

## CHINESE QIGONG MASSAGE

Traditional Chinese medicine developed out of the experiences accumulated over thousands of years in the battle against disease. It has helped more than a billion Chinese to both maintain their health and prevent illness. Qigong massage has a long history, and has been an important part of Chinese medical system. Chinese Qigong massage, like other Chinese medical practices, is considered an important and effective method of treating and even preventing disease. For thousands of years it has had an important role in Chinese medicine.

The theory of Qigong massage, like other Chinese medical practices, has been built on the foundation of the concept of "Qi." It especially emphasizes the smooth circulation of Qi, its proper level, the quality of its circulation, and also how to use it to prevent disease. In fact, compared with other forms of Chinese medicine, Qigong massage has its own unique effectiveness and benefits. It is therefore commonly used together with Chinese herbs and acupuncture to provide a treatment which is more effective than would be possible with any one form of treatment alone.

The advantages of practicing Qigong are that it does not require a large space or any equipment, and it is easy to learn and practice. Qigong massage can be used anywhere and anytime.

Although modern medicine has brought us healthier lives and has significantly extended the average lifespan, there are still many problems that it does not know how to deal with. Modern medicine will often cure one symptom, only to create another. Many treatments seem to be designed only to provide relief from symptoms, rather than identifying and treating the root of the problem.

Even though today's medicine has reached a higher level than ever before, if we compare it to the medicine that we will have in another hundred or a thousand years, it is clear that medicine is only in its infancy.

When looked at objectively, it is clear that there are still many problems with Western medicine. First, the research of the past 50 years has focused on curing, and has virtually ignored prevention. This means that the whole attention of the medical establishment has been focused on treating problems after they have manifested. Attention is given to educating the public only when a situation has become serious. The medical knowledge or medical common sense of the general public is still at the primary school stage.

Another problem with Western medicine is that it concentrates solely on the physical problem and ignores inner energy {bioelectricity or Qi}. Few Western physicians understand that Qi is at the root of every sickness, and is the source of the failure of any physical organ or cell. If you wish to prevent sickness, your first concern must be the Qi which is circulating in the body. If there is a persistent abnormality in the supply or circulation of Qi, the physical body will be damaged and symptoms will manifest. If we wish to cure the root of a sickness, we must first resolve any problems with the Qi. If we regulate the Qi supply and circulation back to normal, we can repair the physical damage and regain health. In light of this, it would seem that the best course for future medical research would be to determine the role Qi plays in our health.

Because Western medicine is unfamiliar with Qi, it has been unable to deal with the mental illnesses which are related to energy imbalances in the brain. It is also totally unprepared to deal with the spiritual side of the human body. According to Chinese Qigong and medical science, the human spirit is closely related to the mind and the Qi which is circulating through the brain.

In less than a century, science has made great strides in physical medicine, however, it has failed almost completely to investigate our internal energy. Because of this, modern medicine has been only half successful.

Science has recently discovered that the growth hormone can slow down the aging process. For many centuries, an important part of Chinese Qigong practice has been learning how to use the mind to lead Qi to the pituitary gland in the brain in order to reactivate and maintain the production of the growth hormone. Although it was not understood precisely how this occurred in the body, nourishing the brain with Qi proved to be an effective way to increase the lifespan.

If East and West can sincerely work at exchanging knowledge, humanity can have a bright and healthy future. During the next fifty years we must study the mental and spiritual sides of medicine which are related to

Qi. Our understanding of medicine will be complete only when we understand this invisible side of our beings. The various institutions that are engaged on medical research should begin allocating money and effort to this field now. Those that do will be considered the pioneers of the medicine of the future.

The Chinese people have always believed that in order to have harmony, two universal forces must be in balance. These two forces are classified as Yin {negative} and Yang {positive}. When these Yin and Yang forces interact, Qi {energy} is produced and life is generated. This close relationship between life and Yin and Yang is the way of "Dao" {or Tao}. The theory of Yin and Yang has given birth to a large part of Chinese culture, and has had a particularly great influence on Chinese medicine and Qigong.

It is believed that in order to have a long, healthy, and happy life, you have to balance the Yin and Yang in your body. Traditionally, the Qi body {internal energy body} is considered to be the Yin body, while the physical body is the Yang body. While the physical body can be seen, the Yin body cannot be seen, it can only be felt. Yin energy is the origin of life and makes possible the growth of Yang. Therefore, when Yin energy weakens or suddenly increases, the result will be manifested in the Yang {physical} body. If the imbalance persists, physical damage or even failure to function will occur in the body.

For this reason, practitioners of Chinese medicine and Qigong have always devoted a major part of their practice and research to maintaining the balance of Yin and Yang. In addition to developing physical exercises to maintain the health of the physical body, they have also been concerned with maintaining an abundant supply of Qi and keeping it circulating smoothly.

In the last fifteen years, Qi theory has gradually been accepted by Western physicians. It is now believed that Qi is what has come to be called "bioelectricity." It is the {Yin} energy which keeps the {Yang} machine of the body running properly.

Massage is a very simple Qigong practice which can increase the Qi and blood circulation in the body. It is widely studied and practiced in Chinese medicine and martial arts. Because massage can regulate and adjust the Qi circulating in the body, it is used not only to maintain health and prevent illness, but also to heal injuries and cure many illnesses.

To understand Chinese massage, the first question you must ask is: How does Chinese massage differ from Western massage? Chinese massage is commonly called Qigong massage, because it is based on affecting the energetic {Qi} system, as well as the circulatory systems of blood and lymph. {Remember Chinese medicine holds that imbalances or blockages in the Qi circulation system are the root of the body's illnesses.} Therefore, in order to effectively use massage to help the patient recover from sickness, the physician must study Qi, understand the Qi circulatory system in the body, train their own Qi, and learn how to use their Qi while massaging in order to help the patient to regain Qi balance. Massage is classified as one of the major fields of Qigong in China, and requires a long period of concentrated study. You can see that Chinese Qigong massage was developed for healing, rather than just relaxation and enjoyment.

The second question you need to ask is: How does Chinese massage differ from Japanese Shiatsu massage? If you investigate the Japanese culture, you will find that much of it originated in China. This is especially true with regard to medicine and religion. The study of Qi and Chinese medical practices such as acupuncture have been major influences on Japanese culture, and Shiatsu is one of the results of this. Japanese Shiatsu massage is actually part of Chinese cavity press or acupressure massage. Naturally, because of several hundred years of separate development, many techniques and theories of treatment are somewhat different. It may therefore be worthwhile to compare the two arts, so that you can choose the best techniques for your practice.

Qigong massage has proven to be effective on treating injuries and illnesses, although, in many cases, it does not get results as fast as Western medicine. However, it does have a number of advantages: 1. There are no side effects; 2. It can correct problems at their root and in a natural way; 3. Unlike Western medicine, it does not use chemicals, which all too often prove to be addictive and enslaving; and 4. Massage increases your awareness and understanding of your bodies {both the physical and the energy bodies}. Knowing yourself better is the key to preventing illness.

## DEFINITION AND CATEGORIES OF QIGONG MASSAGE

Chinese massage is commonly called "An Mo." "An" means "press" and "Mo" means "rub." Chinese massage is constructed around the two major techniques PRESS and RUB, though, of course, many other techniques are also used. Chinese massage can be broken down into four major categories, depending upon the specialized techniques which it uses for its particular purposes. They are Pu Tong An Mo {General Massage}, Tui Na An Mo {Push Grab Massage}, Dian Xue An Mo {Cavity Press Massage}, and Qi An Mo {Qi Massage}.

### 1. **Pu Tong An Mo:**

The most common and popular category of massage in China is called "Pu Tong An Mo." In the West it is sometimes translated as "Relaxation Massage." The goals of general or relaxation massage are probably the simplest, as are the techniques. Because this kind of massage does not deal with injuries or illness, no in-depth knowledge of the Qi channels and Chinese medical theory is required. This category is also the safest.

The purposes of this kind of massage are:

**A. Relaxation.** This includes both physical and mental relaxation. Even if you aren't involved in strenuous physical activity, worry, stress, and responsibility can cause mental tension. Physical tension can be caused by incorrect posture, worry, or even intense thinking. Tension causes your Qi and blood circulation to become stagnant. When this condition persists it can lead to insomnia, nervous breakdown, and even physical damage because of insufficient Qi and blood nourishment. Relaxation or general massage can calm your agitated mind, relax your physical body, and allow the Qi and blood to circulate smoothly.

**B. Recovery from Fatigue.** Recovery from fatigue refers primarily to physical fatigue from hard labor or exercise. Acid accumulates in the muscles, and causes aches and muscular soreness. General massage is very effective in improving Qi and blood circulation, which helps to remove the accumulated acid.

**C. Preventing Illness.** One of the main purposes of relaxation massage is the prevention of illness by smoothing out the Qi and blood circulation before any physical damage can occur. Smooth Qi and blood circulation is essential to maintaining the normal functioning of our thinking and our physical body. This is the primary difference between relaxation massage and the other three categories of massage, which are used to treat injuries and illness.

