

Nine Types of Image Balancing

1. Left-Right Balancing

In Left and Right side balancing, if the pain is on the left side, we can needle points in the same location on the right side, and vice versa. For example, in the treatment of left LI11 pain, needle right LI11. If the patient has pain at right LI4, needle left LI4.

2. Hand and Foot, Arm-Leg Balancing

In this type of balancing, the shoulder and hip can be used to treat each other, the elbow area and knee area can be used to treat each other, the wrist and ankle can treat each other, and the fingers and toes can be used to treat each other.

After choosing the appropriate body part to treat (ex. knee for elbow pain), the treatment channel must be chosen. In this system, channels of the same name are often chosen to treat each other. Therefore the ST channel can treat pain in the LI channel.

For example, if the patient has pain in the hip joint (GB channel), you can needle opposite SJ14. If there is pelvis pain on the ST channel, needle LI15 contralaterally. If there is Knee pain, especially on the Spleen channel, needle LU5.

3. Hand-Foot, Arm-Leg Mirror

In this type of balancing, the two limbs are facing opposite directions. In this method, the hand relates to the pelvis, the elbow to the knee, the upper arm to the lower leg and the shoulder to the foot.

For example, Ling Gu and SI3 can be used to treat sciatica, and SJ5 and SJ6 can treat thigh pain

4. Upper Limb-Trunk

In this style of balancing the hand and forearm from the fingertips to the elbow, is balanced with the torso from the head to the groin area. The forearm relates to the chest, the elbow to the umbilicus, the lower arm to the lower abdomen, and the hand to the genital area.

An example of this type of balancing is the use of the Tung points, Da Jian and Xiao Jian, located on the fingers, to treat genital pain.

5. Upper Limb-Trunk Mirror

This method is the reversal of the previous method, where now the hand relates to the head and neck, the forearm to the chest and upper back, the elbow to the umbilicus, the upper arm to the lower abdomen and sacral area, and the shoulder to the genital area.

There are many examples for this method. PC6 is often used for pain in the chest area, while Tian Zong and Yun Bai, located on the shoulder, are used for problems in the genital area. In Korean Hand Acupuncture, the top of the middle finger is related to DU20, and is used in the treatment of headache. This method is also the reason why LI4 is used to treat wind in the head and brain area or headache.

6. Lower Limb-Trunk

In this style, the lower limb relates to the torso from the head to the groin area. The thigh relates to the chest, the knee to the umbilicus, the leg to the lower abdomen and sacral area, and the foot to the genital area.

A few examples of this in practice are the use of ST44 in the treatment of dysmenorrhea, the use of SP1 and LV1 in the treatment of leukorrhea, and the use of SP6 for lower abdominal pain.

7. Foot-Trunk Mirror

This style is a reversal of the previous one, and now the foot relates to the head, the ankle to the neck, the leg to the chest and upper back, the knee to the umbilicus and lower back, and the thigh to the lower abdomen and sacral area.

Examples of this in Tung's acupuncture are the use of ST43/44 (Men Jin in Tung's acupuncture) in the treatment of frontal headache. Also, two Tung points at the Achilles tendon, Zheng Zong and Zheng Jin, are used for the treatment of neck pain.

In TCM there are additional examples. GB41 is used for temporal headaches, UB65 and UB60 are used for occipital headaches, and LV1 and KD1 are used to treat vertex headaches at DU20. Because the foot relates to the brain in this style, SP1 and ST45 are used for sleep issues, and LV1 can be used for Alzheimer's disease. This style is also the basis for UB40's use in lower back pain.

8. Upper-Lower

There are a few variations of this relationship. In one, the head can be related to a mirror image of itself, where DU20 can treat the throat and vice versa.

In another variation, the head can relate to the sacrum, where DU1 can treat disorders of the brain, and DU20 can treat hemorrhoids.

A third variation of this is the relationship of the head and foot, where KD1 treats vertex headache, and DU20 treats pain on the sole of the foot.

9. Front-Back

In this style of balancing, the front of the body may be used to treat the back and vice versa. Pain at L2, near UB23, is level with the umbilicus, and therefore needling 0.5 cun medially to ST25 can treat low back pain.

Additionally, Ren23 can be used to treat neck stiffness, and DU15 can treat aphasia, voice disorders, and difficulty swallowing.

Application of Image Balancing

When applying these balancing techniques, you must consider not only the related anatomical areas, but the channel relationships as well. Treating channels are often channels of the same name as the effected channel, or channels of an interior-exterior relationship to the effected channel.

1. Meridian Name Sharing

For example, if treating shoulder pain in the LI channel, one choice might be the LI channel on the opposite arm, or another is the ST channel on the opposite leg. If the pain is in the SI channel on the shoulder, you may choose SI on the opposite arm, or the UB channel on the opposite leg. In another example, for the treatment of hernia pain (ST channel), you may chose LI points, such as Ling Gu, because both channels are Yangming and so can balance each other.

2. Interior and Exteriorly Related Channels

Channels with interior-exterior relationships can also balance each other, so LU5 could be used for pain around LI11 as well.

3. Treatment of the Ren and DU

When there are issues with the Ren channel, the Shaoyin channels, HT and KD, may be used to balance the Ren. When there are problems with the Du channel, then the Taiyang channels, SI and UB, may be used. Additionally the Ren and DU channels can be used to balance each other in the front-back style.