted for 30 minutes and the acupuncture points used were the following:

- **GV16 (Fengfu)**
- **GV20 (Baihui)**
- **LI20 (Yingxiang)**

10. Vent, Julia, Djin-Wue Wang, and Michael Damm. "Effects of traditional Chinese acupuncture in post-viral olfactory dysfunction." *Otolaryngology--Head and Neck Surgery* 142, no. 4 (2010): 505-509.

- **LU7 (Lieque)**
- **LU9 (Taiyuan)**
- **ST36 (Zusanli)**
- **KD3 (Taixi)**

All patients received several acupuncture treatments over a 10 week period. A statistical analysis reveals a significant improvement in the patients receiving acupuncture versus the control group.

### Benefit Olfaction Acupoints

At HealthCMI, we recommend **GV24 (Shenting)**, given the importance of scalp acupuncture for neurologic conditions impacting olfaction and the brain. Other important acupoints for benefitting the nose and sense of smell are **Yintang (extra point)** and **LI20 (Yingxiang)**.

**GV24 (Shenting)**, **Yintang (extra point)**, and **LI20 (Yingxiang)** are often applied as a three point combination for benefitting the sinuses and olfaction and may include additional acupoints including **GB20 (Fengchi)**.

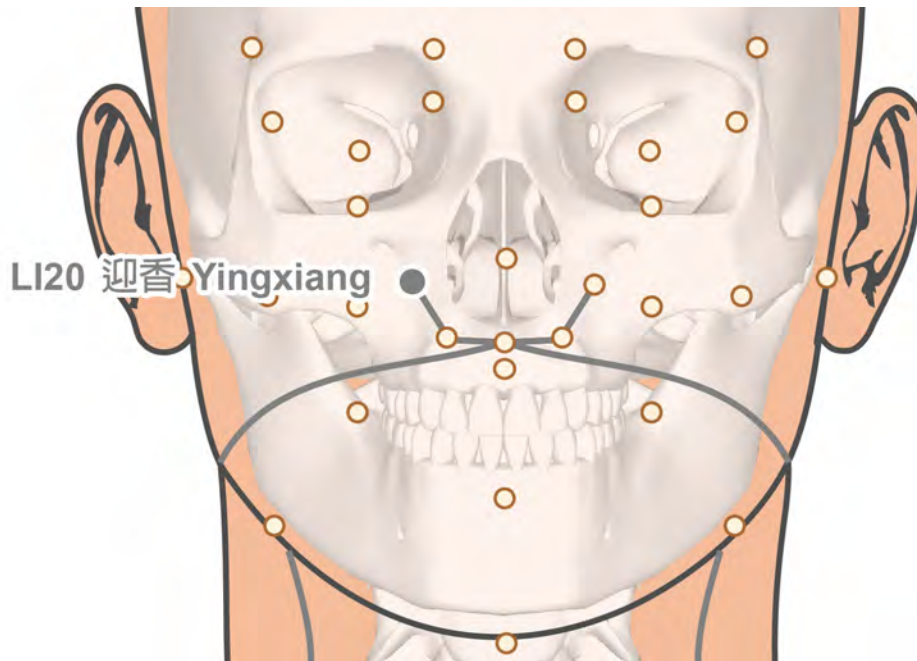
In another investigation of post-viral olfactory dysfunction, traditional Chinese acupuncture “significantly improved olfactory function outcomes in patients who underwent acupuncture compared with the observation group.”<sup>11</sup> Results were confirmed using the University of Pennsylvania Smell Identification Test (UPSIT). Acupuncture points used in the investigation included **LI20 (Yingxiang)** and **M-HN-14 (Bitong)**.

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11. Dai, Qi, Zhihui Pang, and Hongmeng Yu. "Recovery of olfactory function in postviral olfactory dysfunction patients after acupuncture treatment." *Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine* 2016 (2016).

## LI20 (Yingxiang, Welcome Fragrance) 迎香

As the name welcome fragrance implies, LI20 is a chief acupoint for the treatment of olfactory disorders and is featured in research.



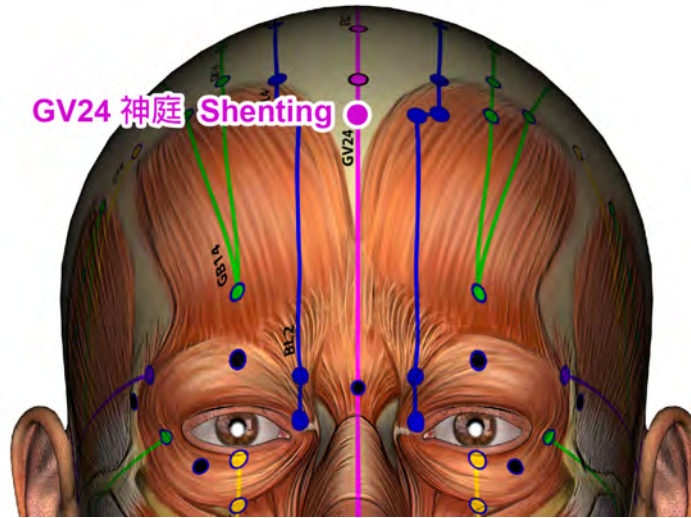
LI20 is in the nasolabial groove, at the level of the midpoint of the lateral border of the ala nasi. LI20 is a meeting point of the large intestine and stomach channels. This point opens nasal passages, disperses wind-heat, and controls the sense of smell.

LI20 regulates the qi of the large intestine yangming channel, which is paired with the lung taiyin channel. LI20 assists the lungs to open the nose to welcome the sense of smell, thus the name: welcome fragrance. Indications for use include nasal congestion and obstruction, anosmia, dysosmia, and deviation or paralysis of the face and mouth.

## GV24 (Shen-spirit Court, Shenting, 神庭)

### Location

GV24 is 0.5 cun directly above the midpoint of the anterior hairline. Transverse insertion 0.5–1 cun is traditionally used. A branch of the frontal nerve and a branch of the frontal artery and vein are located at this acupoint.



### Channel Connectivity

GV24 is the meeting point of the governing vessel with the bladder and stomach channels.

### Functions

GV24 benefits the brain, improves decisiveness, powerfully calms the shen (spirit), expels external wind, regulates internal wind, and benefits the head, nose, and eyes.