**D. Slowing Down Aging.** Maintaining smooth Qi and blood circulation is the key to slowing down the aging process. As we grow older, our Qi and blood circulation slows down and becomes more stagnant. General massage helps to overcome this.

**E. Speeding Recovery from Sudden Environmental Qi Disturbances.** When our environment changes suddenly, the Qi in our bodies will often not be able to change as quickly. For example, when the weather changes suddenly, our bodies cannot adjust quickly enough, and we may get sick. This problem is especially serious today when modern transportation can bring you from one part of the world to another in a very short time. The sudden changes in the time of day, weather, and altitude can cause problems such as jet lag. General or relaxation massage helps the body to adjust itself to these changes.

**F. Enjoyment.** The last purpose of relaxation or general massage is enjoyment. Many people get massaged even when they do not have any unhealthy symptoms. Their reason is very simple: massage makes you feel good. This feeling comes mostly from the mind and the relaxation of the physical body. However, there is another reason, and that is the emotional comfort which one obtains from massage. Many people massage each other looking for the emotional balance that comes from touching and being touched by another human being. Most of the time the people involved know each other. This is similar to why we hug lovers and friends.

### 2. **Tui Na An Mo:**

"Tui Na An Mo" is also often simply called "Tui Na." The two words mean "push" and "grab to control," and refer to the two main techniques. Tui Na has two main purposes. The first is for treating injuries, and the second is for treating illnesses, especially of small children. People are often confused about the differences

between general massage and Tui Na massage, especially since most practitioners of Tui Na massage are also experts in general massage.

The first type of Tui Na is widely practiced by Chinese martial artists because they emphasize techniques for treating injuries which commonly occur during training. This kind of Tui Na is often called "Die Da," which means "Fall Strike," to reflect the fact that it specializes in treating injuries caused by falling and being struck. This art treats primarily external injuries such as bruises, ligament damage, Qi stagnation due to old injuries, broken bones, joint dislocations, and so on.

Traditional physicians were also trained in the treatment of injuries. For example, part of the training of a physician involved bone realignment, and was called "Zheng Gu Ke," or "Align the Bone Category," and also it was called "Jie Gu Ke," which means "Connect Bone Category." You might assume from the names that Zheng Gu and Jie Gu dealt with bone problems exclusively, but this is not the case. Since bone problems are among the most serious external injuries, these two terms were often used to represent Tui Na. This is simply because the physician who knows how to correct bone injuries usually is an expert in all other external injuries. In southern China, Taiwan and Fujian province, Tui Na or Zheng Gu is also commonly called "Cao Jie," which means "Manipulate to Connect." This gives some indication of how difficult it is to determine precisely what a name refers to, and also to the overlap in coverage among the various types of massage.

Ancient documents tell us that Tui Na has been used to cure some illnesses of small children and occasionally adults. The reason for this is very simple. Treatment by acupuncture requires the willing cooperation of the patient as the physician inserts needles, and the patient needs to remain still for a while. This is almost impossible with small children. It is much easier for the physician to use Tui Na techniques to stimulate or sedate the Qi and achieve the same goal as acupuncture. Naturally, the Tui Na masseur must know how to diagnose diseases and evaluate the Qi of the patient, so this type of Tui Na is done mostly by physicians. This does not mean that masters of martial Tui Na do not know how to cure illnesses with Tui Na. In fact many martial artists were knowledgeable physicians.

### **3. Dian Xue An Mo:**

The next category of Chinese massage is "Dian Xue An Mo" or simply "Dian Xue," which means literally "point cavity." Dian Xue is commonly translated "acupressure" in the West. This category uses mainly Press and Rub techniques on cavities and certain non-cavity points. According to Chinese medicine, there are more than seven hundred cavities which can be used for acupuncture treatment. Needles are inserted into these cavities to access the channels and adjust the Qi circulation. It was discovered that there are about 108 cavities where finger pressure can access Qi channels. That was the beginning of acupressure. It was also learned that stimulating one of these cavities vigorously would damage the internal organ related to it, a fact which greatly interested the martial artists.

Like acupuncture, cavity press techniques adjust Qi in the channels to make the related organs either more positive or negative. Therefore, Dian Xue An Mo specializes in curing sicknesses caused by Qi imbalance. As you can imagine, physicians contributed greatly to the development of this art. Dian Xue An Mo is the root of Japanese Shiatsu massage.

To use Dian Xue, a physician or a martial artist must have a thorough knowledge of Qi channels and acupuncture, and must be experienced in working directly with Qi. They need to know precisely what treatments are needed for which ailments, and they need to be skilled in applying the correct pressure to the right cavity at the appropriate time of day.

Since both Tui Na and Dian Xue utilize the Qi channels, just what is the difference between them? Tui Na works mainly on the channels while Dian Xue works on the cavities. The pressure used in Dian Xue massage is more penetrating than that used in Tui Na massage, and so, in adults, Dian Xue massage is quicker and more effective. However, Dian Xue is not used much in the treatment of infants, since its potent power can easily injure their internal organs. Also, few physicians possess the required depth of knowledge to effectively use Dian Xue.

According to the available documents, very few martial artists were involved in training Qi before 500 A.D. Since then, however, many have taken it up in order to learn how to disturb an opponent's Qi. The Southern and internal Chinese martial styles are especially known for this. Some of the higher level martial artists also became experts in using the art for healing as well as killing. Because martial artists had to be skilled

in Tui Na to cure the external injuries caused by training or combat, high level martial priests or artists were recognized as the real experts in Chinese massage society.

Nowadays, however, acupressure physicians are more popular and easier to find than martial artists who are skilled in healing, and they are usually much more experienced in curing sickness. In addition, many physicians who specialize in Dian Xue massage are also familiar with the Tui Na techniques, and those who use mainly the Tui Na are often experienced in Dian Xue, so the combination term "Dian Xue Tui Na" {Point Cavity Push Grab} is often heard.

#### 4. Qi An Mo:

The last category of massage is "Qi massage." Qi massage is commonly called "Wai Qi Liao Fa" which means "Curing with External Qi," and is commonly translated "Qigong Healing" in the West today. This term implies that the massage is done through Qi correspondence rather than touch. Because it does not use "press" {An} and "rub" {Mo}, it is often not considered to be massage. However, since the goal of Wai Qi Liao Fa is to smooth out the Qi and improve the Qi and Blood circulation, which is the same as all other forms of massage, I would like to include it in our discussion.

To understand Qi massage, you must recognize that Qi is the bioelectricity circulating in the body. Because it is electricity, it can be conducted or led through electrical correspondence. Actually, everybody has the ability to do Qi healing. To Give an example, when people are sad, their Qi is Yin {deficient}. If you hold their hands or hug them, your Qi will nourish them and they will immediately feel better. We have been doing this instinctively for a long time. The only difference between the average person and a Qigong master is that the latter has trained in Qi healing, and can therefore be more effective.

There are two kinds of Qi massage, one which involves touching the skin, and one which does not. Qi massage which uses skin contact is further subdivided into two categories. In the first one, the Qigong master or physician uses Dian Xue massage, but also uses their own Qi to nourish the patient through the cavities if the patient's Qi is too deficient {Yin}, or to remove excess Qi through skin contact if there is an excess of Qi {Yang}. The practitioner must be sure to get rid of the Qi they have absorbed, or they might be harmed by it. It is therefore important to be highly skilled in Qigong before practicing Qi healing.

The second kind of Qi massage using skin contact is when the practitioner lightly touches the patient's skin and has their Qi correspond with the patient's Qi. This mutual correspondence allows the healer to lead the disordered Qi back into the proper pattern. Again, the practitioner must also know how to keep their own Qi from being unbalanced by the patient's. It is essential in this kind of healing that the healer and the patient cooperate closely with each other.

In the Qi massage which does not use skin contact, the practitioner uses the fingertips or the Laogong cavity in the palm {which is the gate through which one's Qi communicates with the outside world} to focus Qi in a cavity or area of the patient's body. They are able to use their Qi to affect the Qi in the patient, without even touching them. Another method is to move their hands over the patient's body to help them to smooth a disordered pattern of Qi. Theoretically, massage which doesn't use skin contact is safer for the practitioner, since one does not absorb Qi from the patient, which may threaten the health of the practitioner.

You can see that there is some ambiguity as to just what should be included under the term "massage." If your definition of massage depends upon its purpose, then any technique which helps to smooth and improve the Qi and blood circulation should be considered massage. However, if you define massage as using the techniques of Press {An} and Rub {Mo}, then there needs to be actual skin contact, and Wai Qi Liao Fa would not be included.

There were four main groups which significantly influenced massage in China: physicians, martial artists, the clergy, and laymen masseurs.

**1. Physicians:** When people are injured, they will usually seek out a physician. Massage has always been one of the main methods of treating injuries. It can lessen pain, improve Qi and blood circulation, and release mental tension. All of these can help to effect a rapid recovery. As mentioned earlier, this type of injury treatment is called "Tui Na massage." Later, Tui Na massage eventually developed into a way of treating illnesses in small children.

