

Chapter Four: Assessment, Acupressure Point Classifications & Point Work Techniques

Chapter Four Overview

Now that you have learned about TCM theories, Zang Fu organ functions and the locations of acupressure points and channels it is time to put it all together and discuss how to assess the dog. There are a number of methods for assessment so we will explain them and then it will be up to you to determine which method or methods work best for you. Please note much of this will be presented and demonstrated at the practical.

This chapter includes a number of different Point Classifications. You will want to familiarize yourself with the differences between the types of points, but again, you don't need to memorize them.

Assessment

The assessment is a critical piece in being able to formulate an acupressure session. Since dogs can't tell us what is going on, we need to be that much more observant in putting together the pieces. Often the owner will have an idea about what is going on and it is important to take that information in as part of your assessment. Depending on the issue, you may also have a veterinary diagnosis. Keep in mind that often the TCM perspective will be different than the Western medicine one. If the vet has training in TCVM (Traditional Chinese Veterinary Medicine) that is ideal.

When doing an assessment we want to view it as a snapshot in time and make sure we are paying attention to what the dog's body is showing us today. While the history is an important piece (and part of the assessment) we are really focusing on today. How is the dog coping both mentally and physically in his environment? How is his Qi flowing, or are there areas where the Qi seems to be stuck or absent? The dog's body is a road map of information and we need to find the information, look for patterns and formulate a plan based on our findings.

The Four Examinations

The method of assessment we use prior to doing an acupressure session is called the Four Examinations or the Four Exams. The Chinese utilized all of their well honed senses and applied them using the structure of the Four Examinations to ascertain the dog's condition.

The Four Examinations are

- Observation
- Listening & Smelling
- Questions or Inquiry
- Physical Palpation

1. Observation allows visual assessment of the dog, how he moves, and his general attitude. Some practitioners also determine the vitality of the dog during this exam.

• **Full Vitality** – The dog is agile, thinking clearly, breathing well, alert, and his eyes are shining. He is youthful and energetic and his Qi is flowing correctly. If illness occurs he is expected to make a full recovery.

• **Lack of Vitality** – The dog has a less sparkly eye and coat. He may be listless and have a shortness of breath. Insufficient Essence and Qi of the Yin organs may lead to deficiency syndromes and if illness occurs he may not recover fully.

• **Loss of Vitality** – This dog has serious damage to his Qi indicated by sluggish behavior and indifference. His eyes may be dull and his breathing may be feeble. These are indicators that the Zang-Fu organs are in decline. There is a decrease of vitality due to damaged Qi leading to critical conditions and an unfavorable outcome.

• **False Vitality** – The flicker of life before death. Sometimes seen as a temporary spark of life where the animal seems to be getting better. This is a serious disease pattern leading to death.

2. Listening & Smelling allows us to listen for respiratory issues, vocalization and smelling for heat conditions.

3. Questions or Inquiry is when we ask about lifestyle, seasonal preferences, health history, and the current complaint.

4. Physical Palpation is when we palpate the dog all over getting a sense of general condition, muscle tone, hot and cold areas, injuries and scars.

Observation

Observation includes standing back and observing the dog to see how he is coping in his environment (both physically and mentally). We are basing this on today's findings although some history will be included in the third exam. We want to note how the dog is standing and does he seem to be bearing weight evenly. Watching him walk and even trot can be helpful. Basically anything that can be noticed on the physical dog from movement, posture, skin and coat appearance, symmetry of the body, eyes, ears, nose, lips and also we want to observe how his Spirit or Shen seems to be. Often looking into his eyes will provide this information. Are the eyes bright and sparkly and engaged or are they dull and seemingly uninterested. If possible you also want to observe the color and shape and any coating on the tongue.

Listening/Smelling

In the second exam we are listening for the dog's breathing, gut sounds and any vocalizations. We are also seeing if we smell any unusual smells. A smell other than the usual dog smell may indicate heat in an area. The Five element approach includes a smell with each of the Five elements. Knowing that smells can be subjective, the main thing we want to focus on is if there is a smell and where it is located. This extends also to ears, mouth, anywhere on the body and urine and stool.

History

History is the third exam and includes information about the where the dog came from, any past health issues, current concerns, vaccinations, surgical procedures, feeding, exercise, job, etc. More TCM type questions might ask about seasonal preference, weather that seems to impact the dog, etc. Basically any and all information pertaining to the dog from his past to his current status. Many practitioners have a form that is filled out by the client ahead of time and emailed back prior to the session. Others wait and gather the information at the first session. Subsequent sessions would include asking about what has changed since the previous visit but would be a much shorter intake.

Physical Palpation

The fourth and final exam is the hands on part. This includes physically touching every area of the dog, making sure to keep both of you safe. You are feeling for warm areas or cool areas, sensitive areas, changes in the coat's appearance or texture, areas the dog may have been rubbing or chewing. You may also take this time to assess some of the points that can

guide you in determining imbalances along meridians and with the Zang-Fu organs.

Points that can be used for assessment include:

- Association or Back Shu points
- Alarm or Front Mu points
- Yuan Source points
- Jing-well points

You can also be guided more by the location of an issue. If you were called to work on a dog with a stifle injury you would consider which meridians run through the stifle area and find points that are both local and distal to the stifle to use in your session. (The meridians in the stifle area are primarily Stomach and Spleen, although you also have Liver and Gall Bladder and Kidney and Bladder channel on the hind legs.) We have some suggested stifle points in Chapter 5.

Tongue and Pulse Assessment

The Tongue

As part of the Four Examinations, looking at the dog's tongue color, shape and any coating on it can provide additional insight into the health of the dog. We will discuss this in much more detail at the practical. However, to get you started here are some general guidelines.

Regarding tongue color, a normal tongue is pale red and somewhat moist. This indicates a healthy flow of Blood being carried to the tongue by the smooth flow of Qi. In an acute situation or an issue that has not penetrated very deeply into the body, the tongue may appear normal which indicates that the Qi and Blood have not been damaged. A pale tongue indicates a deficiency of either Blood or Qi and if the tongue is dry and pale this usually means the Blood is deficient. A red tongue indicates Heat, and a dark red tongue indicates extreme Heat. A purplish tongue indicates stagnation of Qi or Blood often related to the Liver not being able to do its job.

A full tongue that may look a little swollen indicates a Yang deficiency and a thin tongue indicates a Yin deficiency. Generally for a Yang deficiency you will see a pale, swollen, full tongue (not enough heat or Qi to move the fluids) and for a Yin deficiency you will see a thin, red tongue (not enough Yin or fluids to cool the heat).

The tongue may also have a coating, sometimes referred to as moss in texts. A yellow coating anywhere on the tongue can indicate heat and a white coating can indicate cold. The location of this coating can also provide insight into where in the body the heat or cold is. The tip of the tongue relates to the Heart (very tip) and Lung (both located in the Upper Jiao), the center of

the tongue relates to the Spleen and Stomach (the Middle Jiao), the back of the tongue relates to the Kidney and the Intestines (the Lower Jiao) and the sides of the tongue relate to the Liver and Gall Bladder.

You may want to start by looking at your own tongue and seeing what you notice.

The Pulse

Distinguishing patterns using Pulse Assessment requires in-depth study and ideally learning from a practitioner or veterinarian who can tell you what they feel, and then have you feel it. Many texts refer to over twenty different types of pulses. For general purposes it is important to know the following; a moderately strong and moving smoothly pulse is normal. A rapid pulse indicates a Heat syndrome and a slow pulse indicates a Cold syndrome.

In addition to the feel of the pulse, there are also locations along the femoral artery of the dog's hind legs that correlate to each of the 12 Zang-Fu organs. Therefore, checking this area with our fingers allows us to assess the quality of the pulse for each organ. We will demonstrate this at the practical.

