

Traditional Chinese Medicine Tips to Increase Immunity and Decrease Anxiety

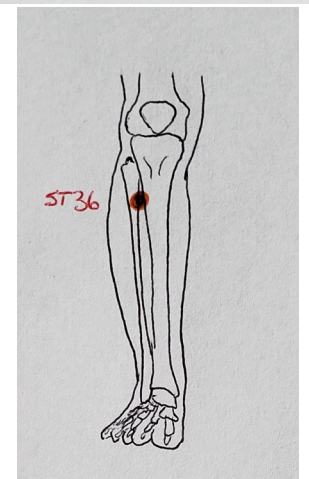
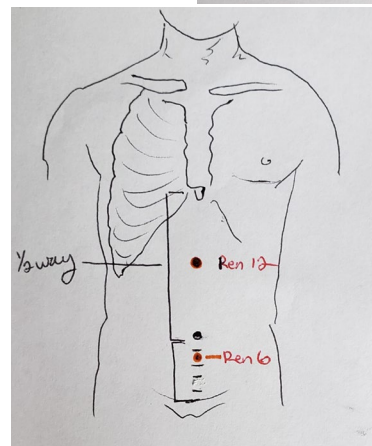
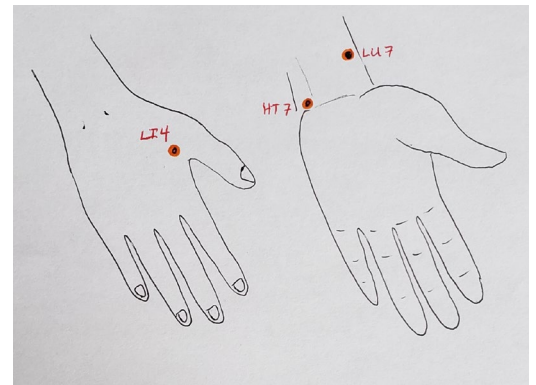
By Dr. Kim Mintenko, TCMD
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These are difficult times we are living in right now - we have an unprecedented crisis that can leave us filled with uncertainty, stress, and fear. It is in everyone's best interest that we each do absolutely everything we can to keep our immune systems strong to protect ourselves, our loved ones, and our communities. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and some basic Acupuncture principles can help. Acupressure points can be stimulated manually, TCM herbs and foods with nourishing properties can be increased in our diet, and some general health habits can be incorporated to improve our well being and overall health during this time.

ACUPRESSURE POINTS *see images for locations*

These points can be stimulated with gentle massage for a few minutes several times a day.

- **Large Intestine 4 (LI4)** - on the top of the hand, in the middle of the fleshy part between the thumb and index finger
 - Important point to strengthen the exterior and improve immunity; good for for all face and head issues including headache, as well as to help the circulation of Qi and Blood
- **Lung 7 (LU7)** - found on the wrist about 1.5 thumb breadths from the wrist crease on the thumb side
 - Important point for common cold prevention and symptoms including body aches, fever, chills, and runny nose; it is beneficial for all head and neck issues
- **Stomach 36 (ST36)** - one hand breadth below the kneecap and one finger breadth from the shin on the pinky toe side of the leg
 - Powerful point to strengthen the exterior and immunity, help nourish the Lungs, and tonify Qi and Blood to help the body fight chronic illnesses and general fatigue
- **Heart 7 (HT7)** - at the wrist crease straight down from the pinky finger, on the inside of the tendon
 - Helps calm the spirit, reduce anxiety, improve sleep, and reduce feelings of fear or panic
- **Ren 6** - on the abdomen centre-line, about* 1.5 thumb breadths below the belly button (*if the area is broken down into 10 sections from belly button to the top of the pubic bone, the point is 3 sections down)
 - Strengthens Qi to improve immunity when we experience shortness of breath and general fatigue; general point to improve all body systems
- **Ren 12** - on the abdomen centre-line, halfway between the bottom of the sternum and belly button
 - This point can decrease stress and regulate our digestive system when stress causes things like bloating, nervous stomach, or changes in appetite. Helps to manage stress, anxiety, and insomnia, particularly due to over-thinking and worry



TCM FOODS

There are many common foods that have nourishing properties according to TCM that can strengthen our immune systems, transform phlegm, and improve the overall functioning of our Lungs and digestive organs. These include:

- Citrus
- Garlic
- Ginger
- Cinnamon
- Cayenne
- Soups
- Seaweeds
- Mushrooms
- Onions
- Radishes

AVOID

Dairy, sweets, and processed foods

These foods can create dampness or phlegm, which makes it easier for bacteria or viruses to stick around in our systems, thus easier for one to get sick.

TCM FORMULAS

Yu Ping Feng San (“Jade Windscreen”)

If you have access to herbal formulas, this one can strengthen the exterior from Wind-Cold syndromes (which, in Calgary, we are still facing these windy winter days). This is a preventative formula to avoid the common cold, and at this time, can keep one strong to deter exterior infections. *THIS IS NOT PROVEN TO PREVENT OR CURE COVID-19, but is a useful formula with herbs contained in it that can benefit the immune system during this season*

OTHER THINGS FOR OVERALL HEALTH

• Physical Health

Exercise is key to keep our bodies running well when there has been a fairly aggressive halt to most or all of our regular activities. At home workouts, stretching, walking outdoors to get fresh air, incorporate anything helps that can keep your blood circulating and body moving!

• Mental Health

This piece will prove to be extra important in the coming days as there is so much uncertainty at this time - not just physically, but socially, and financially as well. To prevent the mind from wandering and dwelling too much, find ways that one can find peace and calm for oneself. This can be through meditation, yoga, reading books, phone calls with loved ones, or other projects one can compete to give a sense of purpose accomplishment while at home.

• Heat

One can take a hot bath or shower, or steam our upper respiratory tract by boiling water and covering the head with a towel to steam the face and heat up the nasal passages (feel free to add peppermint or eucalyptus essential oils as well).

Please stay healthy and safe everyone. Avoid crowds and be mindful of our hygienic practices. If you are at home, take the time to make a list of things to keep our brains and bodies occupied. Clean the house, do a home workout, read books, give yourself or family member an at-home acupuncture treatment, and get creative with your loved ones. Please also keep in mind all those without loved ones or homes to stay inside of. If you have a way to help from home - let's all do our best to share our knowledge or resources the best we can. Wash your hands and stay smart out there!

Love & Health
Dr. Kim Mintenko