Acupuncture has also been developing since the beginning of Chinese culture. Out of the principles of acupuncture was developed acupressure or Dian Xue massage {cavity press}, which was widely used by physicians. Most of the documents available on this subject were written by physicians. Frequently, massage was discussed together with other methods of treatment such as acupuncture or herbs. The pre-eminence of the physicians was probably attributable to the fact that they were usually the best educated and the most open-minded of the four groups that contributed to the development of massage. In addition, they probably had the most experience. Furthermore, new discoveries and ideas were put into writing, and books spread the new knowledge far and wide. This communication and exchange of techniques brought medical massage to the highest level. In fact, many Chinese physicians were also expert in all categories of Qigong massage.

In the last fifty years, Qi massage, also commonly called Qi healing, has become more popular among physicians in China. It used to be kept secret, and practiced only by Qigong practitioners and physicians who were also expert in Qigong. Since this healing technique has been revealed to the general public, we can confidently predict that it will become more popular and widely accepted during the next fifty years.

**2. Martial Artists:** The second largest group of contributors to the development of Chinese massage was the martial artists. Although the history of martial arts massage is not as long as that of medical massage, and there are not as many documents available, it has probably reached a higher level than medical massage in certain areas. This is especially true in the treatment of both internal and external injuries.

How can this have happened? If you look at how and why martial artists developed massage techniques, you will understand why most Chinese people will go to a martial artist to get an injury treated, rather than to a general physician. First, you should understand that martial artists had more experience with injuries than most people, and it was absolutely necessary for them to know how to treat themselves and each other. Tui Na massage was one of the main methods of treatment, and used to be a required course of study for all Chinese martial artists.

Next, you should know that after training long and hard, massage was the best way to get rid of fatigue and eliminate the acid accumulated in the muscles. Massage each other helped martial artists recover from fatigue, but it also helped them understand the structure of the body and the Qi distribution system. This was very necessary in combat. Therefore, martial artists were often also experts in general and relaxation massage.

The third point which will help you to understand the development of massage in martial society is that massage taught the martial artist precisely where the cavities {vital points} were located. Because most massage points are also used as striking points, massage training was the best way for the student to learn the cavities and experience their depth. When you strike these cavities with power you will cause injury or even death by disturbing the Qi. But you can use the same cavities in healing by applying gentle pressure or rubbing in order to adjust disturbed Qi. Massage was a necessity for any martial artist who wanted to reach the higher levels. Because of this, martial artists who had reached a high level of skill were also experts in cavity press massage for healing. Of course, much of the knowledge of healing could have been obtained from the books available at that time, and many of the martial artists were also physicians. This re-emphasizes the fact that, regardless of how Chinese medicine was developed, it was always based on the same Qi theory, and an understanding of this theory was necessary for reaching the higher levels of the martial arts.

Almost all Chinese martial styles train Qigong. It is necessary for reaching the higher levels of power generation, which is critical for the effective use of techniques in combat. As a result, many martial artists in China become experts in Qigong. One of the best ways to understand Qi and its relationship with the physical body is through massage. Massage helps you to train your Qi, and improves your concentration, which is important for cavity strike techniques.

More than one hundred martial styles have been developed in China over the last five thousand years. Traditionally, each style kept its training theory and fighting techniques secret, and the information was passed down to only a few, trusted students. It was only in the last fifty years that a limited number of books or documents were revealed to the public.

**3. Clergy:** The third group that contributed to the development of massage in China was the religious community, mostly Buddhist and Daoist monks. Qigong was part of their training for attaining Buddhahood or enlightenment, and it also included massage. For example, massage is an integral part of the training of

Muscle/Tendon Changing {Yi Jin Jing} and Brain/Marrow Washing {Xi Sui Jing}. This school of massage was restricted to those within the monastic society. However, some of the massage techniques were revealed to the public in this century by martial artists within the society {e.g., Shaolin and Wudang monks}.

**4. Laymen:** The last group which contributed to the development of massage is probably the largest, although the level of their practice was the most superficial. The people who gave general, relaxation massages to the general public can be found all over the Orient. They give enjoyable, relaxing massages, and help their clients to release the stress and tension which builds up in daily life. They usually do not pay much attention to using Qi for healing. There are a few books available on this type of massage, but they do not go into the subject of healing very deeply.

However, the most important thing you need to know is the structure of the human body. Lacking this you will be like a blind man walking in the street.

The first thing you need to know about the physical body is that it is only a part of your entire being. According to Chinese medicine and religion, a living human body consists of three parts: 1. a Yang part, the physical body, which manifests the activities {life} of the body, 2. a Yin part, the inner energy {Qi or bioelectricity} part of the body, which nourishes the physical body and keeps it alive, and 3. the refined product of the Yin and Yang parts: the spiritual or mental body.

## UNDERSTANDING THE PHYSICAL BODY

When you look at a portion of your body, for example, an arm, the first thing you see is the skin. On the skin are hairs and thousands of pores. The pores are like gates through which waste is eliminated from your body, and through which Qi is exchanged with the environment. According to Chinese Qigong, if your Qi is able to reach the skin and abundantly nourish every cell and the circulatory systems there {i.e., if your Guardian Qi is strong}, the skin and hair will stay youthful and healthy. However, when the Qi is weak or the supply is abnormal which happens, for example, when you grow older, the symptoms appear first in the hair and skin. Therefore, one of the purposes of general massage is to lead Qi to the skin, to improve the smooth circulation of the blood, and to maintain the sensitivity of the nerves.

Right under the surface of the skin is a thick layer of fat. Fat is the stored essence of food. In other words, when we eat more than we need, the excess which is not excreted is stored in the body as fat. This fat is usually carried by the blood cells to every part of the body. The more fat there is in the blood stream, the more sluggish the circulation is. Fat can be stored under the skin, in the fasciae, and on in the bone marrow. The more fat you have stored in your body, the poorer your Qi and blood circulation will be.

Underneath the layer of fat, but before the muscles, is a layer of fascia. Fasciae is found in many places in the body. The first place is between the skin and the muscles, the second place is between the layers of muscle, the third place is between the muscles and the bones, and the last place is around the internal organs. These fasciae are thin layers of transparent membrane. Fat is stored in the fasciae. It is also known that the fat and the fascia are not conductors of Qi. This means whenever the Qi is passing through fasciae, the resistance will be higher and affect the Qi circulation. Therefore, one of the purposes of general massage is to remove the fat accumulated in the fasciae. Physical exercise can also accomplish this.

Between the fasciae and the muscles are found the veins, nerves, and sometimes lymph vessels. If you remove some of the muscles, you will see the main arteries, and the main nerves. Beneath the muscle is the bone, and inside the bone is the marrow.

Now let us first look at the body's two physical circulatory systems: the blood vascular system and the lymph vascular system. Then we will review another important system, the nervous system.

## **1. Blood System:**

Blood is considered to be the "elixir of life" in the West. Blood is mainly composed of red cells, white cells, platelets and plasma. The red cells carry nourishment {including oxygen and Qi} to the organs and tissues through the arteries. Waste materials are also carried away from the tissues by the blood to the eliminative organs. The blood finally returns to the heart through the veins. The blood acts as a conduit for essential products made by various organs, carrying these products to other organs which need them to function properly and survive. Each blood cell has properties not unlike that of a small battery, allowing them to store electrical charges and carry them throughout the body. Because of this, blood may also help to equalize the energy level throughout the body, facilitating harmonious interaction between all the diverse bodily components that it supplies.

The main function of white blood cells is to seek out, identify, and destroy germs by literally eating them alive. The white cells are not alone, however, in their germ hunting mission. Other parts of the blood, including its fluid portion {i.e., plasma}, carry germ-killing substances. There are proteins in the plasma which play an integral role in this endeavor. Finally, platelets, along with other substances, help to enable the blood to coagulate {i.e., solidify}. This avoids major loss of blood from minor cuts or wounds.

There are a number of important points here. The first is that the blood cells are the nourishment conveyors of the body. Any defect in the smooth flow of blood in the blood vessels will be reflected in a failure of the other cells of the body to receive the proper amount of oxygen, nutrition, and Qi. New, fresh blood cells are constantly being produced in the bone marrow to replace the old cells. When the bone marrow is not functioning properly or has been damaged through neglect or old age, the blood cells produced will be of inferior quality. According to Chinese Qigong, if you want the marrow to keep producing healthy blood cells, you have to keep the marrow well-supplied with Qi. This has become a very important part of Chinese Qigong, and is called "Bone Marrow Washing Qigong."

The second important point is that, in order to keep the blood cells supplying the body with nourishment and removing waste, the circulatory system must be healthy. While it is very difficult to use massage to improve the Qi supply to the bone marrow, it is very easy to use general massage to improve blood circulation. The main blood vessels are located under the muscles, between the muscles, and on the surface of the muscles. Since tensing the muscles constricts the blood vessels, massaging the muscles will relieve tension on the vessels and improve circulation. In addition, general massage can help to reduce stored fat, thereby increasing the responsiveness of this vital circulatory system.

## **2. Lymphatic System:**

Lymph is a transparent, watery, colorless or sometimes slightly yellow fluid. The lymphatic system consists of this fluid, the vessels that carry it into the blood -- the lymph vessels or lymphatics, and a series of lymph organs including the lymph nodes, tonsils, spleen, and thymus.