Four Exams

Find two different dogs to perform the Four Exams on. Make note of any findings during your Observation, Listening/Smelling, History and Physical Palpation. Share your information as part of this thread.

[See assignment](#)

Point Classifications

One of the most common conditions we are called upon to deal with as acupressure practitioners is pain. In TCM, pain is seen as an obstruction of Qi, Blood and Body Fluids in a channel, or in several channels. The aim of an acupressure session, then is to break up these accumulations and restore the flow of Qi not just in the affected channels, but to ensure that proper Qi and Blood flow occurs throughout the body. There are an infinite number of point combinations to address accumulations and imbalances, depending on the nature and cause of the dis-ease.

All of the meridians are connected like an interlocking network therefore:

- blockage (stagnation or accumulation) to one area of a meridian will disrupt flow of Qi, Blood and Body Fluids in the meridians with which it is paired.

- stimulate local, distal and adjacent points as well as paired channel points.
- there are an infinite number of combinations of acupressure points to address imbalances.
- there are groupings of points that have specific functions to add to the mix. For example, points that clear Heat, points that tonify, points that are associated with a particular tissue type, like bones or tendons, points that are used for acute injury.

In addition to local, adjacent or distal points that would address these imbalances, there are specific categories of points that share certain functions that can be included in a plan for an acupressure session.

Below are highlighted some of the most common categories of points. These include:

- Five Shu Transporting points
 - Jing-well points
 - Ying-spring points
 - Shu-stream points
 - Jing-river points
 - He-sea points
- Yuan Source points
- Luo Connecting points
- Xi Cleft points
- Hui (Gathering or Influential) points
- Front Mu (Alarm) points
- Back Shu (Association) points
- Master points

The Five Shu-transporting points

These are points located on the limbs between the elbow and the foot and the stifle and the foot. They are present on both the Yin and the Yang channels.

At the digits is where the channels change polarity from Yin to Yang and Yang to Yin. It is here that the Qi runs very superficially and it used to be thought that the pathogenic factors could enter the body at these points. Therefore most of the actions of these points at the tips of the digits are related to fighting and expelling pathogenic factors.

The function of these points is also to transmit Qi from the outer extremities to the interior of the body and to ensure this, they are seen as monitors to make sure that the energy does not get obstructed or that the channels do not get invaded by pathogenic factors.

The Chinese used the analogy of the flow of water from a well source deep within the earth, to a mountain spring, to a stream, then a river, all the way to the sea. In this analogy, the well and then the spring, then, are represented by points at the digits and, as we move along the limb, the flow of Qi gets stronger, wider and deeper in the channel, culminating in the points on the elbow or stifle, that represent the sea. The 'sea (He Sea)' points are deep and wide and have a more profound effect on the internal organs.

The Shu or Transporting points share common characteristics and have similar indications. Most of the points share a category from the Five element theory, which bring the energy of that particular element into the functioning of the point.

We will now discuss the characteristics of each of the Shu points.

The Jing-well points

The Jing-well points are located at the digits. Symbolically they are where organism ends and becomes one with the universe. On the Yin meridians, the Jing-well points are ruled by the Wood phase, which brings new life to the channel and gives it a surge of Qi not unlike what we find during Spring time. On the Yang channels, they are associated with the Metal element which represents letting go of old energy.

The Jing-well points being superficial, and because of the change in polarity, are particularly dynamic and can influence Qi strongly, especially at the opposite end of the channel. They have the ability to balance the entire meridian.

The characteristics and functions of the Jing-well points:

- They can affect the whole channel.
- They clear Heat. They act like a valve on the end of the channel which relieves pressure when opened.
- They extinguish Wind and other Pathogenic Factors.
- They can be used in Bi syndromes (rheumatic conditions) where Pathogenic Factors are stuck in the channels.
- They can be used for resuscitation in case of emergency.
- They can have a great effect on the behavior of an animal.

Examples of the use of Jing-well points:

The Yin Jing-well points are beneficial for mental illness. This is because they all belong to the

Wood element and when Liver Qi becomes stagnate it turns into Fire and Heat which disturbs the Shen. Points PC 9 and HT 9 can be used to help with this.

The Yang Jing-well points belong to the Metal element and since Metal controls Wood these points can soothe Liver Qi and remove Qi stagnation. ST 45 and LI 1 can help with this.

KID 1- resuscitation

LI 1 - convulsions

	Jing-well point
Yin organ	(Wood)

LU	LU 11
PC	PC 9
HT	HT 9
SP	SP 1
LIV	LIV 1
KID	KID 1

	Jing-well point
Yang organ	(Metal)

LI	LI 1
TH (SJ)	SJ 1
SI	SI 1
ST	ST 45
GB	GB 44
BL (UB)	BL 67

The Ying-spring points

These are the second points up from the toes. Going from the well to the spring, the characteristic of these points is swirling, like the movement of water in a mountain spring. Here the Qi of the channel is very powerful and full of potential energy. Like the Jing-wells, they are also very dynamic and are used a lot to clear Heat.

They are associated with Fire on the Yin meridians and Water on the Yang meridians, so on the Yin meridians, Heat will be strongest at this point and can be vented here. The Water element can douse fire on the Yang meridians.

The characteristics and functions of the Ying-spring points:

- They clear Heat.
- They clear Pathogenic Factors either internal or external.
- They can change acute situations.
- They can effect pain in joints with redness and swelling.
- They can cool red and inflamed mucus membranes.
- They can be used instead of Jing-wells if the Jing-wells are too sensitive.

Examples of the use of Ying-spring points:

LU 10 - for Lung Heat (fever, sore throat, cough)

LI 2 - LI Heat (diarrhea)

ST 44 - Stomach heat (fever)

HT 8 - extreme anxiety from Heart Fire

LIV 2 - aggressive behavior from Liver Fire, conjunctivitis

Yin organ	Ying-spring point (Fire)
LU	LU 10
PC	PC 8
HT	HT 8
SP	SP 2
LIV	LIV 2

KID KID 2

Yang organ Ying-spring point
(Water)

LI	LI 2
TH (SJ)	SJ 2
SI	SI 2
ST	ST 44
GB	GB 43
BL (UB)	BL 66

The Shu-stream points

The Shu-stream points are the 3rd point along the channels (except for the Gall Bladder channel) and are located around the carpus or the hock of the dog. This is where the Qi of the channels starts to pour. It gets wider and starts to go deeper, thus having more systemic effects. It is the mid-point of this flowing river between the well and the sea, so acts as a kind of fulcrum and balances the interior of the body with the exterior. Here, the Defensive Qi or Wei Qi gathers strongly and it is the job of the Shu stream point to fight off the pathogen before it gets to the interior of the body. Shu means boat and it is here that the stream is strong enough to allow an invasion from the outside to ride on its current to the interior.

The Shu-stream point is the Earth point on the Yin meridians, so it is a nourishing/tonification point to the organ system. As an Earth point these points are beneficial for swelling and heaviness since the Spleen (Earth) transforms Damp and controls the muscles and the four limbs. On the Yin channels, the Shu stream shares its point with the Yuan Source point. On the Yang channels the Shu-stream point is the Wood point.

The characteristics and functions of the Shu-stream points:

- They are the Earth points of the Yin channels and the Wood points of the Yang channels.
- The Wei Qi accumulates here.
- They absorb both good and evil Qi.
- They have a huge effect on Dampness, when the joints are swollen and there is pain in

the limbs.

- On the Yin channels they are used for internal organ problems.

