

# Distal Acupuncture: Theory and Practice

## A systems based approach to complex patterns

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# Steven Malins, DOM



# Who am I?

## My Experience

- Licensed for 10 years
- Community acupuncture for 3 years, 20+ patients per shift
- Community acupuncture for indigenous elders 2x month

## References

- Deadman, P., Al-Khafaji, M., & Baker, K. (2007). A manual of acupuncture. Journal of Chinese Medicine.
- Kuwahara, T. K. (2003). Traditional Japanese Acupuncture: Fundamentals of Meridian therapy. Paradigm Publications.
- O'Connor, J., & Bensky, D. (1981). Acupuncture: A comprehensive text. Editora Roca.
- Tan, T. (2007). Acupuncture 1, 2, 3.

# Why Distal Acupuncture?

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- ② Patients with mobility issues
- ③ Wide range of conditions treated
- ④ Systems based, treat patterns not symptoms

# How does acupuncture work?

## Endorphin Acupuncture Analgesia (AA)

- AA Works much better than placebo
  - 55% to 85% of cases
  - Morphine 75% of cases!
  - Placebo 30% of cases

*In summary, acupuncture stimulates nerve fibers in the muscle, which send impulses to the spinal cord and activates three centers (spinal cord, midbrain, and hypothalamus-pituitary) to cause analgesia.*

Stux, G., & Pomeranz, B. (2012). Basics of acupuncture. Springer Science & Business Media.

# Ling Shu

*When there is a perverse disease with pain which goes along both sides of the backbone to reach the top of the head, and the head nods with heaviness, the eyes are blurred, and loins and spine are stiff and rigid, treat the Leg Major Yang at the point in the middle of the crease of the knee.*

Jing-Nuan, W. (Trans.). (2011). Ling Shu: Or the spiritual pivot. The Taoist Center.

# Diagnosis

## TCM Diagnosis

*TCM diagnosis, eg “spleen qi vacuity” works for herbs but is not useful for acupuncture*

*What is your diagnosis? Spleen Qi Deficiency?!*

# When to use Distal Acupuncture?

## What Can Distal Acupuncture Treat?

*Distal Acupuncture can treat (almost) any pattern/condition!*

- Distal Acupuncture affects cells in Mid-Brain and Pituitary Hypothalamus
- All 5 shu points are distal on all 12 meridians
- Treating patterns and not symptoms reduces number of needles and increases effectiveness!

# When NOT to use Distal Acupuncture

## When to avoid Distal Acupuncture

- Open wounds near points needed
- Chronic pain not responsive to DA
- Medical Emergencies!

### Case Study

*MC: abdominal pain, progressively worse past 24h; rebound tenderness; temperature 100.0*

# Case Study 0.1

## 65F MC: Neck pain

### Subjective

**HPI:** Neck pain started “a few days ago” worse with neck flexion; patient describes pain as “stiff”; radiates to whole head; severity 6 out of 10

### Objective

**P:** vacuous; deep; rapid

**PE:** BP 110/76, PR 87, T 99.7; patient is slow to answer questions; otherwise unremarkable

# Case Study 0.1

## 65F MC: Neck pain

### Diagnosis

***Suspected Meningitis!***

### Plan

*Refer to ER for lumbar puncture to confirm or rule out Meningitis*

# Discussion



# Acupuncture 1,2,3

- Dr Richard Tan
- Three Steps:
  - **Step 1:** Diagnose the Sick Meridian
    - Inspection
    - Auscultation
    - Inquiry
  - **Step 2:** Determine Treating Meridians
    - 5 Systems
  - **Step 3:** Point selection

*An affected meridian may indicate solely a physical pain, or may be an indication of an internal issue*

## Meridian Name-Sharing

Meridian 1	Meridian 2
Lung Hand TaiYin	Spleen Foot TaiYin
Large Intestine Hand YangMing	Stomach Foot YangMing
Heart Hand ShaoYin	Kidney Foot ShaoYin
Small Intestine Hand TaiYang	Bladder Foot TaiYang
Triple Burner Hand ShaoYang	Gallbladder Foot ShaoYang
Pericardium Hand JueYin	Liver Foot JueYin

Needle Side

Opposite Side

## Branching Meridians

Meridian 1	Meridian 2
Lung Hand TaiYin	Bladder Foot TaiYang
Large Intestine Hand YangMing	Liver Foot JueYin
Heart Hand ShaoYin	Gallbladder Foot ShaoYang
Small Intestine Hand TaiYang	Spleen Foot TaiYin
Triple Burner Hand ShaoYang	Kidney Foot ShaoYin
Pericardium Hand JueYin	Stomach Foot YangMing