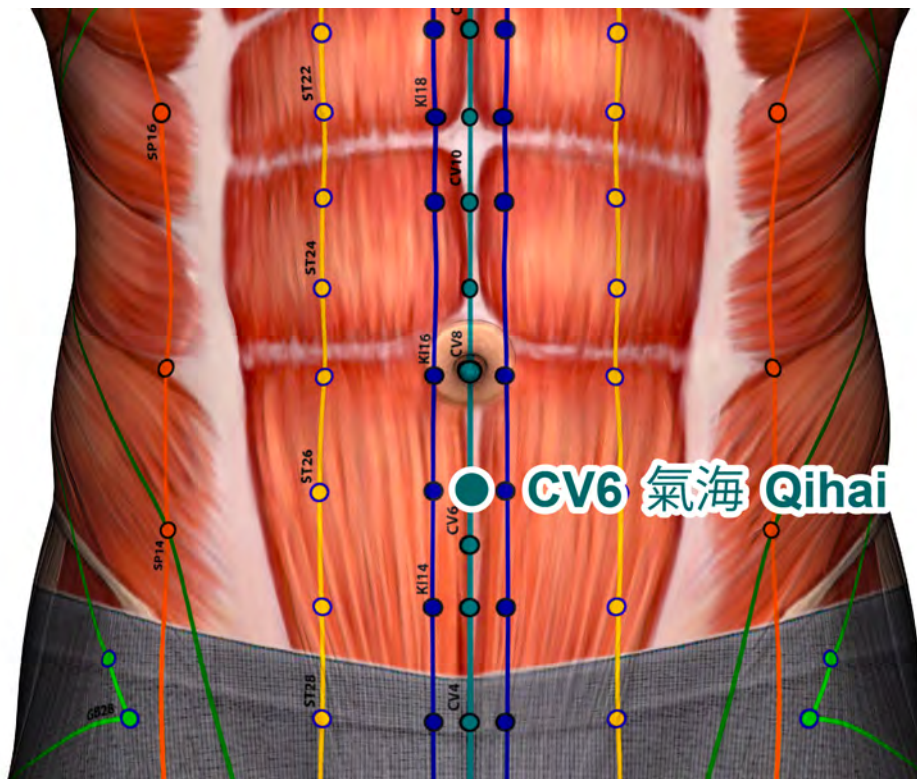
### Indications

Needling GV24 treats conditions including insomnia, bipolar disorder, dizziness, indecisiveness, mania, fear and fright, depression, headaches (including frontal headaches), epilepsy, vertigo, rhinitis, rhinorrhea, palpitations, post-stroke syndrome, and forgetfulness.

**GV24 combined with LI20 plus Bitong or Yintang is helpful in the restoration of olfaction.**



## Long COVID Acupuncture Research



Acupuncture provides relief from COVID-19 by reducing inflammation. University of Pennsylvania (neurosurgery department) and Tianjin University of Traditional Chinese Medicine researchers determined that acupuncture alleviates respiratory, digestive, cardiovascular, and nervous system disorders associated with COVID-19.<sup>12</sup> In addition, acupuncture was found effective for alleviating fatigue, depression, and insomnia associated with COVID-19.

The research team finds acupuncture successful in regulating inflammation affecting the immune system. The researchers also document the success of acupuncture in regulating oxidative stress levels and neurotransmitter releases. In addition, diseases of the vascular system were alleviated with the application of acupuncture and

12. Wang, Lifen; Hu, Xiyu; Geng, Lianqi; Li, Ningcen; Chen, Yong; Zhang, Jingyu; Yuan, Xinru; Huang, Lihong; Ba, Dongsheng; Lian, Jinyu; Lyu, Xiaoyan; Chen, Zelin; Zhang, Yue; Chen, Bo. Multi-effective characteristics and advantages of acupuncture in COVID-19 treatment. *Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine* 3(2):p 83-95, June 2023.



acupuncture treatments actively regulated mitochondrial function and cardiomyocyte apoptosis.

Acupuncture's ability to improve digestion and alleviate diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, and abdominal discomfort for COVID-19 patients is consistent with other areas of medicine confirming acupuncture's ability to exert benefits to the digestive system. For example, The American Society of Clinical Oncology formally recommends acupuncture as an effective modality for the treatment of nausea and vomiting due to chemotherapy. Overall, the digestion system findings are consistent across significant meta-analyses published in *JAMA*.<sup>13 14</sup> This is especially significant since patients reporting digestive disturbances as the initial symptoms of COVID-19 are most likely to develop into severe cases.

The research team finds that the pain relieving effects of acupuncture and its ability to alleviate fatigue are associated with the ability of acupuncture to regulate neurotransmitter and neuropeptide levels. This is consistent with findings published in *BMJ* (British Medical Association) and *BMC* (BioMed Central).<sup>15 16 17</sup>

**These findings are significant because Long COVID remains an issue, with many patients having insomnia and mental disorders over six months after discharge.**<sup>18</sup> In related standards, the American Cancer Society recommends acupuncture for the alleviation of fatigue due to cancer treatment.

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13. Shen J, Wenger N, Glaspy J, et al. Electroacupuncture for control of myeloablative chemotherapy-induced emesis: a randomized controlled trial. *JAMA* 2000;284(21):2755–2761.
  14. Qi LY, Yang JW, Yan SY, et al. Acupuncture for the treatment of diarrhea-predominant irritable bowel syndrome: a pilot randomized clinical trial. *JAMA Netw Open* 2022;5(12):e2248817.
  15. Wang T, Xu C, Pan K, et al. Acupuncture and moxibustion for chronic fatigue syndrome in traditional Chinese medicine: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *BMC Complement Altern Med* 2017;17(1):163.
  16. Xu S, Yu L, Luo X, et al. Manual acupuncture versus sham acupuncture and usual care for prophylaxis of episodic migraine without aura: multicentre, randomised clinical trial. *BMJ* 2020;368:m697.
  17. Li X, Dai Q, Shi Z, et al. Clinical efficacy and safety of electroacupuncture in migraine treatment: a systematic review and network metaanalysis. *Am J Chin Med* 2019;47(8):1755–1780.
  18. Spinner CD, Gottlieb RL, Criner GJ, et al; GS-US-540-5774 Investigators. Effect of Remdesivir vs standard care on clinical status at 11 days in patients with moderate COVID-19: a randomized clinical trial. *JAMA* 2020;324(11):1048–1057.

Long COVID as a cause of depression indicates that acupuncture is an appropriate treatment modality. Published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, the American College of Physicians notes that acupuncture combined with antidepressants is a superior protocol versus pharmacological monotherapy.<sup>19</sup> This approach indicates that integrated treatment protocols optimize patient outcomes.

## Most Common Long COVID Acupoints

The research team did a breakdown of the most common acupuncture points used in clinics based on respiratory, digestive, neurological, and mental disorders. For respiratory system disorders including fever, dyspnea, chest pain and tightness, and coughing, the following acupoints were determined to be the most common:

- **Dazhui (GV14)**
- **Hegu (LI4)**
- **Neiguan (PC6)**
- **Quchi (LI11)**
- **Dingchuan (EX-B1)**

The research is consistent with modern clinical practice. GV14 is one of the single most important acupoints for the alleviation of febrile diseases. It is a point of sea of qi acupoint and is a meeting point of the governing vessel with the six yang channels of the hand and foot. LI4 is commonly used for the invasion of external pathogenic factors and is a yuan-source point, Gao Wu command point, and Ma Dan-yang heavenly star acupoint. PC6 is an important luo-connecting acupoint and is a confluent point of the yin linking vessel. Dingchuan, an extra point translated as calm dyspnea, often provides immediate and long-term relief for wheezing, asthma, dyspnea, coughing, and pain of the back.