Examples of the use of Shu-stream points:

SP 3 - tonifies Spleen and resolves Dampness

SI 3 - Bi syndrome

KID 3 - Kidney tonification

LIV 3 - general pain due to Qi or Blood stagnation

Yin organ	Shu-stream point (Earth)
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LU	LU 9
PC	PC 7
HT	HT 7
SP	SP 3
LIV	LIV 3
KID	KID 3

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Yang organ	Shu-stream point (Wood)
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LI	LI 3
TH (SJ)	SJ 3
SI	SI 3
ST	ST 43
GB	GB 41
BL (UB)	BL 65

The Jing-river points

At the Jing-river points the flow of Qi to the sea is much bigger. It flows like a large current. If a Pathogenic Factor has entered the flow, it will now go at this point to the joints or to the interior of the body. It is the Metal point on the Yin channels and can be used for respiratory disorders, cough and asthma due to Lung deficiency. It is the Fire point on the Yang channels and can be used for cough and asthma due to Fire/Heat.

These points are located proximal to the carpus and hock, but in no particular position, unlike the other points.

These are points where the Qi leaves the meridians and flushes into the surrounding tissues, sinews and joints irrigating and nourishing them. So, if a pathogen jumped in the boat, it can get off here, invading the surrounding tissues. This is why the Jing-river points are the main ones to access the joints, sinews and bones and are stimulated to effect rheumatic conditions as well as spasms and lameness.

The characteristics and functions of the Jing-river points:

- They effect rheumatic disorders.
- They effect lameness.
- They can be used for Wind diseases and to control the Wei Qi.

Examples of the use of Jing river points:

SJ 6 - febrile diseases

LU 8 - cough, asthma due to LU deficiency

LI 5 - cough, asthma due to Heat or Fire

Yin organ	Jing-river point (Metal)
LU	LU 8
PC	PC 5
HT	HT 4
SP	SP 5
LIV	LIV 4

KID KID 7

Yang organ Jing-river point
(Fire)

LI	LI 5
SJ (TH)	SJ 6
SI	SI 5
ST	ST 41
GB	GB 38
BL (UB)	BL 60

The He-sea points

These points are located around the elbow and stifle. Here the Qi of the meridian is broad and deep and joins the general circulation of the body in the interior. Qi here is slower moving and less turbulent than the points at the distal end of the channel and treat deeper pathologies of the organs.

The He-sea points on the Yang channels belong to Earth and are used for digestive disorders. The He-sea points on the Yin channels belong to Water and can be used for urinary problems. They have also a function similar to that of the Jing-river points in that they dislodge pathogens stuck in the joints.

The characteristics and functions of the He-sea points:

- They are the last of the Five Shu-transporting points.
- They affect internal disorders of the organs.
- They are used for both digestive problems (Yang) and urinary problems (Yin).
- They clear Heat from the Blood and can be used in skin disorders.
- They are used to effect Bi syndromes.

Examples of the use of He-sea points

Sp 9 - resolve dampness

LI 11 - clear Heat

ST 36 - digestive issues

Yin organ	He-sea point (Water)
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LU	LU 5
PC	PC 3
HT	HT 3
SP	SP 9
LIV	LIV 8
KID	KID 10

Yang organ	He-sea point (Earth)
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LI	LI 11
TH (SJ)	SJ 10
SI	SI 8
ST	ST 36
GB	GB 34
BL (UB)	BL 40

The Yuan Source points

The Yuan Source points are related to the main source of Qi and Blood in the body. The Yuan Source Qi originates from the Kidney Essence and is distributed by the San Jiao to each organ and is accessible at these Yuan Source points. All the channels have Source points, but the Yin organs are particularly strengthened by using these points. The Source points are located around the carpals and tarsals.

They are significant during assessment because we look at the Source points to see disease in the organs. If, at the Source points, there is inflammation, swelling, congested blood vessels, a bluish color or a dip in the tissue, we know that the organ belonging to that vessel is diseased or at least out of balance. We also use the Source points of the Yin channels to tonify the function of the organs. NOTE - if you remember, these are the same as the Yin Shu-

Stream points.

The Source points of the Yang channels are less important and tonify less, rather, they help expel Pathogenic Factors.

The Source points are:

LU 9 - on the medial side of the radiocarpal joint just cranial to the radial artery, at the level of HT 7.

LI 4 - on the medial side of the front leg at the midpoint of the second metacarpal bone. (Under the dew claw if one is present.)

ST 42 - on the cranial aspect of the metatarsus at the junction of the 3rd and 4th metatarsal bones.

SP 3 - just proximal to the metatarsophalangeal joint on the medial side of the 2nd metatarsal bone.

HT 7 - on the lateral transverse crease of the carpal joint in the large depression lateral to the tendon of the flexor carpi ulnaris muscle. Opposite PC 7.

SI 4 - on the lateral side of the front leg, distal to the carpal joint, caudolateral to the base of the 4th metacarpal bone. Opposite LI4.

BL 64 - on the lateral aspect of the hind leg, distal to the proximal end of the 5th metatarsal bone.

KID 3 - between the medial malleolus and the calcaneal tuber. Opposite BL 60.

PC 7 - on the medial side of the front leg, just proximal to the radiocarpal bone, and caudal to the tendon of the flexor carpi radialis muscle. Opposite Ht 7.

SJ 4 - on the lateral side of the front leg, at the radiocarpal joint just cranial to the common digital extensor tendon.

GB 40 - craniodistal to the tip of the lateral malleolus of the tibia, over the tendon of the lateral digital extensor.

LIV 3 - on the craniomedial side of the hind leg proximal to the metatarsophalangeal joint between the 2nd and 3rd digits.

The Luo Connecting points

The Luo Connecting points directly influence the flow of Qi in the Luo Connecting vessels (the Luo Mai). The Luo Connecting vessels diverge from the main channel at the Luo point on each meridian and run along their own trajectory, increasing the area of influence of the main channel. It is important to note that this is not a singular linear line, and the word Luo implies a net. The Luo vessels run superficially, they fill the space between the skin and the muscles and can be seen to end in highly vascularized areas.

The second thing to note is that the Connecting vessels run like a mesh between the exterior/interiorly related pairs of channels.

The Luo Connecting points can be used in the following ways:

- They can effect balance and relieve stagnation in their area of influence, usually in the space between the main channel and the skin. They have a huge effect on the fascia, the sinews, the muscles and the tendons, especially in relation to the invasion of pathogenic factors.
- They can be used in combination with the Yuan Source point of their exteriorly/interiorly related paired channel when there is stagnation or pathologies affecting both of the channels or organs. The way we use this is to find the 'source' of the problem meaning which channel imbalance came first. Then we use the Luo connecting point of the channel most acutely affected by the original imbalance. For example: a deficiency in the Kidney meridian creates stagnation in the UB channel, so we use the Yuan Source point of the Kidney which is KID 3 as well as the Luo Connecting point of the affected channel, UB 58. This approach is sometimes called the "Host-Guest Theory".

The Luo Connecting points are:

LU 7 - is on the medial side of the front leg, proximal to the styloid process of the radius.

LI 6 - on the craniolateral aspect of the front leg, 3 cun proximal to LI 5 (in a depression on the craniomedial aspect of the radiocarpal joint).

ST 40 - on the lateral side of the hind leg, halfway between the lateral malleolus of the fibula and the top of the tibia.

SP 4 - on the caudomedial aspect of the hind leg in the depression distal to the proximal end of the second metatarsal bone.

HT 5 - on the caudolateral aspect of the front leg, approximately 1.5 cun above the carpus.

SI 7 - on the caudolateral aspect of the front leg, 5 cun proximal to SI 5 (in a depression along the lateral styloid process of the radius, proximal to the accessory carpal bone).

UB (BL) 58 - on the caudolateral aspect of the hind leg, 7 cun proximal to BL 60, on the caudal border of the fibula.