Lymph vessels of the lymph-capillary type arise in nearly all parts of the body. Lymph-capillaries take up any blood-plasma which has been discharged for nourishment purposes from the blood-capillaries into the tissue-spaces, and returns it into veins near the heart. Most of these lymphatics empty themselves into one main reservoir called the thoracic duct, which runs upward along the anterior of the spine, opening into large veins on the left side of the neck, at its base. The rest of the lymphatics empty into a smaller reservoir which runs into corresponding veins on the right side of the neck base. Lymph's primary function is to remove bacteria and certain proteins from the tissues, to transport fat from the intestines, and to supply lymphocytes to the blood.

Lymph nodes, which are also commonly referred to as lymph glands, are oval or round bodies which are found adjacent to the lymphatic vessels. They supply lymphocytes to the circulatory system and cleanse the lymph by removing bacteria and foreign particles. One commonly known example of these glands are the tonsils.

One of the largest lymphoid structures in the human body is the spleen. The spleen, which filters and stores blood, is located on the left side of the torso below the diaphragm. Finally, the thymus is a ductless glandlike body, positioned just behind the top of the sternum. The thymus reaches its maximum development in childhood, and plays some part in building resistance to disease. However, by adulthood this organ is usually vestigial, having no further known use.



### 3. The Nervous system:

A nerve is a bundle of fibers uniting the central nervous system with the organs and other parts of the body. Nerves relay sensory stimuli as well as motor impulses from different parts of the body to one another.

All multicellular animals except sponges possess nervous systems. They are essentially regulatory mechanisms, controlling internal bodily functions and responses to external stimuli. The human nervous system is made up of two component sub-systems: the central nervous system {CNS} and the peripheral nervous system {PNS}.

Making up the central nervous system {CNS} are the brain and the spinal cord, which are contained and protected within the skull and the spine respectively. The CNS integrates, interprets, and transmits messages to and from the brain and the periphery of the body.

Making up the peripheral nervous system {PNS} is all nervous tissue found outside of the skull and spinal column, including not only the nerve fibers that carry impulses, but also groupings of fibers {plexuses} and nerve cell bodies {ganglions} that are found in the periphery. The PNS registers changes in the internal and external environments of the body, transmitting this information to the CNS for action, and then delivering the orders of the CNS to muscles and glands for response.

The PNS includes 12 pairs of cranial nerves which attach to the brain and their associated ganglions, as well as 31 pairs of spinal nerves and their ganglions. Finally, the PNS also includes specialized receptors and endings on muscles.

In terms of the function and interaction of all these constituent components, the PNS is simple yet efficient. It is "built" out of somatic fibers {somatic nervous system} that provide the nerves for the skeletal muscles as well as the skin's special receptors {for touch, pressure, heat, cold}, and autonomic fibers {autonomic nervous system}. The autonomic fibers carry impulses to smooth and cardiac muscles and glands, and from visceral receptors. These fibers make possible the reflexes which control breathing, heart rate, blood pressure, and other bodily functions in an involuntary and unbroken manner. Most organs receive fibers from two subdivisions of the autonomic nervous system. The parasympathetic {craniosacral} division, which is comprised of certain cranial nerves and several of the sacral spinal nerves, furnishes nervous influences for the purpose of conservation of body sources and maintenance of nominal function levels. The sympathetic {thoracolumbar} division, which is comprised of the thoracic and lumbar spinal nerves, furnishes impulses for the purpose of elevating body activity in order to tolerate or resist stressful or hazardous situations. In this way an organ may have its operation intensified or diminished according to the demands of the situation for survival.

This brief anatomic discussion of the nervous system shows us that the brain and spinal cord are the center of our feeling and functioning. We have seen that nerves from the spinal cord extend out and connect to the entire body, including the limbs and also the internal organs.

There are a number of other facts about the nervous system that are also important. First, our state of mind is linked to the condition of our physical body through our nervous system. This means that if we are mentally tense or relaxed, our physical body will react accordingly. Second, the nervous system is constructed of tissue fibers, which are part of the material side of our body. In order to function properly, in fact, even to stay alive, this material needs Qi. Third, if we compare the system of Qi distribution with the nervous system we see that, although they are related, they are not the same system. The Qi circulatory system does not supply Qi only to the nervous system exclusively, it supplies it to all of the body's cells.

The nervous system plays a critical role in the practice of Qigong. The nervous system enables us to feel what is going on everywhere in our body. Since the mind leads the Qi, if we want to lead Qi somewhere we have to be able to feel that place. If we cannot feel that place, then the mind cannot lead the Qi there, since it does not know where it is.

The nervous system is responsible for our ability to feel, and it is our ability to feel that governs the Qi. This means that the condition of the nervous system is directly related to the Qi circulation in our body. In Qigong massage therefore, while we should pay particular attention to the Qi system, the nervous system should be second in our priorities.

To massage the nervous system, you start with the central nervous system, which includes the brain and the spinal cord, and then you loosen up the places where the peripheral nervous system extends out from the spinal cord to the limbs and internal organs. All of these junctions are located on the sides of the vertebrae.

After the head, the spine is the most important place to massage. The spine consist of seven cervical vertebrae {the neck}, twelve thoracic vertebrae {the rib area}, five lumbar vertebrae {the waist area}, the sacrum {which consists of five pieces}, and the coccyx or tailbone {four pieces}.

It is important to know how the central nervous system relates to the internal organs. Massaging the nervous system in and around the spine stimulates the corresponding internal organs and improves their functioning. This means that when you massage the spine, you indirectly massage the internal organs.

Finally, you also need to know how the central nervous system is related to the skin on the limbs. Since you touch a person's skin when you do general massage, and since sections of the skin are related to sections of the central nervous system, you can smooth out the Qi and relieve nervous tension from the spine to the ends of the limbs. An area of the skin with sensory fibers from a single spinal nerve is called a dermatome.

## UNDERSTANDING THE QI BODY

Before discussing the Qi body, I would first like you to understand that you cannot actually see the Qi circulatory system. This is because we cannot see the difference between regular muscle tissue and the electrically conductive fascial tissue with the naked eye. At present, it seems reasonable to conclude that all of the Qi channels are hidden in these tissues. Exactly how these channels are formed is a mystery that is still awaiting further study with modern equipment.

### Qi:

Qi is the energy which circulates within the body. Your entire body is like a factory and your organs are like the many machines operating inside the factory. Your brain is like management, directing the entire operation. In order to keep the factory functioning properly, you need a power supply. The power supply is connected to each machine with many wires and cables. Each machine must receive the appropriate level of power; too much power will damage the machine to function properly. You can see that without a proper power supply in the factory, production will be off, and if the power supply stops, the entire factory is dead. It is the same with your body. When your body does not have a normal energy {Qi} supply, the organs will not function properly, and you will become sick; and if the Qi circulation stops, you will die.

You should realize that your entire body is alive, including every blood cell, every nerve tissue, and every muscle fiber. All of these physical, fundamental structures of the body need Qi to maintain their existence and their ability to function. The system which distributes Qi throughout your body is much like the wiring system in a factory, connecting the power source to the machines.

From the viewpoint of function, Chinese medical science classifies Qi in the following ways:

1. **Organ Qi:** This Qi is responsible for the functioning of the organs.
2. **Channel Qi:** This Qi is responsible for the transportive and moving functions of the channels.
3. **Nourishing Qi:** The main responsibilities of this Qi are transforming and creating blood. Nourishing Qi also moves with the blood and helps the blood to nourish the tissues of the body.
4. **Guardian Qi:** {Also commonly translated as Protective Qi}. This Qi circulates outside the channels and the organs. Guardian Qi's responsibilities are to warm the organs, to travel between the skin and the flesh to regulate the opening and closing of the pores, and to protect and moisten the skin, hair, and nails. This Qi is able to provide the body with a defense against external negative influences such as cold weather.
5. **Ancestral Qi:** This Qi gathers {resides} in the chest with its center at the Shanzhong cavity. Ancestral Qi is able to travel up to the throat and down to the abdomen. It is responsible for breathing and speaking, regulating heart beat, and, when cultivated through meditation, Ancestral Qi can strengthen the body.

**Blood:**

The Western concept of blood is only part of the Chinese conception of blood. Although blood is seen as a red fluid, in Chinese medical science it is also regarded as a force which is involved with the sensitivity of the sense organs and the inner vitality of the body. Since the main responsibility of blood is to carry nourishment to every part of the body, it is closely related to Nourishing Qi.

**Qi and Blood:**

In Chinese medicine, Qi is considered Yang and blood is considered Yin. Qi is said to be the "commander" of blood because blood relies on Qi for its generation {out of food and air}, and for its power to move through and remain in the blood vessels. It is also said that blood is the "mother" of Qi because the strength of Qi depends upon the nutrition and moisture carried in the blood. Therefore, Qi and blood are believed to complement each other.

**Organs {Viscera}:**

The concept of the organs in Chinese medicine differs significantly from that of Western medicine. In Chinese medicine the organs are systems of functions, and not mere physical objects. Generally, this means that within the description of the organs, almost all of the body's functions can be defined and explained.