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19. Qaseem A, Barry MJ, Kansagara D; Clinical Guidelines Committee of the American College of Physicians. Nonpharmacologic versus pharmacologic treatment of adult patient with major depressive disorder: a clinical practice guideline from the American college of physicians. *Ann Intern Med* 2016;164(5):350–359.

Digestive symptoms of COVID-19 include diarrhea, abdominal discomfort and distention, nausea, vomiting, low appetite, and constipation. The most common acupoints documented for digestive system concerns related to COVID-19 were:

- **Qihai (CV6)**
- **Guanyuan (CV4)**
- **Zusanli (ST36)**
- **Hegu (LI4)**
- **Sanyinjiao (SP6)**



Interestingly, CV6, CV4, and ST36 are combined with CV3 (Zhongji) for the treatment of fatigue and chronic low levels of vitality. This is termed the Dan Tian treatment, named after the area below the navel used in

Chinese medicine for the support of vital energy. Prof. Wae Shui noted that CV6, CV4, CV3 (often combined with ST36) benefits the lower Dan Tian, which is the “medicine bag of health.” Exhaustion and intestinal distress may present with Long COVID and the inclusion of CV6 and CV4 addresses this concern.

Neurological concerns including headaches, fatigue, anosmia (loss of smell), dysosmia, extremity pain, and dizziness were determined common adverse effects associated with COVID-19. The researchers documented the most common acupoints used for these ailments in COVID-19 patients:

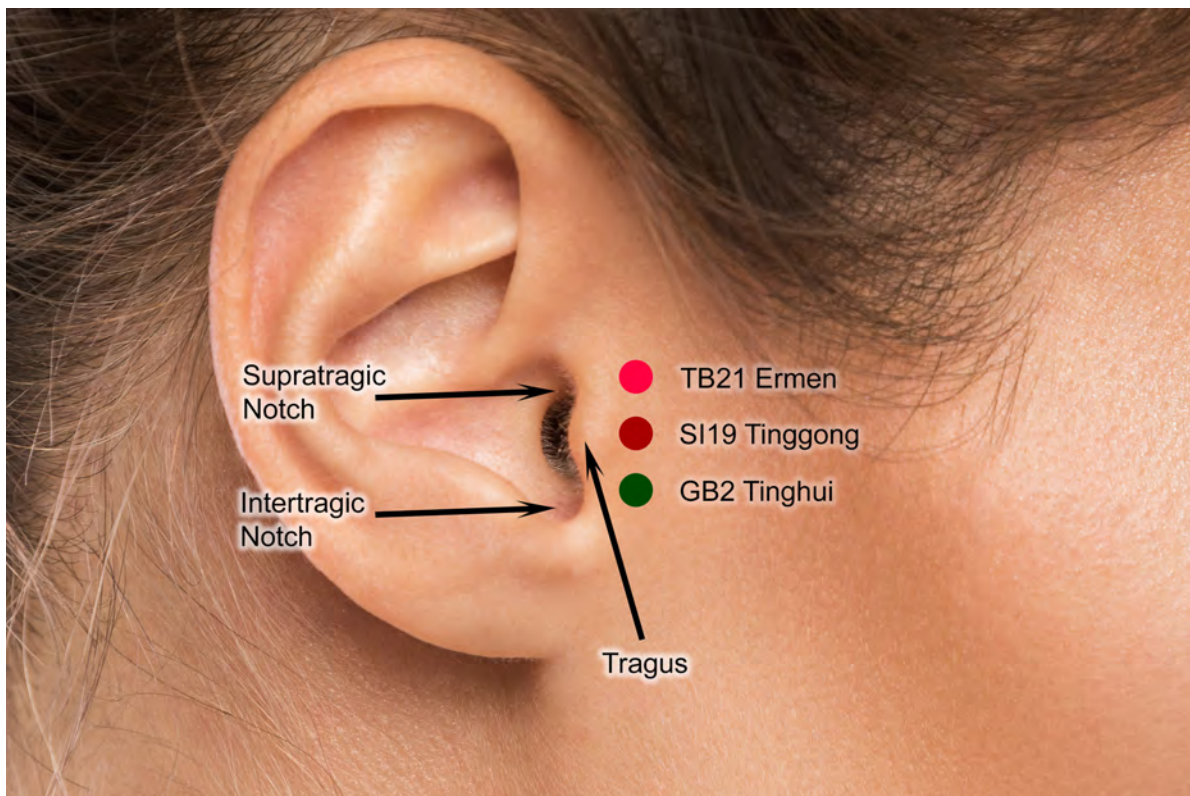
- **Mingmen (GV4)**
- **Zusanli (ST36)**
- **Hegu (LI4)**
- **Sanyinjiao (SP6)**
- **Quchi (LI11)**

For mental and psychological disorders associated with COVID-19 (e.g. anxiety, depression, insomnia), the following acupoints were determined the most commonly applied:

- **Shenmen (HT7)**
- **Zusanli (ST36)**
- **Neiguan (PC6)**
- **Baihui (GV20)**
- **Ear Shenmen (auricular point)**

The researchers indicate that acupuncture is synergistic with drug therapy. Based on the research team’s findings, acupuncture is an appropriate treatment modality for patients with COVID-19 or its long-term adverse effects.

## Hearing Loss and Tinnitus



*TB21, SI19, GB2*

Hearing loss and tinnitus are adverse effects correlated with COVID-19 for both acute cases and Long COVID. Three principle acupoints used to alleviate hearing loss and tinnitus are TB21 (Ermen), SI19 (Tinggong), and GB2 (Tinghui). Treatment may be administered with patients either seated or in a supine position. This treatment may cause discomfort and therefore communication with the patient is essential. Frequent treatments over an extended period of time may be required to obtain significant results.

TB21 (Ermen), SI19 (Tinggong), and GB2 (Tinghui) are applied as a three point combination or may be applied during separate acupuncture treatments. Supplementary acupoints include GB12 (Wangu), TB17 (Yifeng), TB3 (Zhongzhu), GB20 (Fengchi), LV2 (Xingjiang), ST40 (Fenglong), and KD3 (Taixi).

## SI19 (Tinggong, Palace of Hearing, 聽宮)



### Location

SI19 is located in the depression formed when the mouth is opened, anterior to the middle of the tragus and posterior to the condyloid process of the mandible.

### Meeting Point

SI19 is the meeting point of the small intestine, triple burner, and gallbladder channels.