KID 4 - on the caudomedial aspect of the hind leg, 0.5 cun caudodistal to KID 3, on the medial border of the calcaneal tendon.

PC 6 - 2 cun proximal to the transverse carpal crease, between the flexor tendons. Opposite SJ 5.

SJ 5 - lateral side of the front leg, 2 cun proximal to the carpus between the radius and the ulna. Opposite PC 6.

GB 37 - on the lateral side of the hind leg, 3 cun proximal to GB 39, between the extensor muscles.

LIV 5 - on the medial side of the hind leg, 5 cun proximal to the medial malleolus of the tibia, on the caudal border of the tibia.

***GV (DU) 1** - in the depression between the anus and the ventral aspect of the base of the tail.

***CV (REN) 15** - on the ventral midline, 1 cun cranial to CV 14.

****SP 21** - at the 6th intercostal space at the level of the shoulder joint or slightly higher.

** While GV (DU) and CV (REN) are not paired with each other, they each have a Luo Connecting point on their channel which can influence along the trajectory of their respective channels.*

***There is a point on the Spleen channel, Spleen 21 (the great Luo), which is the Connecting point of all the Connecting vessels and in this way, stimulating this point affects pain throughout the fascia of the entire body.*

The Xi Cleft points

There are Xi Cleft points on each of the main channels and on 4 of the extraordinary vessels. These points are usually located below the elbow or stifle, except for the Stomach channel point which is above the stifle, and lie in a bony or tendinous cleft or hole. The word “Xi” means crevice. Qi is thought to get stuck in these clefts and when the points are stimulated, there is a big release of Qi throughout the channels. They are used for obstructions on the channels which leads to severe pain and other acute stagnation patterns.

The Xi Cleft points and examples of uses for each of them:

LU 6 - (acute infection of upper airway, acute channel problems of the forelimb) - 5 cun distal to LU 5 (which is in the cubital crease, lateral to the tendon of the biceps brachii muscle and medial to the tendon of the brachialis muscle..

LI 7 - (acute abdominal pain, acute borborygmus) - 5 cun proximal to LI 5 (which is in a depression on the craniomedial aspect of the radiocarpal joint).

ST 34 - (acute epigastric pain or acute stifle issues) - on the lateral aspect of the hind leg, 2 cun proximal and caudolateral to the patella, in the belly of the vastus lateralis muscle.

SP 8 - (acute abdominal pain, diarrhea, colic, edema, difficult urination) - 3 cun distal to SP 9, on the caudal border of the tibia.

HT 6 - (acute cardiac pain, Shen disturbance) - 0.5 cun proximal to HT 7.

SI 6 - (acute shoulder and foreleg pain, poor eyesight) - on the lateral side of the front leg, distal to the tip of the ulna, cranial to HT 7.

BL (UB) 63 - (headache, epilepsy, seizure) - on the caudolateral aspect of the hind leg, on the distal aspect of the calcaneus, proximal to the 5th metatarsal bone.

KID 5 - (irregular cycles, anestrus, silent heat) - 1 cun distal to KID 3.

PC 4 - (acute chest pain or cardiac pain, epilepsy) - on the medial side of the front leg, 5 cun proximal to the transverse carpal crease.

SJ 7 - (acute epilepsy or seizure, deafness, paralysis) - on the lateral side of the front leg, 1 cun caudal to TH 6 (which is 4 cun above the carpus) between the radius and the ulna.

GB 36 - (Liver Yang rising, irritability, anger, hypertension) - 4 cun proximal to GB 39, between the extensor muscles.

LIV 6 - (hernia, uterine problems, colic) - 7 cun proximal to the tip of the medial malleolus, in the depression on the caudal border of the tibia.

Yang Qiao - BL 59 - (lumbosacral pain) - 3 cun proximal to BL 60.

Yin Qiao - KID 8 - (irregular heat cycles) - 2 cun proximal to KID 3.

Yang Wei - GB 35 - (fullness of chest) - 1 cun caudal to GB 36 (which is 4 cun proximal to GB 39).

Yin Wei - KID 9 - (hyperactivity) - 5 cun proximal to KID 3, at the lower end of the gastrocnemius muscle.

The Hui (Gathering) points

Sometimes called the Influential points, the Gathering points are points that have a particular influence on certain tissues, organs, Qi or Blood. Hui means to gather or to meet and it is thought that the energy of these particular tissues and substances gather at these points.

They can be used when there is a general imbalance of a particular tissue or substance to reduce the number of points to be stimulated.

Examples of the use of the Hui points:

GB 34 - spasms or tremors of the tendons/muscles

UB17 - Blood disorders

The Hui points:

LU 9 - Hui of the Pulse and Blood vessels - on the medial side of the radiocarpal joint just cranial to the radial artery, at the level of HT 7.

ST 40 - Hui of the Phlegm - on the lateral side of the hind leg, halfway between the lateral malleolus of the fibula and the top of the tibia.

UB 11 - Hui of the Bones - at the cranial edge of the scapula, 1.5 cun lateral to the dorsal spinous process of T1.

UB 12 - Hui of the Wind and Trachea - 1.5 cun lateral to the caudal border of the dorsal

spinous process of T2.

UB 17 - Hui of the Blood - 1.5 cun lateral to the caudal border of the dorsal spinous process of T7.

GB 34 - Hui of the Sinews (Tendons and Ligaments) - in the interosseous space between the tibia and fibula, cranial and distal to the head of the fibula.

GB 39 - Hui of the Marrow - 3 cun proximal to the tip of the lateral malleolus, caudal to the tibial border.

LIV 13 - Hui of the Yin organs (also the Spleen Alarm point) - at the distal end of the 12th rib.

REN 12 - Hui of the Yang organs (also the Stomach Alarm point) - on the ventral midline halfway between the xiphoid process and the umbilicus.

REN 17 - Hui of the Qi (also the Pericardium Alarm point) - on the ventral midline, at the caudal border of the elbow in the 4th intercostal space.

The Front Mu points

These are points that are located directly over (or in the case of quadrupeds, under) the organ itself and are also known as the 'Alarm' points. Changes in skin texture, temperature, loss of hair or sudden obvious tenderness at these points will point to imbalances in the corresponding internal organ.

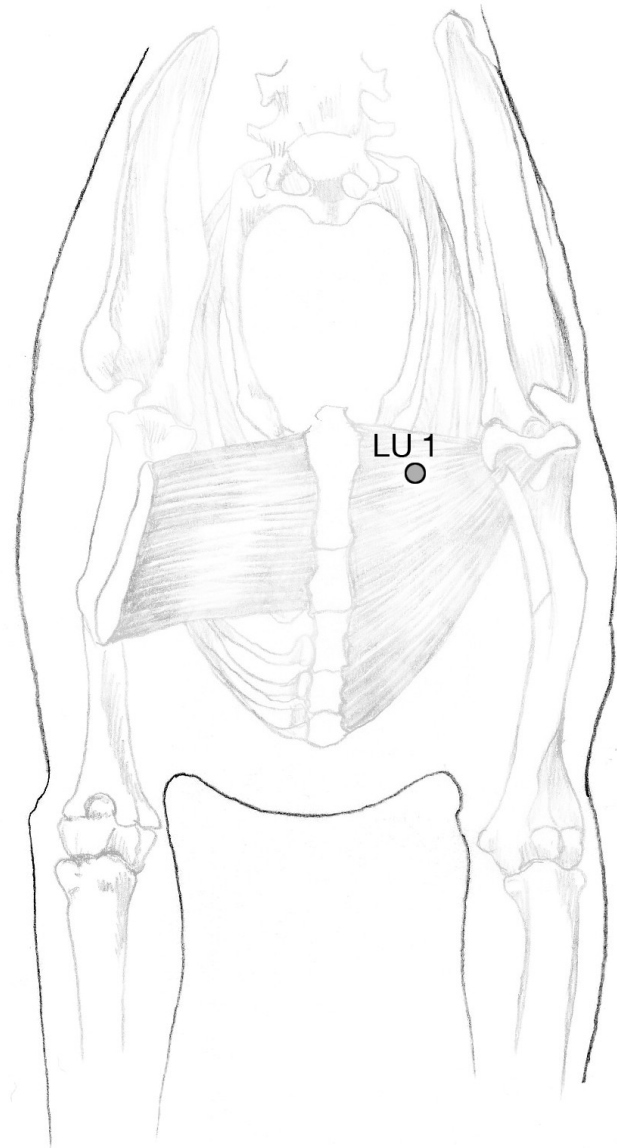
The Front Mu points are on the front or ventral aspect of the dog's body, with the exception of the Liver, Gall Bladder, Spleen and Kidney Front Mu points which are on the lateral side of the body. The majority of the Front Mu points are located on the Ren channel.