In Chinese medical science, the organs are divided into two main groups: the Yin {Inner} organs and Yang {Outer} organs. There are six Yin organs and six Yang organs. Five of the Yin organs {excluding the pericardium} are called "Zang," which means viscera. These five {liver, heart, spleen, lungs, and kidneys} are considered the core of the entire system. Usually, when a discussion involves the channels and all the organs, the pericardium is added; otherwise it is treated as an adjunct of the heart. According to Chinese medicine, the Yin organs "store and do not drain." That means that their functions are directed toward sustaining homeostasis, both physically and mentally.

The six Yang organs are called "Fu," which means "bowels," and include the gall bladder, small intestine, large intestine, stomach, bladder, and triple burner. According to Chinese medicine, these Yang organs "drain and do not store." This refers to their responsibility in the transformation and the disposal of food and waste. All the Yang organs receive food or a product of food, and then pass it along.

Each Yang organ is associated with a Yin organ by a special Yin/Yang relationship {or Inner/Outer relationship}. Pairs of related Yin and Yang organs belong to the same Phase, and their Qi channels are sequential to each other in Qi circulation. They are so closely linked that a disease in one will usually affect the other.

**Yin and Yang:**

Yin and Yang are not contradictory. Nor is one considered "good," and the other "bad." To obtain health, a harmony is sought between them and any imbalance is avoided. Yin and Yang are relative, not absolute.

**Five Phases {Five Elements} {Wu Xing}:**

The five phases are Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, and Water. They are also commonly translated as the "Five Elements." In Chinese, Xing means to walk or to move; probably more pertinent, it means a process. The Five Phases are thought of as the five properties inherent in all things. Each phase symbolizes a category of related functions and qualities. For example, Wood is linked with active functions that are in phase with growth or with increasing. Fire expresses that the functions have reached a maximum state and are ready to decline. Metal represents declining functions. Water symbolizes that the functions have declined and are ready to grow. And finally, Earth is associated with balance or neutrality. Therefore, Earth is the center point of the five phases.

**Qi Channels and Vessels:**

"Jing" is commonly translated "meridians" or "primary Qi channels." Your body has twelve channels, which Chinese medicine considers to be like rivers of Qi. Earth channel, although referred to in the singular, is actually a pair of mirror-image channels, one on either side of the body. One end of each of these twelve

channels is associated with one of the twelve organs, while the other end is connected to a toe or finger {six channels are connected to the fingers and the other six are connected to the toes}.

There are eight "Qi Mai" or "Qi vessels" in your body. They are often compared to reservoirs because they store Qi for your system. They can also be compared to batteries and capacitors in an electrical system. Batteries store and then release electrical current, and capacitors regulate the electrical current in the same way that the vessels regulate the Qi in your channels and organs.

There are other Qi channels called "Luo" or "Qi branches." There are millions of Luo spreading out from the channels to distribute Qi to every cell in the body. The Luo carry Qi from the channels outward to nourish the skin, hair, eyes, nails, etc., and also inward to the bone marrow to maintain the production of blood cells. Luo also connect the organs, enabling them to communicate and cooperate with each other.

The next term you must know is "Xue," which is translated as "cavity." Your body has more than seven hundred of these cavities, through which acupuncturists access the Qi channels with needles or other methods.

In order for you to be healthy, the Qi must flow smoothly and continuously on the channels. However sometimes there are blockages, and the flow becomes stagnant. Blockages can be caused by eating poor quality food, by injuries, or by the physical degeneration that occurs as you age. Another problem occurs when the Qi is not flowing at the proper level. Acupuncturists have several ways of treating these problems, including the insertion of needles in certain cavities to adjust the flow of Qi.

|                    | WOOD         | FIRE            | EARTH          | METAL           | WATER   |
|--------------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|---------|
| Directions         | East         | South           | Center         | West            | North   |
| Season             | Spring       | Summer          | Long Summer    | Autumn          | Winter  |
| Climatic Condition | Wind         | Summer Heat     | Dampness       | Dryness         | Cold    |
| Process            | Birth        | Growth          | Transformation | Harvest         | Storage |
| Color              | Green        | Red             | Yellow         | White           | Black   |
| Taste              | Sour         | Bitter          | Sweet          | Pungent         | Salty   |
| Smell              | Goatish      | Burning         | Fragrant       | Rank            | Rotten  |
| Yin Organ          | Liver        | Heart           | Spleen         | Lungs           | Kidneys |
| Yang Organ         | Gall Bladder | Small Intestine | Stomach        | Large Intestine | Bladder |
| Opening            | Eyes         | Tongue          | Mouth          | Nose            | Ears    |
| Tissue             | Sinews       | Blood Vessels   | Flesh          | Skin/Hair       | Bones   |
| Emotion            | Anger        | Happiness       | Pensiveness    | Sadness         | Fear    |
| Human Sound        | Shout        | Laughter        | Song           | Weeping         | Groan   |

Table of Correspondences associated with the Five Phases.

### Important Points

1. The spleen, liver, and heart are the organs with the most direct relationship with the blood. The spleen filters the blood {modifying the blood's structure}, the liver stores the blood, and the heart moves it. Any problem associated with the blood will involve at least one of these organs.
2. The liver and the kidney are closely related. Their channels cross in many places. The liver stores blood; the kidney stores essence. These substances, both of which are Yin, have a considerable influence on the reproductive functions.
3. The heart {upper burner, Fire} and the kidney {lower burner, Water} keep each other in check and are dependent upon one another. The spirit of the heart and the essence of the kidneys cooperate in establishing and maintaining human consciousness.
4. The spleen's digestive function is associated with the distributive functions of the liver. Disharmony between these two results in various digestive troubles. The transportive and digestive functions of the spleen {also called the Middle Qi} depend upon the strength of the kidney Yang.

5. Although the lungs govern Qi, Qi from the lungs must mix with essence from the kidneys before Original Qi can be produced. The lungs govern Qi, the liver spreads Qi, and the kidneys provide its basis.

## UNDERSTANDING THE MENTAL BODY

Let us now discuss the third part of the human body, the mental or spiritual body. First, let us consider the difference between the mental and the spiritual. Even with today's science, it is very difficult to define these two aspects of our nature, so we must look to the experiences gained in the past. According to Chinese understanding, the mental part of us includes both the physical and the Qi aspects of our being which are related to thinking. The physical parts are the nervous system and the brain, which need Qi to exist and function. If the physical brain and nervous system receive the right amount of Qi and stay healthy, the mind will be able to think clearly and judge wisely. However, if the Qi supply is not normal, the brain and nervous system will not function properly, and mental problems may occur. Naturally, if the Qi supply stops, these physical systems will die. Therefore, in order to keep the mental system functioning properly, Chinese Qigong places heavy emphasis on learning how to lead Qi to the brain to nourish it, and also how to maintain the entire nervous system.

Only when the mental aspect of your being is healthy are you able to build up the spiritual part of your body. It is very difficult to understand and define this spiritual part. The various religions were created to search for the truth of this matter. Asian religions believe that when the human spirit has been cultivated to a very high level, we will be able to leave the cycle of reincarnation and gain eternal life. Religions in the West have similar beliefs.

The mental part of our being can be considered a lower level of our spirit which has not yet been well cultivated. The Chinese religions believe that when this lower level of spirit is cultivated, the Qi in the body will be able to combine and communicate with the Qi of nature. This enables us to better understand the patterns of natural Qi, and ultimately learn how to avoid reincarnation and gain spiritual independence. This level of growth is called "enlightenment" in Daoism and "Buddhahood" in Buddhism.

The mental part of our being is actually our thinking, which can be manifested externally. When manifestation occurs, the process is completed through the Qi circulatory and nervous systems. This means that the mind, Qi, and physical body cannot be separated. In order to calm down the physical body, we must first calm down the Qi body through the nervous system. In order to calm down the Qi body, we must first regulate the mind.

Because of the closeness of the mind, Qi, and physical body, regulating the mind is an important part of Qigong training. Chinese medicine and Qigong teach that there are two minds, one is called "Xin" and the other is called "Yi." The mind which is generated by emotional disturbances is called "Xin." Xin means "heart" in Chinese. Any occurrence which is able to touch your heart and disturb your neutral mind is called "Xin." For example, if you are upset because someone has said something bad about you, the thoughts or intentions that you have are considered to be Xin. Or when your regular Qigong practice time comes by, but you are lazy and decide not to practice, the thinking which led to this decision is called Xin. "Xin" can therefore be translated "emotional mind."

However, when the thoughts come from wise thinking and clear judgment, then this kind of mind is called "Yi," which can be translated as "intention" or "wisdom mind." What the wisdom mind has conceived, you can usually accomplish.

Unfortunately, the emotional mind usually dominates the wisdom mind. When people react to events, it is usually according to their emotional feelings rather than their calm judgment. One of the main goals of Chinese Qigong is developing the wisdom mind so that it can "govern" the emotional mind. When this happens, emotional disturbances will not occur, and the mind can be peaceful and calm. The emotional mind is considered to be Yang while the wisdom mind is Yin. The training works to balance Yin and Yang.

You can see that the mental body actually is constructed of two "minds." When either mind is too strong and causes your actions to deviate from the neutral, balanced state, you then lose your mental balance. This will also affect how your physical body functions. According to Chinese religious Qigong, when the Yin and Yang minds are in mutual balance, the human spirit can be raised to a supernatural state and reach the stage of enlightenment or Buddhahood.