### Indications

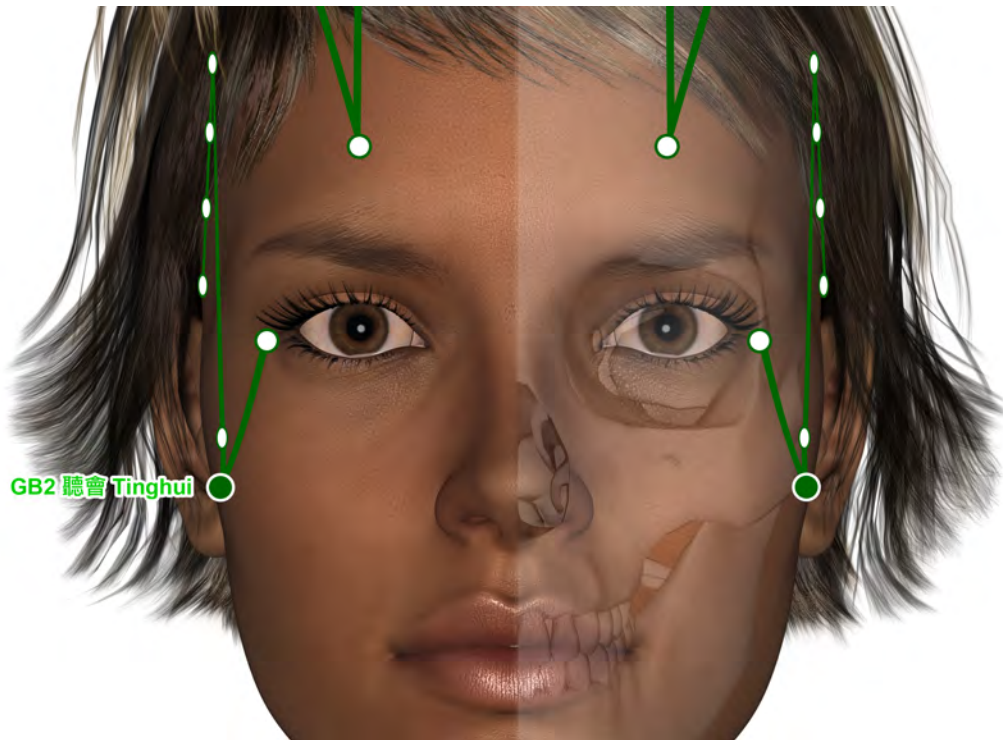
SI19 benefits the ears and calms the spirit. Indications include hearing loss, tinnitus, puss in the ear, otitis media, and toothaches. SI19 is one of the most powerful acupuncture points benefitting hearing.

### Standard Needling

Perpendicular insertion 0.5–1 cun is standard.



## GB2 (Tinghui, Meeting of Hearing, 聽會)



### Location

GB2 is anterior to the intertragic notch, at the posterior border of the condyloid process of the mandible, located with the mouth open, located below SI19.

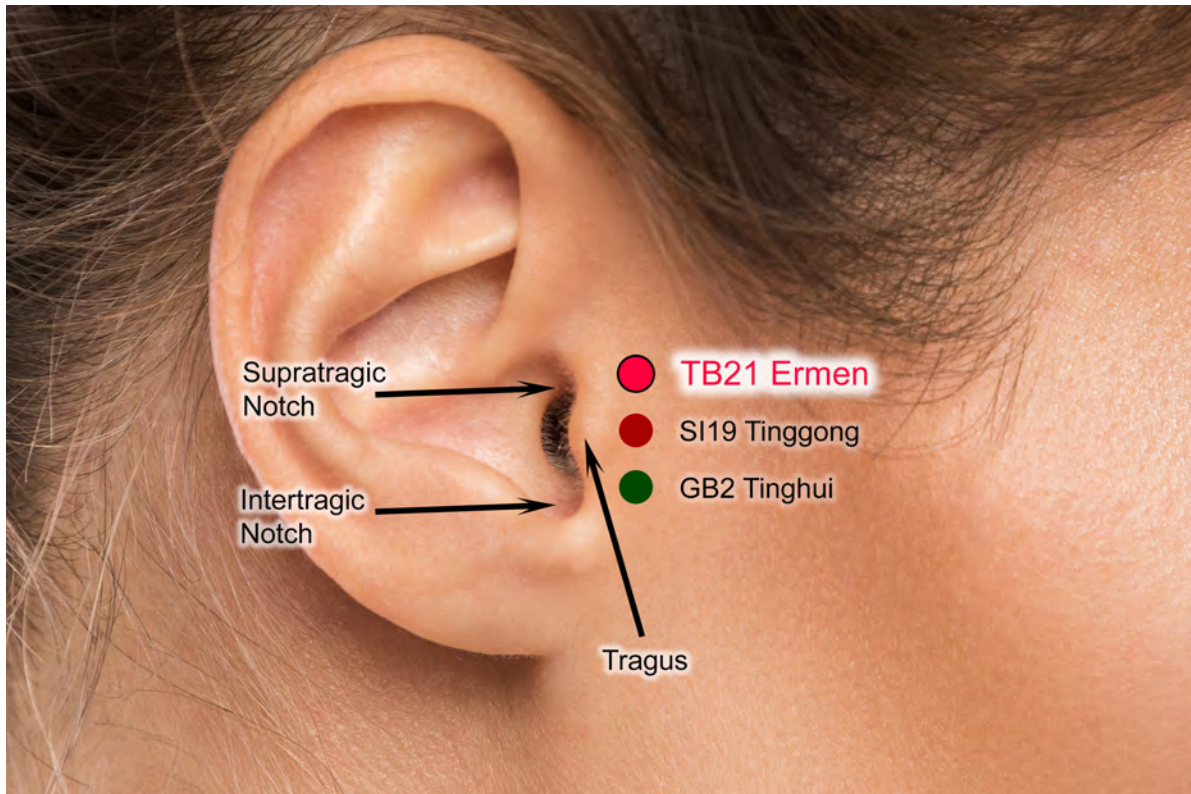
### Indications

Indications include tinnitus, hearing loss, toothaches, facial paralysis, and deviation of mouth or eyes.

### Standard Needling

Perpendicular insertion (or slightly posteriorly) 0.5–0.7 cun is standard.

## TB21 (Ermen, Ear Gate, 耳門)



### Location

TB21 is located with the mouth open, in the depression anterior to the supratragic notch and posterior to the condyloid process of the mandible.

### Functions and Indications

TB21 opens the ear and disperses heat. Indications include ear disorders, toothaches, stiffness of the lips, and temporomandibular arthritis.

### Standard Needling

Perpendicular insertion 0.3–0.5 cun is standard.



## Long COVID Exhaustion & Fatigue

Two major factors in long-term COVID-19 related depleted energy levels are lingering pathogenic factors and qi & blood deficiency. Lingering pathogenic factors may be viewed biomedically as insufficient clearing of the virus or secondary infections. Lingering pathogenic factors may also be viewed in terms of the six evils (wind, cold, damp, heat, summer heat, dry) and other Chinese medicine diagnostics. The goal is to clear the lingering pathogenic factors (pernicious influences) to restore vitality. The clear toxin treatment of GV14, GV13, GV12 with ST36, LI4, and LI11 is highlighted in this course material to achieve clearing of pathogenic factors.