They are most commonly used in acute conditions although they can also tonify the associated organ as well as drain excesses.

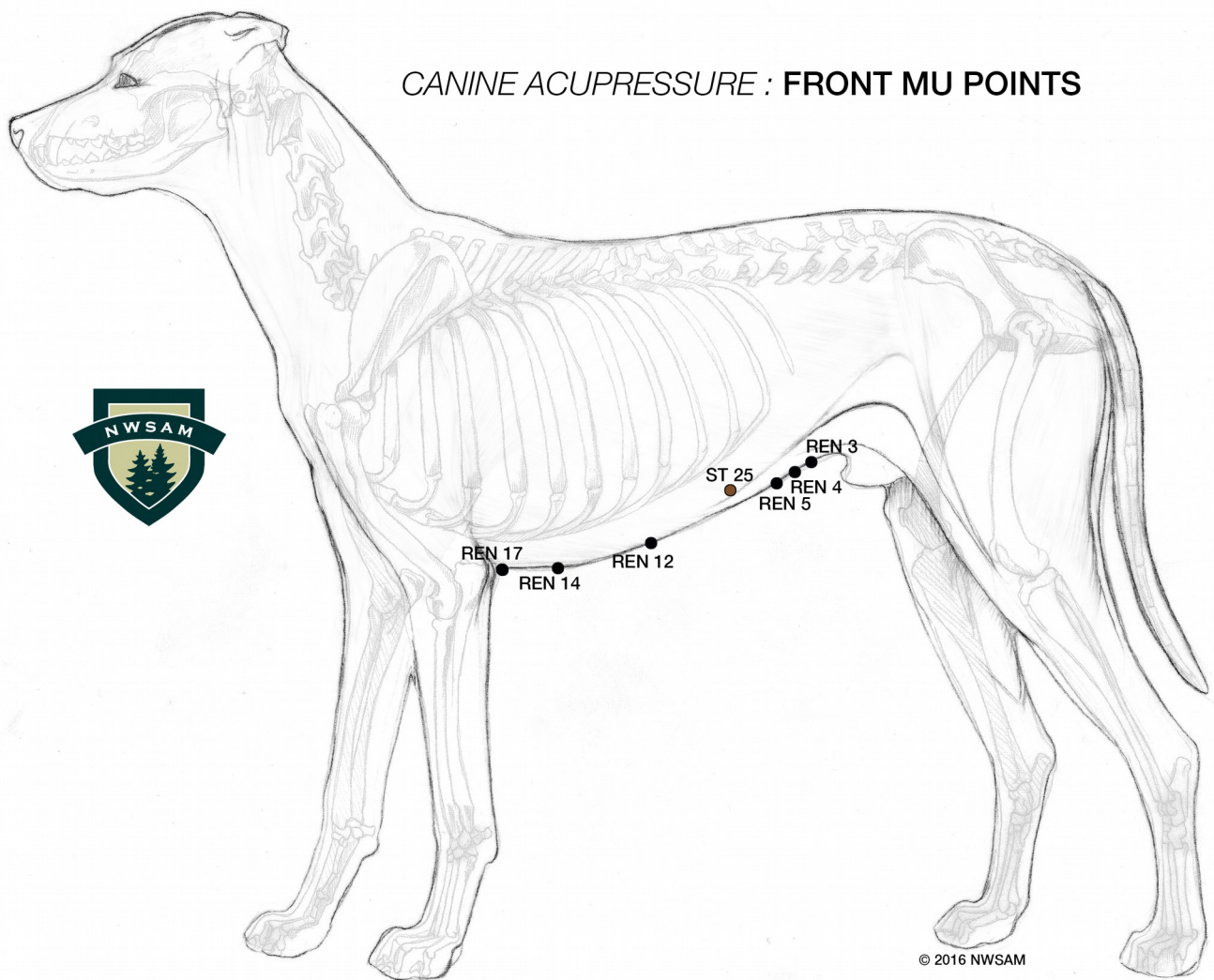
Often used in combination with the Back Shu points, this combination makes for a longer lasting and more effective session and they are used in assessment.

The Front Mu points and their locations are:

LU 1 (Lung) - in the space medial to the greater tubercle of the humerus in the superficial pectoral muscle at the level of the 1st intercostal space.



CANINE ACUPRESSURE : FRONT MU POINTS



Ren 17 (Pericardium) - on the ventral midline, at the caudal border of the elbow in the 4th intercostal space.

Ren 14 (Heart) - on the ventral midline, at the tip of the xiphoid process.

Ren 12 (Stomach) - on the ventral midline halfway between the xiphoid process and the umbilicus.

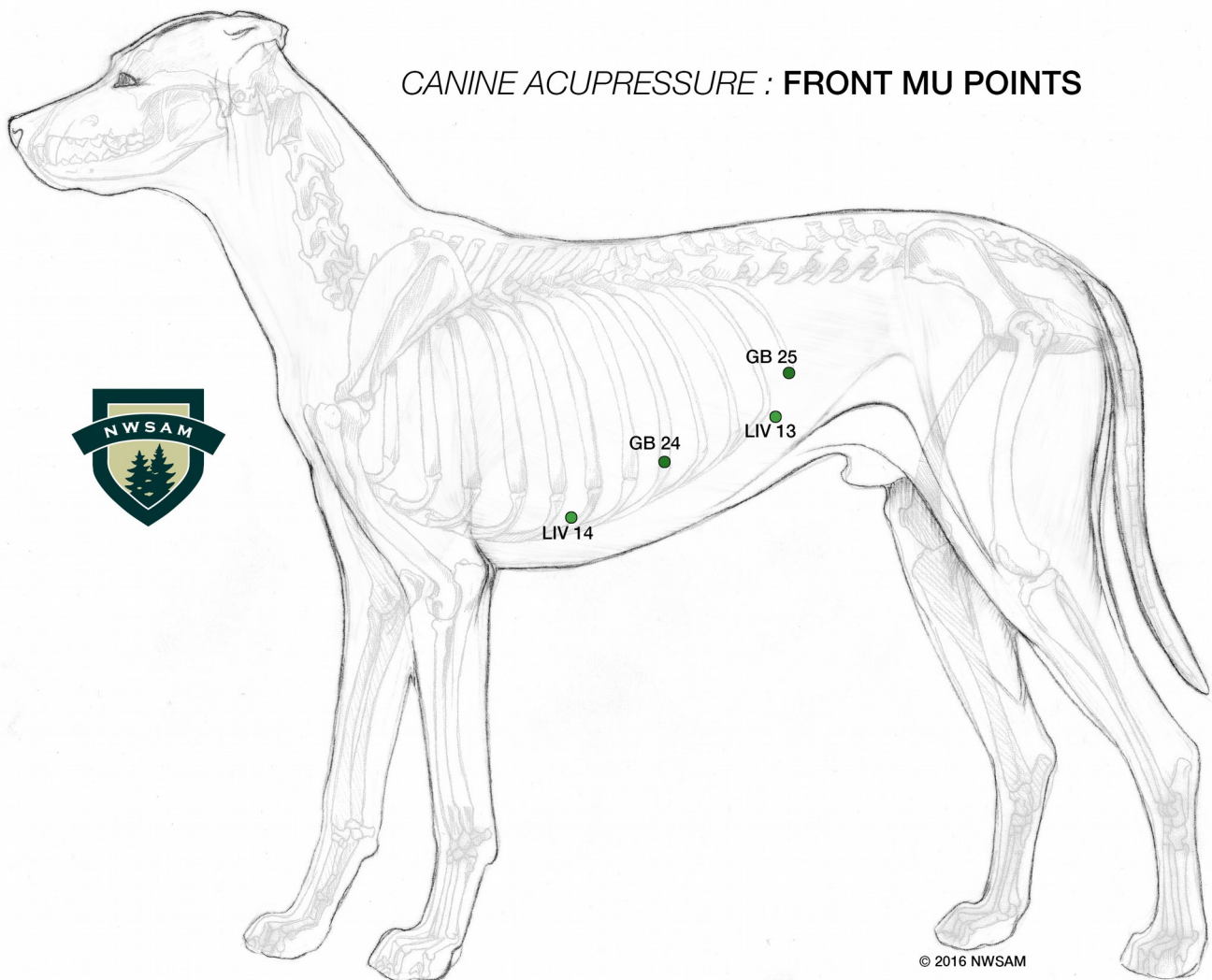
St 25 (Large Intestine) - 1.5 to 2 cun lateral to the umbilicus.