In general massage, to relax the physical body you must first remove emotional disturbances from the mind. This means that the first thing you should do is to massage the mental body so that the mind can be calm and relaxed. Only when the patient's mind is relaxed can their physical body be relaxed. Only when the physical body is relaxed can the Qi move easily and smoothly in the body. This is the key to successful massage.

## GATES AND JUNCTIONS IN THE HUMAN BODY

In this section, we would like to explain two terms which are used frequently in Qigong. The first term is "Men," which can be translated "gate" or "door," the second term is "Jie," which can be translated "knot" or "junction."

A "gate" usually means a door through which the Qi can enter or exit a place. They are therefore commonly called "Qi Xue" {Qi cavities} or simply "Xue" {cavities}. According to Chinese medicine and Qigong, many of these Qi gates are crucial in maintaining health, curing sicknesses, and even practicing Qigong. These gates are usually called "Qiao Men" {tricky gates} in order to distinguish them from the other gates. Most of these gates are used in Qigong massage. Since obstructions in these gates can affect the smooth circulation of Qi, treating them properly can improve the Qi circulation.

Many of these tricky gates have several different names which are used by the various groups that utilize them. Names may vary between the physicians, martial artists, Qigong practitioners, and the religious communities. For example, the cavity between the thumb and the second finger is called "Hegu" in medicine, while it is called "Hukou" in martial arts society. The cavity on the top of the head is called "Baihui" in medicine, "Tianlingai" in the martial arts, and "Niwangong" in Daoist Qigong. Therefore, do not be confused if you hear someone call a cavity by a different name.

There are two types of gates. One is the "external Qi gate," through which Qi can enter or leave the body. You can use these gates to adjust the body's energy level. For example, when you are excited or nervous, your heart has an excess of "fire," which may damage it. The excess heat in the heart can be moved to the pericardium, and then brought through the Qi channels to the center of the palms, where it can be released into the air through the Laogong cavities. When this happens, your palms feel warm and perspire.

The communication of Qi between your body and the air does not happen only through the acupuncture cavities. There are many non-cavity gates, such as the nose and anus, which handle a great deal of the work.

The second type of Qi gate is the "internal Qi gate," which enables the Qi to communicate between the different parts of the body. Many of these gates are cavities, while many others are not. For example, the neck is the Qi gate through which the head and the body communicate. The joints in the arms and legs are also considered gates.

The second term you need to understand is "Jie," which means "knot" or "junction." Usually the term refers to physical knots or junctions, such as where a large nerve or blood vessel branches out into many smaller nerves or vessels. When these areas are tense, they can interfere with smooth Qi and blood circulation. Most of these places are also Qi gates, which is not surprising, since it is the Qi which controls the nervous system.

## **Gates on the Surface of the Body:**

### **1. Eyes, Mouth, Ears, and Nose:**

These four organs are most important gates which allow you to communicate with the outside world. Whenever you look at something, your eyes receive energy {Qi} from it, and this energy is passed to your brain for recognition. The eyes are usually considered to only receive Qi, although many Qigong masters believe that the eyes can also emit it.

The mouth takes in food, which Chinese medicine and Qigong consider to be "Post-birth essence." It is this essence, when it is converted into Qi, which nourishes the body. Therefore, the main purpose of the mouth is to receive this essence. However, when you are sick, the mouth is also used to release extra heat or waste from the body. For example, when you have a cold, coughing releases heat. The sounds which come out of the mouth can also release Qi from the body, and different sounds can release the excess Qi from different organs. For example, when you are happy your heart has an excess of "fire" or heat. When you laugh you make the sound "Ha," which releases the heat. The mouth plays an important part in Qigong, and a great deal of study has been devoted to how different sounds can be used to balance the Qi in the internal organs.

The ears receive sound energy, and the brain responds to the different wavelengths of the energy. Like the eyes, the ears are not normally used to release or emit energy.

Finally, the nose brings air into and out of the body. When you inhale, you take in oxygen, another form of "Post-birth essence," which is converted into Qi. The nose also releases carbon-dioxide which we do not need in the body. Chemically, When the oxygen is taken into the body, a chemical reaction begins. The final product of this reaction is carbon-dioxide, which contains the body's waste carbon {from the biochemical reaction}. This is eliminated from your body when you exhale.

### **2. Anus and Urethra:**

The anus and urethra are also gates which release waste from the body, and, at the same time, release excess Qi. When waste elimination is irregular, your body can be in a state of either excess or deficient because of the too frequent elimination, but when you are constipated, there will be an excess of Qi in your body, and you will feel heat accumulating internally. Because of this, both Western and oriental physicians will check their patient's regularity as a part of their diagnoses. The same theory also applies to the urethra.

### **3. Pores:**

The millions of pores in your skin are probably responsible for releasing the greatest amount of Qi from your body. When you are too hot, the heat is released through the pores. In the summertime, when the Qi in your internal organs is normally sufficient, and the Qi in the surrounding air is also sufficient, your pores will be wide open to release any excess heat from your body. However, in the wintertime, the Qi in the surrounding air is deficient. In order to protect your internal Qi, most of your pores will stay closed to seal the Qi inside. You can see that your pores are designed to adjust the Qi in the body.

An important part of Chinese Qigong is the practice of skin breathing. This makes it possible for the Qi to reach all the pores smoothly so that they can keep functioning properly. Naturally, the activity of the pores is controlled by the sensations you receive from the nerves in your skin. You can keep the nervous system functioning properly if you keep it supplied with a steady amount of Qi. It is believed that the most effective way of preventing colds is to practice "skin breathing" Qigong.

There is another Qigong practice in which Qi can be stored in the bone marrow instead of being released into the air and wasted. This practice is called "Brain/Marrow Washing Qigong." Normally, aging is caused by deficient Qi nourishment of the brain and of the bone marrow, which manufactures blood cells. If Qi can be led inward to the brain and bone marrow, they can keep functioning significantly longer than usual. In addition, the excess Qi produced in the body can be efficiently used, instead of released into the air. Conserving Qi is especially important as you get older; in fact, it is the key to longevity.

### **4. Tips of Fingers and Toes:**

According to Chinese medicine, there are six primary Qi channels connected to the tips of the fingers, and another six connected to the tips of the toes. It is believed that because we are continually using the fingers for working and the toes for walking, the Qi has to reach smoothly to the tips of the finger and toes to maintain

their sensitivity. This is the reason for the gates in the ends of the toes and finger. These gates are the reason that, when you massage someone with your fingers, you can exchange Qi effectively with them.

## **5. Cavities:**

It has recently been discovered that what Chinese acupuncture calls cavities are actually tiny spots of higher electrical conductivity than the surrounding skin. This higher conductivity creates a tunnel or path from the surface to the primary Qi channels under the skin and muscles. The cavities bring the excess Qi circulating in the primary Qi channels out to the surface of the skin and release it to the air. All of these cavities can be used in Qigong massage to release excess Qi.

Of the more than 700 acupuncture cavities, about 108 can be reached by the fingers. Acupressure and Dian Xue are systems of treatment which use the hands or fingers to press and rub the cavities in order to regulate the Qi circulation in the channels. Some of the Dian Xue techniques are well known and used frequently by practitioners of general massage.

A number of the cavities are larger than the others, and it is easier to establish communication with the Qi through them. These cavities play an important role in Qigong massage. These gates are the Baihui, Naohu, Yintang, Mingmen, Laogong, and Yongquan cavities. The most important of these are the two Laogong cavities located in the centers of the palms, and the two Yongquan cavities located on the bottom of the feet. These four gates are used to regulate the condition of the Qi in the heart and the kidneys. Massaging these four gates keeps them open and exchanging Qi with the environment.

There are a few other gates or areas through which the Qi can communicate easily inside and outside of the body. For example, the nipples are considered Qi gates, although they have not been studied very extensively. Also, the pores around the joints are more open than elsewhere, and so the Qi exchange occurs there more easily.

## **Gates or Junctions Inside the Body:**

### **1. Joint Junctions:**

Joints are the junctions or passages where the Qi and blood communicate between one section of the body and another. If the Qi and blood circulation is blocked at a joint, a part of the body will not obtain the proper nourishment, and will malfunction or suffer some damage as a consequence.

In Qigong massage, the joints are separated into three categories. The first category consists of the central joints {i.e., spinal joints} which are the passageway for Qi and neural messages between the brain and every part of the body. Since these joints are related to our thinking and feeling, they are considered to be the most important in Qigong massage. The second most important set of joints are those which connect the six major parts of the body. These six parts are the head, the two arms, the two legs, and the torso. These six main parts are connected by the neck, the shoulder joints, and the hip joints. The third kind of junction includes all the other joints of the body. Although some are more important than others, they are all junctions of Qi and blood. These joints include the jaw, elbows, wrists, finger joints, knees, ankles, toe joints, and a number of other, minor ones.

Whenever you are tense, the Qi and the blood circulation in the joints can be affected. Blockages of the joint junctions can also have many other causes, such as injuries, joint diseases such as arthritis, degeneration due to aging, etc. In massage, when you have loosened the joints, you are already one third of the way to your goal.