The other factor is constitutional depletion due to illness. Qi and blood deficiency presentations require tonification to restore the body's vital energy. Biomedically, depletion may be quantified as resultant from damage to the body's tissues and biological pathways.

### Tonification

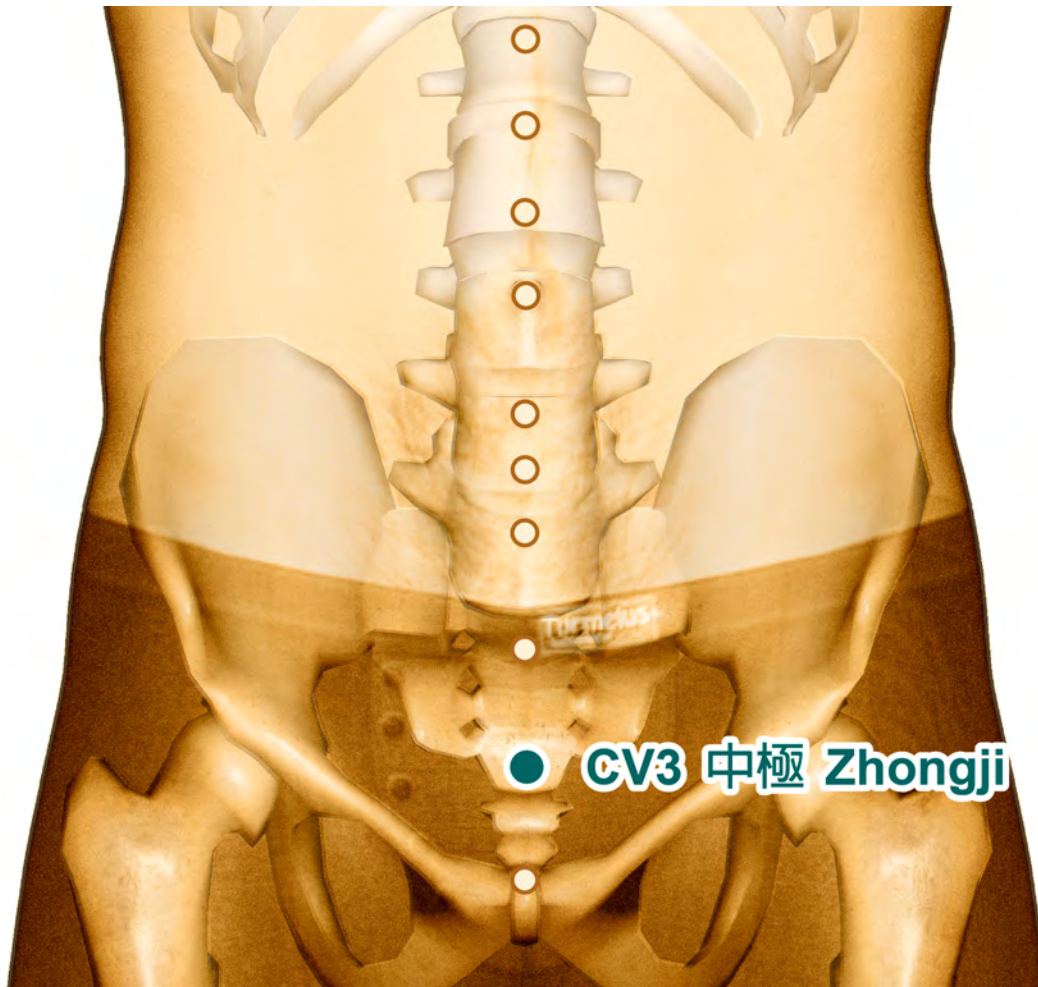
Tonification methods vary and two approaches are the powerful lower dantian (elixir field) treatment and the three measures (LI10, ST36) distal treatment. In addition, a treatment using a limited number of back-shu points is another way to achieve tonification without dispersing the qi and causing depletion in patients with severe deficiency.

### Lower Dantian Treatment

Renowned Chinese medicine physician Prof. Shui Wae, L.Ac. employed a dantian tonifying technique with the acupoint prescription of CV6, CV4, CV3, and ST36. This combination was used for powerfully tonifying jing, qi, blood, yin, and yang. The following are highlights of the acupoint prescription:

**CV3 (Zhongji, Center Pole, 中極)**

CV3 is located on the midline of the abdomen, 4 cun below the umbilicus.



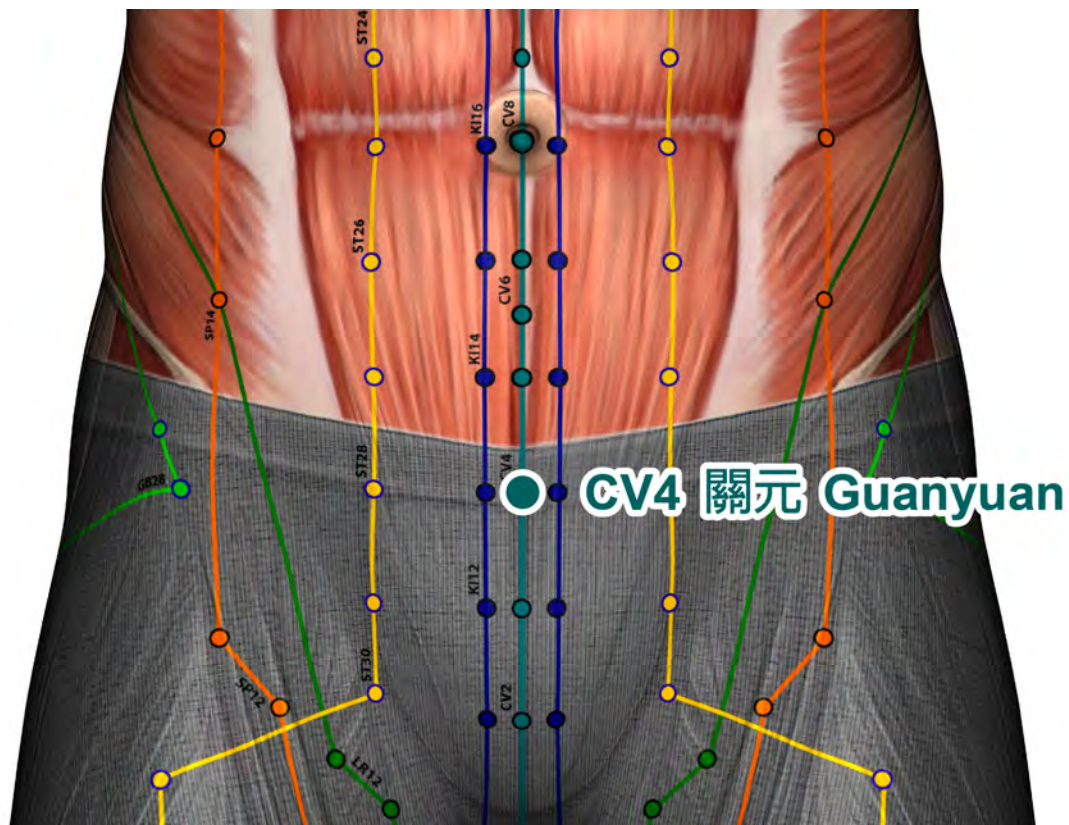
CV3 is the mu (alarm) point of the bladder and is the meeting point of the conception vessel with the spleen, liver, and kidney channels. CV3 is the intersection of the three leg yin channels. CV3 assists the transforming function of qi, regulates the uterus and menstruation, benefits kidneys, and alleviates damp-heat of the lower burner (jiao) and urogenital system.