Ren 5 (San Jiao) - on the ventral midline, 2 cun caudal to the umbilicus.

Ren 4 (Small Intestine) - on the ventral midline, 3 cun caudal to the umbilicus.

Ren 3 (Urinary Bladder) - on the ventral midline, 4 cun caudal to the umbilicus.

CANINE ACUPRESSURE : FRONT MU POINTS



LIV 14 (Liver) - in the 6th intercostal space at the level of the mammary line.

GB 24 (Gall Bladder) - in the 9th intercostal space at the costochondral junction, just above the height of the elbow.

LIV 13 (Spleen) - at the distal end of the 12th rib.

GB 25 (Kidney) - at the tip of the 13th (last) rib.

The Back Shu points (Association points)

Each Zang and Fu has a Back Shu point and they are used in the cases of chronic deficiency of the corresponding organ. Shu means to transport and the idea is that these points transport Qi to the inner organs they are associated with, hence the alternate translation of Association points.

The names of the points come from the Chinese name of the organ, so *Xinshu* is the name of the Back shu of the Heart, *Ganshu* is for the Liver, etc. The points are located on the dorsal aspect of the dog's body along the Bladder channel, 1.5 cun lateral to the dorsal midline, level with a spinous process of a vertebra.

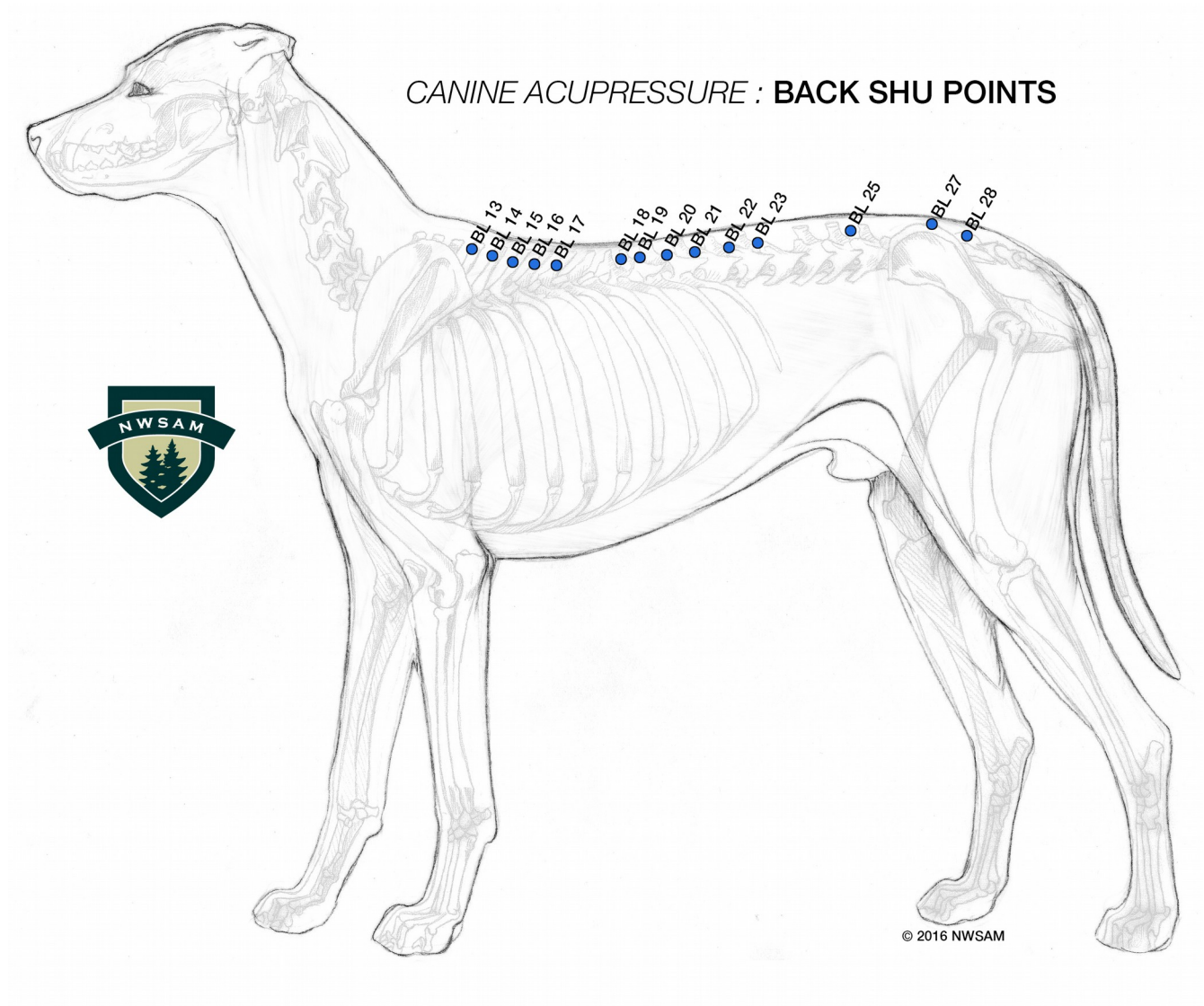
These points can be used in the Assessment process when gathering information to determine the pattern of disharmony. They are also very powerful points to incorporate into a session as they bring Qi directly to the organ without having to go through the primary channels and in this way the session is more direct. They are mostly used in chronic conditions.

Another characteristic of these points is that they are used to treat the sense organ of the corresponding organ for example, BL 18 - the Back Shu of the Liver, treats the eyes.

There are six other points called the "outer Back Shu" points that are located on the outer line of the Bladder channel that are used to affect the spiritual aspect of the Yin organs and the emotions related to them. They sit another 1.5 cun below their organ shu point and are used in emotional/behavioral imbalances of the corresponding organ. For example, BL 47, 1.5 cun below BL 18, the Back shu of the Liver, can be used for aggressive behavior or anger. BL 44, the outer shu of the Heart, treats anxiety and insomnia.