Needle Side

*Either Side*

# System III

## Interior Exterior

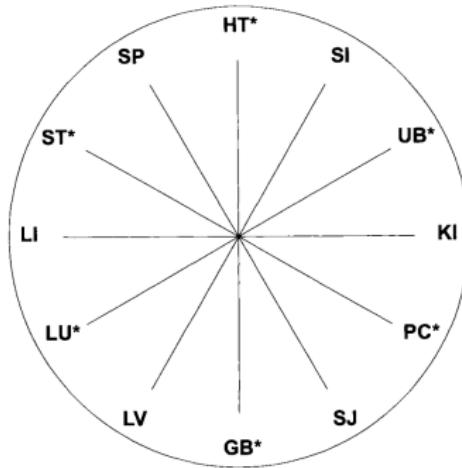
Meridian 1	Meridian 2
Lung	Large Intestine
Heart	Small Intestine
Pericardium	Triple Burner
Spleen	Stomach
Kidney	Bladder
Liver	Gallbladder

Needle Side

*Opposite Side*

# System IV

## Clock Opposites



Needle Side

Either Side

## Clock Neighbors

Meridian 1	Meridian 2
Lung	Liver
<b><i>Large Intestine</i></b>	<b><i>Stomach</i></b>
Spleen	Heart
<b><i>Small Intestine</i></b>	<b><i>Bladder</i></b>
Kidney	Pericardium
<b><i>Triple Burner</i></b>	<b><i>Gallbladder</i></b>

Needle Side

Opposite Side

# Imaging I

<u>Needled Area</u>	<u>Image</u>	<u>Sick Area</u>	<u>Reverse Image</u>
Finger	Genitals anus	Top of head	
Hand	Coccyx, sacrum	Base of head	
Wrist	Bladder L-S	Neck	
Forearm	Low AB and Back	Upper ab and back	
Elbow	Umbilicus, L-2, waist	Umbilicus, L-2, waist	
Upper arm	Upper ab and back	Low AB and Back	
Shoulder	Base of head	Coccyx, sacrum	
Top of shoulder	Top of head	Genitals anus	

# Imaging II

<u>Needled Area</u>	<u>Image</u>	<u>Sick Area</u>
		<i>Reverse Image</i>
Toe	Genitals anus	Top of head
Foot	Coccyx, sacrum	Base of head
Ankle	Bladder L-S	Neck
Lower Leg	Low AB and Back	Upper ab and back
Knee	Umbilicus, L-2, waist	Umbilicus, L-2, waist
Upper Leg	Upper ab and back	Low AB and Back
Hip	Base of head	Coccyx, sacrum
Top of Hip	Top of head	Genitals anus

# Acupuncture 1,2,3 Example

Back Pain

Area of Discomfort: Paraspinal pain from L3 to L4, left side

1,2,3

## Diagnose the Sick Meridian

*Bladder meridian, left side*

## Determine Treating Meridian

*System 1 & 5: Small Intestine*

*System 2 & 4: Lung*

*System 3: Kidney*

## Point Selection

*SI 7 to SI 8 right side*

*LU 5 to LU 6 either side*

*KI 8 to KI 10 right side*

# Acupuncture 1,2,3 Example

## Bells's Palsy

Area of Discomfort: Facial paralysis and pain, with difficulty moving the eye, cheek, and mouth, right side.

# Step 1 and 2

Diagnose the Sick Meridian

*Gallbladder, Stomach, Large Intestine, Triple Burner, right side*

Step 2: Determine Treating Meridians

	GB	ST	LI	TB
I	TB	LI	ST	GB
II	HT	<b>PC</b>	<b>LR</b>	KD
III	<b>LR</b>	<u>SP</u>	<u>LU</u>	<b>PC</b>
IV	<u>HT</u>	<b>PC</b>	KD	SP
V	TB	<u>LI</u>	ST	GB

# Whole Back Pain

Dr Tan balance method for whole back, from his book  
*Acupuncture, 1,2,3*

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Left	Right
LU-5, PC-3, HT-3, HT-7 GB-41, UB-65	Ling Gu, Da Bai, Zhong Bai KI-3, KI-10, SP-6, LR-5

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