### General Indications

CV3 is useful for treating urinary tract infections (UTI), frequent urination (including in the elderly), spermatorrhea, infertility due to kidney deficiency, impotence, dysmenorrhea, prolapsed uterus, vaginitis, premature ejaculation, urinary retention, enuresis, and frequent urination.

### CV4 (Guanyuan, Gate of Origin, 關元)

CV4 is located on the midline of the abdomen, 3 cun below the umbilicus.



### Functions

CV4 is the front mu-alarm point of the small intestine. CV4 nourishes and stabilizes the kidneys, tonifies yuan (source) qi, benefits the bladder and spleen, benefits the uterus and conception vessel, regulates qi,

moves and builds qi, and restores yang. CV4 is an intersection of the three leg yin channels (deeply) and is also a crossing point of the spleen channel (superficially).

### *General Indications*

Indications include the treatment of chronic fatigue syndrome, infertility, issues related to aging (premature graying, loss of hair, etc...), impotence, nocturnal emissions, loss of sperm, and children with slow growth and responses.

### *Lower Jiao*

Lower jiao (burner) indications for use include enuresis, frequent urination, urgent urination, leukorrhea, dysmenorrhea, irregular menstruation, hernia, abdominal pain, and kidney yang deficiency morning diarrhea.

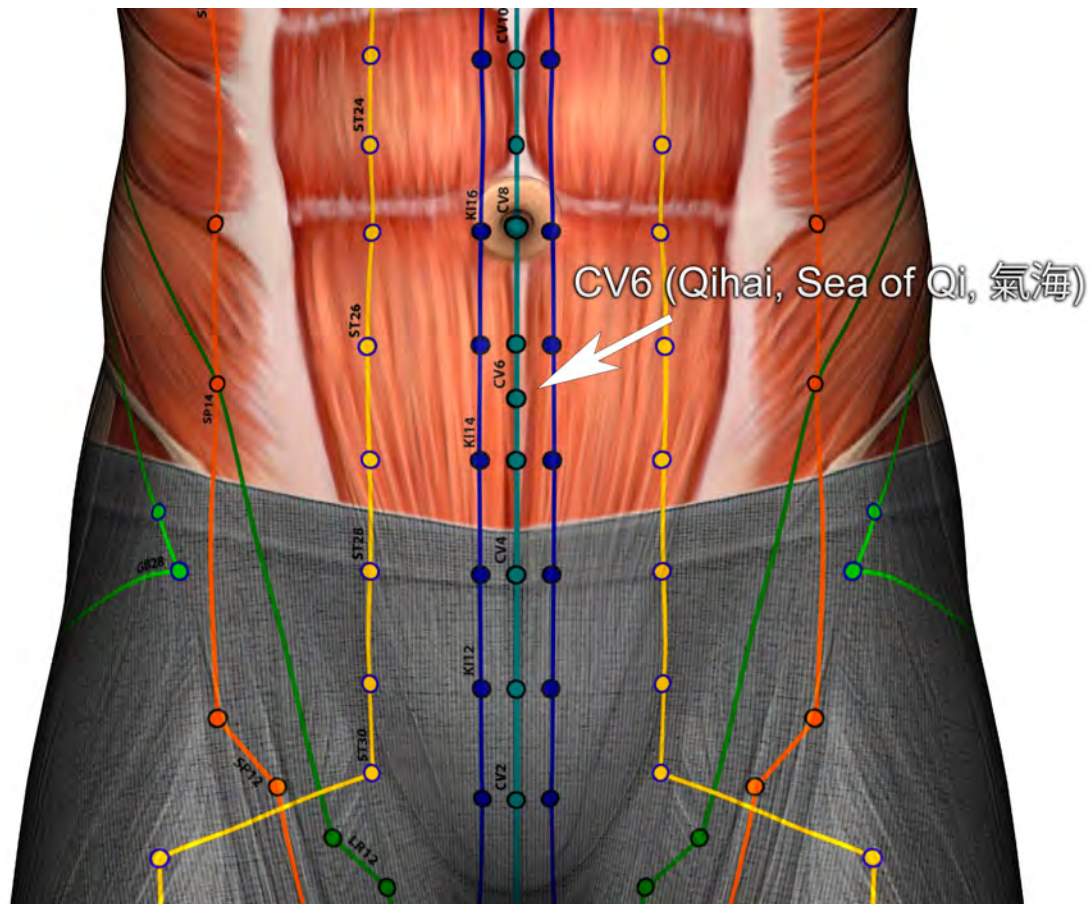
### *Caution*

Use with caution during pregnancy or avoid. Deep insertion may penetrate a full urination bladder. Make sure the patient has visited the bathroom prior to needling this point.

### **CV6 (Qihai, Sea of Qi, 氣海)**

CV6 is located on the midline of the abdomen, 1.5 cun below the umbilicus. CV6 is contraindicated for deep needling to avoid reaching the peritoneal cavity.





### *Functions*

CV6 regulates qi, strengthens kidneys and qi, benefits yang, harmonizes blood, regulates the chong (penetrating) and ren (conception) vessels, and dispels dampness.

### *Indications*

Indications for use include abdominal pain, irregular menstruation, dysmenorrhea, leukorrhea, abnormal uterine bleeding, urination bladder disorders, spermatorrhea, nocturnal emissions, impotence, and cold sensations of running piglets rushing upwards.

CV6 is used to help the kidneys receive the lung qi to promote proper inhalation. This is especially applicable for the treatment of asthma.

## Three Measures Distal Treatment: LI10, ST36

LI10 (Shousanli, Arm Three Miles, 手三里) is synchronized with ST36 (Zusanli, Leg Three Miles, 足三里). The reference to the synchronization is within the names of the points: Arm Three Miles, Leg Three Miles.

Anatomically, LI10 and ST36 are in similar locations distal to the elbow and knee respectively. As a result, they communicate with each other, which is reflected in their names. These are paired points that are used to tonify qi. LI10 clears the large intestine channel pathway and assists the strengthening function of ST36 to benefit the stomach and spleen.