For deep deficiency, stimulate the Back shu points along with the Source point of the corresponding organ.

The Back Shu points and their locations are:



BL 13 - Lung - BL 42 - 1.5 cun lateral to the caudal border of the dorsal spinous process of T3. BL 42 is 1.5 cun below BL 13.

BL 14 - Pericardium - BL 43 - 1.5 cun lateral to the caudal border of the dorsal spinous process of T4. BL 43 is 1.5 cun below BL 14.

BL 15 - Heart - BL 44 - 1.5 cun lateral to the caudal border of the dorsal spinous process of T5. BL 44 is 1.5 cun below BL 15.

Please note BL 16 and BL17 are not Associated with any organ and therefore not Back Shu points, but are important points and more can be read about them in Chapter 3 in the

Bladder unit.

BL18 - Liver - BL 47 - 1.5 cun lateral to the caudal border of the dorsal spinous process of T10. BL 47 is 1.5 cun below BL 18.

BL 19 - Gall Bladder - 1.5 cun lateral to the caudal border of the dorsal spinous process of T11.

BL 20 - Spleen - BL 49 - 1.5 cun lateral to the caudal border of the dorsal spinous process of T12. BL 49 is 1.5 cun below BL 20.

BL 21 - Stomach - 1.5 cun lateral to the caudal border of the dorsal spinous process of T13.

BL 22 - San Jiao - 1.5 cun lateral to the caudal border of the dorsal spinous process of L1.

BL 23 - Kidney - BL 52 - 1.5 cun lateral to the caudal border of the dorsal spinous process of L2. BL 52 is 1.5 cun below BL 23.

BL 25 - Large Intestine - 1.5 cun lateral to the caudal border of the dorsal spinous process of L5.

BL 27 - Small Intestine - 1.5 cun lateral to the caudal border of the dorsal spinous process of L7.

BL 28 - Bladder (UB) - 1.5 cun lateral to the dorsal midline between the sacrum and the medial border of the wing of the ilium.

The Master Points

Master points have a strong influence on a region of the body and are not necessarily located in that region. For example, PC 6 can have a local effect with pain in the carpal area due to its location, but since it is the Master point for the chest, armpit and upper abdomen it can also improve digestion.

The Master points and their region of influence:

LI 4 - Master point for Face and Mouth - on the medial side of the front leg at the midpoint of the second metacarpal bone. (Under the dew claw if one is present.)

LU 7 - Master point for Head and Neck - is on the medial side of the front leg, proximal to

the styloid process of the radius.

PC 6 - Master point for Chest, Armpit and Upper Abdomen - 2 cun proximal to the transverse carpal crease, between the flexor tendons. Opposite SJ 5.

ST 36 - Master point for the Abdomen and Gastrointestinal Tract - on the craniolateral aspect of the hind leg, 3 cun below ST 35, 0.5 cun lateral to the cranial aspect of the tibial crest, in the belly of the cranial tibialis muscle. It is a long linear point.

BL 40 - Master point for the Low Back and Hips - in the center of the popliteal crease.

SP 6 - Master point for the Caudal Abdomen and Urogenital System - 3 cun above the proximal tip of the medial malleolus, on the caudal border of the tibia. Opposite GB 39.

Ah shi Points

Ah shi points are tender points that are often found in painful diseases. They are usually found by palpation and observation. In many cases the Ah shi point may feel like a pea-sized nodule under the skin, or the dog will indicate this painful area during the Four Exams.

If an Ah shi point is present it should always be addressed during the acupressure session along with local and distal acupressure points. In some cases Ah shi points correlate to acupressure points and other times they are not along a meridian or channel.

How to Prepare for an Acupressure Session

It is important as an acupressure practitioner to prepare yourself prior to working with a dog. There are three main areas of our own body that we want to check in with. These are posture and body mechanics; breathing; and awareness or intention.

Posture and body mechanics means having a relaxed body. If you are sitting or kneeling try not to block your own Qi flow and you want to try and stay in good alignment throughout the session. For safety you want to have both hands on the dog at all times.

Being aware of your own breathing is very important when doing acupressure. You want to be taking deep breaths so that when you inhale the breath expands your abdomen, back, ribs and chest and those areas then release on the exhale. You may also use your own breathing to help the dog relax.

Finally, it is important to focus your healing intention on the dog when doing acupressure. Any thoughts or worries about the rest of your day that may be floating around in your mind, need

to be left behind. By being focused and present in your session you will be able to connect your own Qi with that of the dog and the point(s) you are working.

Putting it all together

Now that you have learned about the Four Exams and the various point classifications it is time to put it all together and formulate a plan for your acupressure session. In all cases you will start with the Four Exams so that you have a clear idea of what is going on with the dog at the time of your session.

There are a variety of ways to select points and we will present a number of them here and delve more deeply into them at the practical.

1. Assess the Back Shu (Association) points and the Front Mu (Alarm) points. The Back Shu points can indicate a local issue, a meridian issue or an organ system issue. By adding in the Front Mu points we can assess if the issue has moved deeper into the body. Since the Front Mu points are located beneath or adjacent to the organ they are related to, sensitivity on them may indicate that there is some organ involvement. Based on these findings you can then prioritize the issues going on and choose points for the session. Both the Back Shu and Front Mu points can be part of the session, or you may choose to go with other points along the related channels or ones with energetics that can help with the issues.
2. You may opt to select points based on their classification. For example, if the dog is having low back and hind end issues you may want to add in BL 40 since it is the Master point for this region of the body. Or if the dog just had dental work done you might want to select LI 4 since it is the Master point for the face and mouth and perhaps you would also include BL 11 in the session since it is the Influential point for Bone. (In TCM, teeth are seen as an extension of bone.)
3. You may choose to use some of the suggested points in Chapter 5 for common canine conditions. These are points that other practitioners and veterinarians have found to work well for these conditions. Often the points are a mixture of local and distal points. This is sometimes a good way to start out if you are feeling overwhelmed with too many options. As you practice and gain confidence you will add in points of your own that you find to help with these conditions.
4. You may choose to work points along a particular channel if you notice that many of the presenting issues seem to all be along one meridian. For example, a dog that presents with a stiff neck and some hip discomfort might lead you to want to work Gall Bladder points. In particular, GB 20 and GB 21 would be good local points for the neck, GB 29 and 30 would be good local hip points and then GB 44, the Jing-well point would be good for balancing the

entire meridian. You might also add in a few other points such as Lu 7, the Master point for head and neck and also BL 40, the Master point for low back and hips.

5. You may want to identify the issue as an excess or deficiency and then determine which of the Zang-Fu organs is involved and use some of the points found in Chapter 2. For example, if you determined the dog had a Spleen Qi deficiency because he had some diarrhea, loss of muscle mass and general fatigue you might opt to use ST 36, SP 6, SP 3, UB 20, UB 23 and REN 4.

6. You may want to identify which element or elements seem to be out of balance and use points based on this. Perhaps the dog recently became angry after hurting his cranial cruciate ligament on the right hind leg and is now on crate rest with some yellow discharge from his right eye. You might determine this was primarily an imbalance in the Wood element and opt to use LIV 2 (sedation point on the Liver channel) to help get rid of some of this pent up frustration. You could then also use LIV 3 the Yuan Source point for the Liver channel, GB 34 the Influential point for tendons and ligaments and perhaps BL 18 the Back Shu point for the Liver. (You might start with the Back Shu point, as it is probably the safest point to start with since it is along the back. With Liver issues, especially Liver Qi stagnation the dog may not want you around his hind legs initially.)