### **2. Junctions of the Arteries and Nerves:**

The body contains many nerve and artery junctions, usually where a main artery or nerve branches out into many smaller arteries or nerves. An example is the place under the ear where the main artery and nerves branch upward from the neck. Whenever this place is blocked, the brain will not obtain enough oxygen, and brain cells will wither or even die. You therefore need to learn how to massage the area to keep the junction open. Although many junctions are located around the joints, many other are not related to the joints {e.g., the temple}.



### **3. Gates to the Main Nerves:**

We have already explained how, in Qigong, the nervous system, mind, and Qi cannot be separated. Since the nerves are the bridge between the mind and the Qi, Qigong massage devotes a great deal of attention to massaging the nerves.

In addition to massaging the nerve endings such as are found in the skin, general massage also has ways to massage the major nerves. There are many places in the body where you can reach them. These gates are usually found on the Yin sides of the joints, such as on the inside of the elbows, the back of the knees, and in the armpits. Since these gates access the central nervous system, it is important to use the correct techniques and the proper amount of power. Too much stimulation will only cause more tension, and increase Qi and blood stagnation.

### **4. Qi Junctions:**

There are twelve primary Qi channels in the body. The Qi circulating in them can be affected by our thinking, tension, sickness, or by the food and air we take in. There are a number of places where also where the acupuncture cavities are located. Physicians can insert a needle through the cavity to reach the stagnation and release it, or else they can massage the area and release the stagnation. In fact, this is how Dian Xue massage treats illness.

When you study Qigong massage, you must learn the paths of the twelve channels, as well as which places are likely to become stagnant, and how to remove the stagnation by stimulating the cavities.

Chinese medicine and Qigong consider the junctions where a channel or vessel with Yin Qi joins a channel or vessel with Yang Qi {or vice versa} to be extremely important for your health. It is believed that when the Qi cannot transmit smoothly from one phase to another, you may become sick. Usually, these transmissions or changes happen according to natural timing, such as the transmissions between day and night, the lunar month, the seasons, or the year. For example, the Qi is circulating more strongly in the front {Yin} side of your body during the daytime, and in the back {Yang} side of your body during the night.

In general Qigong massage, there are two cavities which are considered the most important for the exchange of Yin and Yang. The first one is the Huiyin cavity, located in the perineum between the genitals and anus. The Huiyin cavity is the place where the Yin Conception Vessel joins the Yang Governing Vessel.

The second cavity is called Renzhong, and is located under the nose. Although this cavity is not the exact location where the Yin-Yang exchange takes place {which is actually in the roof of the mouth}, stimulating this cavity will improve the exchange.

In addition to regulating the transmission of Qi, these two cavities can also be used to raise up the spirit of vitality, for example, in reviving someone who has fainted.

## THEORY OF GENERAL MASSAGE

In general massage, to obtain the maximum result you need to massage the mental body first, then the physical body, and finally the Qi body. No matter how hard you try to massage someone, or how strong your Qi is, if their mind is not calm and peaceful, you are wasting your time. However, when partner can mentally coordinate with your massage, they will be able to relax deep inside and help you work. When the body is relaxed, the Qi can circulate more smoothly, and it can be led more easily. You have to massage your partner's mind before you massage physical body. You can see that when you massage, you are massaging three different bodies, yet you must treat them as one. They are mutually related and cannot be separated.

### **1. Massaging the Mental Body:**

When you are massaging someone, your first concern is how to gain their whole-hearted mental and physical cooperation. Since the main purpose of massage is to improve the Qi and blood circulation, if your partner's mind remains tense, their physical body will also be tense and their Qi circulation stagnant. In

addition, tense muscles may cause the pulse to speed up, and may even raise their blood pressure. Remember: **IN A GOOD MASSAGE, THE PERSON BEING MASSAGED SHOULD BE IN A SEMI-HYPNOTIC, RELAXED, MEDITATIVE STATE.** When this happens, the heart beat slows down and the mind is very peaceful. This does not mean that the person being massaged should be asleep. If you want to efficiently improve their Qi and blood circulation, you need their whole-hearted cooperation. Remember: **IT IS THE YI WHICH LEADS THE QI.** When your partner's Yi {mind} is with your massage, they can regulate their Qi more efficiently, and your massage can be most effective. However, if your partner falls asleep, then the massage will not be as successful.

Furthermore, when you massage someone, you want your massage to reach well past their skin and muscles and deep into their body, as deep as the internal organs and bone marrow. However, when people give general massages they frequently cannot get their power to penetrate deeply enough. The cause of the problem is often with the person being massaged. They must be calm, they must be relaxed and balanced both mentally and physically, and most important of all, they must use their own meditative mind to regulate the Qi and blood circulation.

When you do have the cooperation of your massage partner your Qi will unite with their Qi, your mind will unite with their mind, and both of you will enjoy the massage. As you can see, in general massage, your first task is to massage your partner's mind and spirit before you start on the physical massage.

## **2. Massaging the Physical Body:**

The main purpose of physical massage is to stimulate the cells of the body, enhancing Qi and blood circulation and removing Qi and blood stagnation. Massaging the physical body includes massage of the nerve endings {i.e., the skin}, the sensory organs {ears, eyes, nose, and mouth}, the fasciae and muscles, the joints including the spine, the internal organs, and the bone marrow.

### **A. Massaging the Nerve Endings:**

When you massage the nerve endings, you are actually also massaging the endings of the Qi channels in the skin. The nervous system communicates feelings and sensations to your brain, and your brain directs the Qi. Since the nervous system and the Qi system are so closely related, it is not surprising that massage techniques used on the skin can adjust both systems.

Massaging the nerve endings in the skin enables you to maintain or even improve the connection between them and the brain. Usually, when you touch the skin in the proper way, you can relax the entire part of the nervous system which is related to that area of the skin. This is why we can use touch to express our emotions so well and cause such varied sensations in our partners. So much love can be communicated through the sense of touch.

There are three ways to physically massaging the skin. The first way is by using a gentle touch along the massage pathways {i.e., from the top to the bottom and from the center to the sides}. This kind of massage can relax your partner and also lead them into a meditative state. Usually, this kind of skin massage is done at the very beginning of the massage.

The second way of massaging the skin is by slapping, grabbing and shaking, or even by whipping the body with the appropriate equipment. This type of massage causes some degree of pain, but it strongly stimulates the nerve endings and brings Qi and blood hidden deeply in or under the muscles to the surface of the skin allowing it to disperse. In Greece, this type of massage is done by gently hitting the skin with branches. This kind of skin massage is done near the end of the massage, when the Qi and blood accumulated deep within the body have already been loosened up. Slapping or gently whipping the skin will then lead the Qi and blood to the surface of the skin where it can be spread out.

The third way of massaging the skin is to rub it with the hands to generate heat, which leads the accumulated Qi and blood to the skin and spreads it out.

### **B. Massaging the Sensory Organs:**

In addition to massaging the skin, which is the sensory organ of touch, we must also massage the other sensory organs: the eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. In Chinese medicine, the areas near these organs are considered to be the endings of the Qi channels. As you get older, the Qi circulation to these organs gets weaker, and they

don't function as well. The degeneration of vision and hearing are common occurrences in old age. Because of this, general massage places great emphasis on massaging the sensory organs.

Massaging around the sensory organs will gently stimulate the nervous system to lead Qi and blood to them. In fact, many people have had their vision and hearing improved through massage after years of deterioration.

### **C. Massaging the muscles and Fasciae:**

Massaging the muscles and fasciae is probably the most important aspect of general massage for fatigue, although, of course, it can also greatly relax you even when you are not fatigued. When you are fatigued, an excessive amount of lactic acid has accumulated in the muscles. This causes muscle pain and the accumulation of Qi and blood.

When you massage the muscles, you are also massaging the fasciae between the skin and the muscles, and between the layers of muscle. The fat which is stored in the fascia hinders the Qi and blood circulation. General massage can remove much of this stored fat.

When you massage the muscles and fasciae, you stimulate them and increase the circulation of Qi and blood. This removes the lactic acid and spreads it out so that it can be removed from your system. Since most of the Qi channels are within the muscles, this will also restore smooth Qi circulation, which is one of the best ways of retarding the aging process.

### **D. Massaging the Spine:**

The spine consists of seven cervical vertebrae in the neck, twelve thoracic vertebrae in the back, five lumbar vertebrae in the waist, as well as the sacrum and tailbone. Nerves branch out from the spinal cord to the limbs and the internal organs. Any problem with the spinal cord interferes with the brain's ability to sense and govern the body.

Inside the spinal column is a Qi vessel {the Thrusting Vessel} which connects the brain to the Huiyin cavity and communicates with the other two main vessels {the Conception and Governing Vessels}. These three vessels are the most important ones in the body, and they are intimately related to your health and longevity. Whenever the Qi level in these three vessels is low, the whole body receives insufficient Qi nourishment, and consequently, the physical body {including the nervous system} cannot function normally.

In order to keep enough Qi coming into the central nervous system, the spine must be loose, and any accumulated Qi or blood must be removed. Since the trunk muscles around the spine have a very great influence on the condition of the spine, massaging the trunk muscles is a very important part of spine massage.