LI10 has a powerful function to reduce stagnation and is therefore effective for invigorating qi and blood circulation to the arm, elbow, rotator cuff, and scapula. For example, when a patient has frozen shoulder syndrome, this point can be needled while passive or active motion is exerted, which frees mobility in the arm and shoulder.

For any shoulder or arm pain, this point provides a deep clearing of stagnation and one can go “three more miles.” This deep clearing action through the channel also applies to the treatment of toothaches, burning anus, neck pain, abdominal discomfort, and nodules in the neck.

### *Translation Note*

For LI10 (Shousanli), although the character li (里) in the name of the point is translated as mile, it is technically shorter than a mile. The same is for ST36. Although there have been variations in this traditional measurement over time, 1 li is approximately 0.3 miles or 0.5 km. Note: the literal translation of Shou (手) is hand, but this is also used to refer to the arm as in Shouwuli (LI13, Arm Five Miles). The character for hand is also cultural reference to the arm when used for the name of LI13.

## Acupuncture Long COVID Rehabilitation

Boli Zhang and Qingquan Liu are editors-in-chief of *Diagnosis and Treatment of COVID-19 with Integrated Chinese and Western Medicine*.<sup>20</sup> The editors are highly regarded in the field of Chinese medicine for their wealth of knowledge. In the text, the following Long COVID protocol is provided:

Reducing technique is applied to the following:

- BL13
- LU7
- LU9
- SP6

Tonification technique applied to the following:

- BL23
- BL20
- ST36

Symptom presentation acupoints:

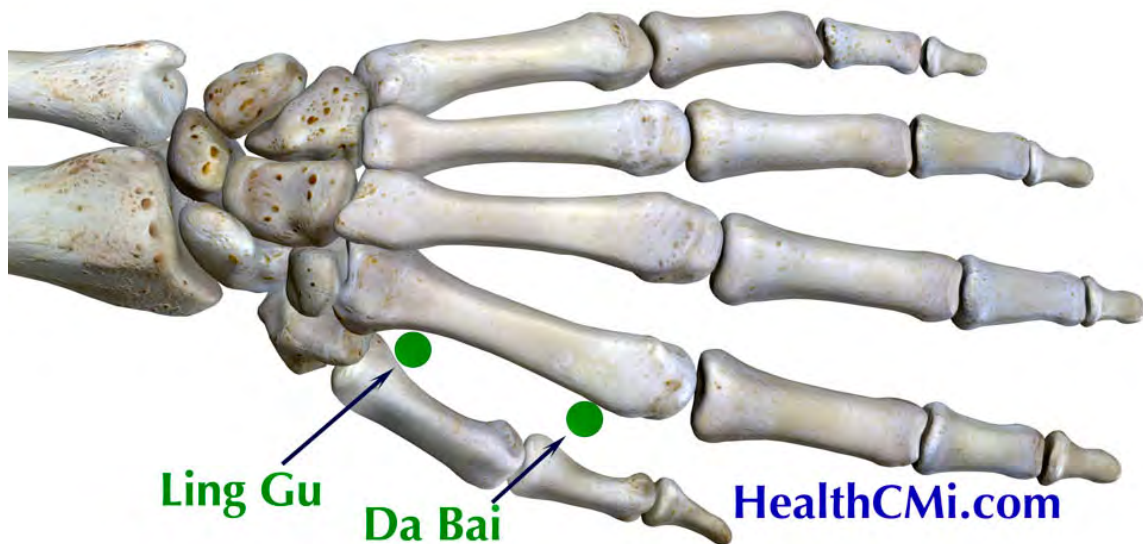
- For severe sore throat add: LU11, LU5
- For excessive heat add: GV14, LI11, LU5
- For phlegm heat obstructing lungs add: LU5, LI11, CV22
- For lung yin deficiency add: BL43, KD3

In general, for excess use reducing methods and use reinforcing or reinforcing-reducing techniques for deficiency.

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20. Zhang, Boli, and Qingquan Liu. *Diagnosis And Treatment Of Covid-19 With Integrated Chinese And Western Medicine*. World Scientific, 2023.

## Acupuncture & Herbs For Long COVID Research



*For the purposes of this acupuncture course material, no quiz material is based on the herbal medicine, which is included in this research.*

Acupuncture and herbal medicine show effectiveness in alleviating symptoms of Long COVID. Chronic COVID-19 (Long COVID) involves diverse conditions caused by acute COVID-19 that begin weeks, months, or years after the acute phase.

Researchers tested the efficacy of Chinese herbal medicine combined with acupuncture for the treatment of this condition. The results show significant outcomes when using acupuncture and herbal medicine.<sup>21</sup>

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21. Chen Huanjun, Yang Ruikang, and Xiao Cunli. "Clinical observation on the recovery period of new coronavirus infection treated with combined acupuncture and medicine." *Shanxi Traditional Chinese Medicine* 39.08(2023):43-45.



The Clinical Global Impression (CGI) scale of SF-36 scores before and after treatment were analyzed with SPSS 26.0 software. Significant improvement was defined as complete or substantial elimination of symptoms or signs. Effective treatment was marked progress in symptoms or signs or partial elimination of symptoms.

## Results

The results show that among the 31 cases in the study, 23 cases (74.19%) were significantly effective after treatment, and 8 cases (25.81%) were effective. All patients showed improvements with no ineffective cases. As a result, the total effective rate was 100% with no serious adverse reactions. The study was marked by high compliance.

## Symptoms

Common symptoms that were improved or eliminated were fatigue, chest tightness and shortness of breath, insomnia, dream disturbed sleep, headaches, palpitations, memory loss, and sweating. Additional symptoms that were improved or eliminated were back pain, coughing, low appetite, aversion to cold, dysosmia, anosmia, difficulty breathing, dizziness, dry mouth, thirst, soreness of the extremities, sore throat, hair loss, skin disorders, visual and auditory disorders, and gastrointestinal problems.

## Participants

The Ping'an Hospital (Xicheng District, Beijing) research included 11 males and 20 females with Long COVID in the clinical trial.

## Herbs

The following herbs were administered: modified Sheng Mai Yin combined with Yu Ping Feng San. The base formula included: Radix Salviae Miltiorrhizae (Danshen) 30g, Radix Astragali (Huangqi) 15g, and Radix Ginseng (Taizishen), Ophiopogon tuber (Maidong), Fructus Schisandrae (Wuweizi), Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae (Bai Zhu), and Radix Saposhnikoviae (Fangfeng) 10g each.