As you can see, there are many possible ways to mix and match points. As you become more and more familiar with the points, you will be able to pick and choose based on your own experiences.

Point Work Technique

Before you begin, take a few deep breaths and focus on what you are doing. Some people like to rub their palms together (Pericardium 8 is a powerful acupoint in the center of your palms) to bring up their own energy and intention and focus on their Qi. Sit near the dog and allow him to approach you or show interest/give permission in having you proceed. Where you conduct the session is up to you. Make sure you and the dog are safe throughout your time together.

Place your hands gently on the dog to let him get used to your touch, and/or do some light stroking/petting along the neck, back or chest. Locate the acupressure point(s) by stroking through the area gently with flat fingers or hand and then letting your finger(s) or thumb or palm (depending on sensitivity of the dog to pressure/touch) stop in the area of the point. Remain still on the point for a minute or so to let the dog get used to your touch in the area and to feel for the quality of the Qi at that point.

Just staying on the point is fine. If you aren't feeling the Qi flow in the area you may want to move the skin and tissue gently in the area to feel for it. You can also circle on the point if that

feels like the right thing to do. Some dogs may want a bit more pressure and you can sink into the point as the tissue allows you to do so. This is not about pressing hard, start out very lightly. If you press too hard you may lose the dog's trust.

The dog may yawn, change their breathing, move into you or basically relax as a form of a release. Or they may move away from you indicating they have had enough. You may stay in the area for 30 seconds or up to a few minutes, depending on the dog. So pay attention to the feedback they are providing you and the feeling of the Qi at the point. Once done with an acupoint, gently stroke through the area before moving on to the next point.

Please note, not all dogs will enjoy all the points and not all points will lead to a release. It is not about how many points you do or how much pressure you use, less is more.

Common Questions about Pointwork

1. How big is an acupressure point?

Point size will vary depending on the size of the dog and the location of the point. Some of the points around the eyes are pretty small in size. Other points are closer to the size of a dime. Small Intestine 9 is a pretty big hole, located between the deltoid and the triceps muscles. Stomach 36 is more of a linear point, it feels like more of a groove along the channel.

The Chinese word for acupressure point is Xue, which means hollow, cave or indentation. Points are found in the hollow spots in muscles, or between muscles, between bones and around joints. These are the spots that our fingers instinctively seem to settle.

2. How do I know I am on the point?

Qi is energy and it moves. When locating an acupoint you want to use the description provided to get in the general area. Then you want to slowly move your flat fingers around in the area feeling for different textures in the skin. Or you may stroke through the area a few times and find that your fingers keep stopping in the same place. Sometimes the dog may shift slightly to help you find the point.

3. What does Qi feel like?

Qi may feel slightly different to different people. In some cases as you are on a point you may feel the area warm up as the Qi moves into the point. Sometimes it might feel like pulsing or even a bit of a tingle under your fingers. As you are there the tissue may soften and allow you

to sink a bit deeper into the point. You may feel a sensation of calmness come over you or feel the need to take a deep breath. The dog may too.

4. What if I don't feel anything?

Keep trying. It takes time to hone your touch. In the beginning you may only feel a temperature difference. You may want to vary your approach and leave all your notes and material at home and just go and feel what you feel on the dog. You can figure out what point(s) you were on afterwards.

5. How much pressure should I use?

Start lightly. It is not about how much pressure you use. To test the amount of pressure start by closing one eyelid and pressing with your pointer or middle finger. This is how much pressure you should begin with. Each dog will be different. Some like deeper pressure and others don't. It will also depend on if the Qi is stuck at a point which may make the point more sensitive or if it is deficient it may feel cold or empty. You want to let the tissue under your fingers soften up and allow you in. One analogy is, if you slap the surface of the water with your hand you will find resistance, versus if you place your hand lightly on the surface of the water and allow your hand to gently sink into the water. This is how you want to approach your point work.

Also, if you press too hard initially you may lose the dog's trust and you may end up pushing through the point, kind of like kinking a hose.

6. How long do I stay on a point?

It depends. Your pointwork is a conversation of sorts between you and the dog. Therefore you need to pay attention to the body language and feedback the dog is providing. Indications that the dog is enjoying the pointwork include; lowering his head and neck, eyes closing a bit, a change in breathing, licking and chewing, yawning, muscles relaxing, passing gas, stretching, etc.

Your goal is to re-establish the correct flow of Qi. This may take a minute or it may take 3-5 minutes. If a point is deficient in energy it may take longer to get the Qi to the point. Whereas if a point has stuck or stagnant energy it may be painful and the dog may not want you on the point initially. Sometimes you need to go to another point along the same meridian and then come back to the sensitive point or work points above and below the area with the intention to bring the energy through the sensitive area. After working on a point you then want to lightly

stroke through the area before moving on to the next point.

7. How many points can I use?

It will depend on the dog and the issues they have. In an older dog that is fairly debilitated you don't want to do too many points. The goal is to use a handful of points to help re-balance his Qi and gently nudge him back to health. In a healthy adult dog you might use a dozen or so points. Remember that the dog needs to be a willing participant in the acupressure session and his body has to have the ability and desire to get better. So we want to do a session and then wait and see how his body responds to the work.

8. How often should I do an acupressure session?

Again it depends on the dog and the issues being addressed. You want to see how the body responds and give the Qi a chance flow back through the organ/meridian system(s) being addressed, keeping the Circadian Clock in mind. So you might wait 3 to 5 days before doing another session. If something is acute you might do some points once a day for a few days to get the issue to resolve. A more chronic condition will take longer to resolve so you might work on the dog once a week for 3-4 weeks and then see if you can spread the sessions out further. And if you are doing preventive sessions, once a month works well.

9. Can I hold more than one point at a time?

You should have two hands on the dog all the time, partly for safety, but also to keep a connection with him. While one hand is doing pointwork, the other hand can be doing passive touch. There are times when you may want each hand to hold a point. For example, a dog with a stiff and sore neck, may appreciate having GB 20 and GB 21 held simultaneously to move the energy through the neck.

If holding two points together there should be a reason for doing so rather than just trying to hurry the session along. Reasons might include two points on the same meridian to move energy along the meridian or through a sensitive area, points on either side of a joint, or paired points from sister meridians. There are a few classic point combinations which include; PC 7 and HT 7, PC 6 and SJ 5, and KID 3 and BL 60.

The beauty of holding 1-2 points at a time is that you really get a sense from the dog as to which point or points he got the most benefit from.

10. Do I need to work the points on both sides of the dog?

It is a good idea to work the points on both sides of the dog, but it isn't essential. Since the 12 major meridians run bilaterally, it is a good way to maintain balance by working the points on both sides. In some cases though, the dog may not want you to and for safety reasons you may choose only to work on one side.

Also, the response to the pointwork may vary from one side to the other. The dog may only respond to points on one side or may release more quickly to points on one side.

Chapter 4 Quiz

This is a gateway assignment; you must score at least 80% to complete it.

When you are ready, take this quiz on the material in Chapter Four. You *may* refer to your notes and the material (open book) during the quiz if you wish. Use the Next and Prev buttons to navigate through the quiz, changing any answers you wish, before clicking on Finished to submit. You will see your results and your score.

You may take this quiz as many times as you like. It's a good idea to review the questions you missed, or material you didn't remember. Re-read the information and try again. The repetition will help your retention of the material and show you areas to study further. Obviously, cutting corners in submitting answers will not help your progress in the course, your working knowledge of small animal acupressure, or your performance assessment at the practicum.

You *must* pass this quiz with an 80% or better (at least 32 correct out of 40) to complete the chapter study. Take the test until you achieve this scoring range before going on to the next chapter. Your best score is retained.

Please contact your instructor with any questions.

Good luck!