Herbs were added for specific symptom presentations. For cough and phlegm: Herba Ephedrae (Mahuang) and Ramulus Cinnamomi (Guizhi) 9g each, and Rhizoma Zingiberis (Gan Jiang) and Rhizoma Pinelliae (Ban Xia) 10g each. For wind-cold cough: Fructus Trichosanthis (Gualou) 20g, Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae (Chenpi), Bulbus Allii Macrostemonii (Xiaobai), and Radix Platycodi (Jiegeng) 10g each. For cough, sore throat, and constipation: Periostracum Cicadae (Chantui) and Bombyx Batryticatus (Jiangcan) 10g each, and Radix et Rhizoma Rhei (Dahuang) 9g.

For qi deficiency and blood stasis with chest pain, shortness of breath, back pain, and palpitations: Radix Salviae Miltiorrhizae (Danshen) 30g, Semen Persicae (Taoren) 24g, Rhizoma Chuanxiong (Chuanxiong), Cortex Cinnamomi (Rougui), Lignum Sappan (Sumu) 10g each, and Hirudo (Shuizhi) 3g. For phlegm and blood stasis with chest pain, shortness of breath, back pain, and excessive phlegm: Radix Salviae Miltiorrhizae (Danshen) 30g, Fructus Trichosanthis (Gualou), Bulbus Allii Macrostemonii (Xiaobai), and Rhizoma Pinelliae (Ban Xia) 10g each, and Hirudo (Shuizhi) 3g.

For qi stagnation and blood stasis with chest pain, shortness of breath, fatigue, and palpitations: Rhizoma Chuanxiong (Chuanxiong) and Semen Persicae (Taoren) 10g each, and Flos Carthami (Honghua) 3g. For qi and blood deficiency with fatigue, weakness, and hair loss: Radix Astragali (Huangqi) 50g and Radix Angelicae Sinensis (Danggui) 10g.

### **Dose**

A water decoction of 400ml was orally ingested daily and divided into 2 doses, taken in the morning and evening. A total of 6 doses constituted 1 course of treatment, and 3 courses were applied.

### **Acupuncture**

Acupuncture was applied five days per week for three weeks, with 15 treatments completing the course of treatment. The following acupuncture points were applied with 0.25 mm x 25 mm needles:

- **Linggu (灵骨, Spirit Bone, 22.05)**
- **Dabai (大白, Great White, 22.04)**
- **LU9 (Taiyuan)**
- **LU10 (Yuji)**
- **LU7 (Lieque)**
- **GV20 (Baihui)**

The following acupoints received 0.35 mm x 50 mm needles:

- **GV14 (Dazhui)**
- **ST36 (Zusanli)**

Moderate standard stimulation with even reinforcing and reducing techniques were applied and needles were retained for 40 minutes. After obtaining qi sensation, moxibustion was attached to the handle of GV14. Shield guards of aluminum foil for heat protection were used.

### **Master Tung's Acupoints**

Linggu (灵骨, Spirit Bone, 22.05) and Dabai (大白, Great White, 22.04) acupoints belong to Master Tung's Dao Ma technique of unique acupuncture points. Linggu acupoint is located on the interosseous space between the thumb and index finger at the junction of the first and second metacarpal bones. Dabai acupoint is located on the back of the hand between the first and second metacarpal bone, approximately one inch distal from the Linggu acupoint.

The results of this investigation indicate that acupuncture and herbal medicine are helpful in recovery from Long COVID.

## Brain Fog

Researchers note:

Brain fog is a common persistent symptom after COVID-19. Some researchers believe that the origin of brain fog is from "brain fatigue," a syndrome characterized by neurasthenia-like physical and cognitive symptoms. Many patients infected with SARS-CoV-2 experience transient or persistent cognitive dysfunction, including deficits in attention, executive function, language, processing speed, and memory. This syndrome of cognitive dysfunction is called "brain fog", contributing heavily to the long-term morbidity of patients with long COVID. In a population-based matched retrospective cohort study, researchers found a higher incidence of cognitive decline among long-term care inpatients during the COVID-19 pandemic than before the pandemic. Most dementia cases are associated with neuronal loss in the hippocampus. The activation of microglia in the hippocampus is associated with the inhibition of neurogenesis, which may explain impaired memory in patients.

Acupoint stimulation may improve common symptoms of cognitive impairment such as memory deficits, language dysfunction, and executive dysfunction. An analysis of 15 RCTS of acupuncture for mild cognitive impairment (MCI) involving 1,051 subjects found improvements in the Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE), Montreal cognitive assessment, clock mapping tasks, and activities of daily living (ADL) scores compared to those of controls, suggesting that acupuncture was beneficial for improving cognitive function in older adults with MCI. Acupoint stimulation is also effective in improving cognitive deficits in memory, language, and executive function caused by surgery, chemotherapy and schizophrenia. Acupuncture has profound effects on all levels of the nervous system,

from the peripheral nerves and spinal cord to the brain, namely, the limbic system, hypothalamus, pituitary gland, and cerebral cortex. Acupuncture at the Yintang (GV29) and Yingxiang (LI20) and 2 Hz EA at the Shenting (GV24) and Benshen (GB13) prevented hippocampal activation by microglial cells in Alzheimer's disease (AD) mice model. Numerous studies have shown that acupoint stimulation, primarily in the form of MA and EA, can ameliorate various primary and secondary cognitive impairments.<sup>22</sup>

The research highlights a few recommended points for cognitive disorders. At HealthCMi, we add that Sishencong and other scalp acupuncture approaches to patient care are helpful in cognitive recovery.

### **Sishencong (M-HN-1)**

Sishencong is translated as four alert spirit. These are the four points at the vertex of the scalp, located 1 cun anterior, posterior, and lateral to DU20. This set of points calms the spirit, pacifies wind, and benefits both the ears and eyes. Sishencong is effective for benefitting the brain and for the treatment of insomnia, headaches, vertigo, poor memory, and epilepsy.

For benefitting the overall shen (spirit) of a patient, especially when there is memory loss and heart symptoms, the following acupoints are helpful:

### **HT7, HT5, PC6, PC7, DU20**

**HT7 (Shenmen), HT5 (Tongli), PC6 (Neiguan), PC7 (Daling), DU20 (Baihui)**

This acupoint combination nourishes the heart and shen (spirit). This is a great treatment for insomnia, palpitations, or heart arrhythmias. This

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22. Feng, Bo-Wen, and Pei-Jing Rong. "Acupoint stimulation for long COVID: A promising intervention: 穴位刺激治疗长新冠: 一种有前景的干预措施." *World Journal of Acupuncture-Moxibustion*.

acupoint prescription is beneficial to patients wherein qi and blood deficiency creates insufficient nourishment to the heart. It is also beneficial to patients wherein sudden fright causes these indications. Notably, Prof. Shui Wae employed the use of this acupuncture point prescription in his clinical practice.

*Indications for use of this point combination*

- palpitations
- insomnia
- arrhythmias
- dizziness
- diminished vision
- dyspnea
- poor memory
- pale complexion
- excess worrying or anxiety
- fatigue
- weak pulse

**We hope you enjoyed this presentation on acupuncture for the treatment of COVID.**



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