### **E. Massaging the Joints:**

This refers to the joints in the arms and legs. We know that in the area of the joints are gates which allow the exchange of Qi between the body and the environment. In addition, around the joints are areas where we can access the main nerves and arteries. And, of course, the joints allow us to move our limbs freely. Whenever there is any stagnation of Qi or blood in the joints, or any physical defect such as arthritis, we suffer pain and our mobility is limited. Injuries and aging affect the joints much more than the shafts of the bones. Therefore, general massage places great emphasis on keeping the joints healthy and functioning properly.

### **F. Massaging the Internal Organs:**

The internal organs can be massaged with the hands and also with movement. While another person can use the first method on you, you may use either one on yourself.

When you massage by hand, you place your hands on the skin above the organ, and use gentle rubbing movements in specific patterns to loosen the muscles around the organ. The gentle movements of your hands generate Qi under the skin. This Qi follows the movement of the hands, and therefore can be directed into the organ. Naturally, if the person being massaged uses their mind to relax the muscles and lead the Qi, the results will be significantly greater.

Massage by movement uses mainly the trunk muscles and the up and down movement of the diaphragm {from deep breathing} to massage the internal organs. Muscles in the torso wrap around the internal organs. When these muscles are tense, the Qi and blood circulation around the internal organs will be stagnant.

Therefore, the first steps of self-massage of the internal organs with movement are learning how to loosen up the trunk muscles, and then using movements of the trunk muscles to massage the internal organs. You also need to learn how to breathe deeply to move the diaphragm smoothly, slowly, and gently while keeping it relaxed. This massages the organs under the diaphragm.

In Qigong, it is desirable to learn how to control the muscles in the abdominal area so that you can move the abdomen in and out. This will enhance the effectiveness of the internal organ massage.

### **G. Massaging the Bone Marrow:**

Massaging the bone marrow is one of the most difficult parts of general massage. The main purpose of bone marrow massage is to lead Qi to the marrow to maintain the normal production of healthy blood cells. In Chinese Qigong, one of the most effective ways of leading Qi to the marrow is through correct breathing techniques and certain methods of meditation.

Because of theory is difficult to understand, most practitioners of Qigong massage have ignored marrow massage. I would like to introduce several possible massage techniques which may stimulate the Qi circulation in the marrow.

The first technique is stimulating the bones in the area of the joints, where the bone is most exposed and closest to the skin. The shaft of the bone is protected by the muscles and difficult to reach. To stimulate the bone at the joint, press the bone with your fingernails and circle your fingers. Move the skin with your nails so that you do not scrape the skin. This will cause a slight amount of pain, and in some areas, such as the knees, it will cause an exciting, stimulating sensation deep within the body. You may also use your teeth to stimulate the bones at the joints or at places which do not have a thick layer of muscle over them, such as the shin. Go very carefully. Do not cause too much pain, and do not cause any bruising, because that would make the entire body more tense, and you will not be able to accomplish your goal.

In the areas which are protected by a thick layer of muscle, you can increase the exchange of Qi by stimulating the muscles so that Qi is led from the marrow to the skin. When this happens, the bone draws fresh Qi from around the joint. The easiest way to do this is to use a whip made of wire or a bar to gently hit the muscles until they get warm.

### **3. Massaging the Qi Body:**

First, I would like to point out that massaging the Qi body is different from Qi massage. When you massage the Qi body, you use both physical techniques and Qi correspondence to regulate your partner's Qi. However, in Qi massage, you cause your Qi to correspond with your partner's Qi so that you can regulate and rebalance it. Massaging the Qi body smooths the Qi circulation for relaxation and health, while Qi massage is used to correct abnormal Qi circulation which was caused by illness or injury.

Before we discuss massaging the Qi body, I would like to remind you of a very important point we made in the first part of this book. According to both Chinese and Western medicine, every blood cell must have Qi or bioelectricity to stay alive. Furthermore, each blood cell functions like a battery, and stores and releases Qi as needed. Because of this, Qi and blood cannot be completely separated, and when you discuss either one of them, the other one is usually also involved to some degree.

In addition to the blood circulatory system, there are twelve primary channels which also circulate Qi in the body. Most of the course of each channel lies within muscle, so when you tense your muscles you are limiting the Qi circulation to the organs {which are connected to these channels}, and they may not receive the proper amount of Qi nourishment. This is why keeping your body relaxed is one of the main keys to health.

Next, we will discuss the theory of how to massage the Qi body.

### **A. Massaging the Qi Endings:**

Massaging the Qi endings cannot be separated from massaging the nerve endings. The reason for this is quite simple. Since Qi is necessary for keeping the nerve fibers alive, small Qi channels supply the nerves, and the endings of these tiny Qi channels are located near the endings of the nerves.

While the skin separates the insides of our bodies from the outside environment, the skin has thousands of pores, capillaries, nerve endings, and small Qi channels through which Qi and air pass in and out. According to Chinese medicine, all of the Qi channel endings in our skin are related to our internal organs. Stimulating the

skin can maintain the exchange of air and Qi between our insides and the world outside, and can also stimulate our internal organs.

To massage the Qi endings in the skin, simply touch your partner lightly and move your hands along the massage paths {which are also the routes of the Qi channels and nerves}. Move from the top to the bottom, and from the center to the sides. This allows several things to take place. If your Qi is in correspondence with your partner's, they will be able to use their own mind to lead their Qi in synchronization with your movements to smooth their own Qi. This skin-to-skin contact also allows the Qi to pass between you and your partner so that you can nourish each other. Mutual Qi nourishment is one of the methods which Chinese Qigong uses to balance irregular Qi conditions. For example, when you are sad, the Qi in your body is Yin and weak. If a friend holds your hands or hugs you, you immediately receive Qi nourishment from them. This allows you to smooth out your Qi, and helps them to relax. Touching is a natural, instinctive method of Qigong healing.

#### **B. Massaging the Qi Gates:**

In general massage, you want to lead the excess Qi out of your partner's body to release the tension. In order to do this, you must know all of the Qi gates and junctions. This includes the gates between the body and the surrounding environment, and also the gates and junctions within the body. Stimulating the gates in sequence along the channels will lead the excess Qi to the limbs and finally release it from the body.

#### **C. Massaging the Endocrine Glands:**

An important purpose of general massage is increasing the production of hormones and strengthening the immune system. The production of hormones can be increased in two places in men and in one place in women. In men, this can be done in the adrenal glands, which are on top of the kidneys, and in the testicles. In women, only the adrenal glands can be easily reached. Massaging the muscles around the kidneys and testicles will lead Qi to them and increase hormone production, and will also maintain smooth Qi circulation around them.

## **RULES OF GENERAL MASSAGE**

Now that you have a grasp of theory, you probably already have an idea of what procedure you should follow. In this subsection, I would like to summarize the procedures of general massage, as well as the pathways you should follow, and also to discuss how much power you should use.

#### **1. Procedures:**

When you massage, unless you are only massaging a portion of the body, you should follow the standard procedures which tell you where you should start, and where you should end. Following the correct procedures will make the massage more effective and more enjoyable.

##### **A. Mental Massage:**

In order to achieve maximum effectiveness, and reach the deepest places in the body, your partner should be in a semi-hypnotic, meditative state. This lets them relax their body as much as possible, which allows the power of the massage to penetrate as deeply as possible. When their mind is calm, they are also able to regulate their own Qi and physical body. Therefore, before the physical massage, you should massage your partner's mental body and help them to enter a deep meditative state.

##### **B. Head and Neck:**

In physical massage, it is important to start from the head, because this is where a person's "headquarters" is. Within the head is the brain, which controls the entire body through the nervous system. If the head is tense, the mind will also be tense, as well as the rest of the body.

The neck is the passageway of the Qi and blood. Whenever the neck is tense, the Qi and blood circulation will be stagnant, and the brain will not receive proper nourishment. The best way to remove the excess Qi and blood which has accumulated in the head, as well as to bring in plenty of nourishment, is to relax the neck and keep all of the Qi and blood vessels open.

#### **C. Back:**

The next place to massage is the back. The spine is the central supply line of Qi, with the Governing Vessel funning up the back of it. The Governing Vessel controls the six primary Yang Qi channels in the body. In addition, in the center of the spine is the Thrusting Vessel, through which the Qi communicates between the lower part of the body and the brain. Furthermore, the spinal cord is a major part of the central nervous system, and all of the peripheral nervous system branches out from it. You can see that the spine is the connection between the brain and the entire body. Whenever there is any problem in the spine, there will be a malfunction in the related portion of the body. This is why loosening up the spine and improving the Qi circulation there is a crucial part of general massage.

After loosening up the spine, the next task is leading the accumulated Qi or blood away from the spine. This Qi and blood, which have accumulated deep inside the joints of the spine, are the main cause of problems with the nervous system. The Qi and blood must be brought up to the skin and spread out to the sides and downward.

#### **D. Back of the Legs:**

Excess Qi is released out of the body at the ends of the limbs. The Qi which you have released from the back should be brought out to the limbs. You normally do the legs next, because the Qi channels in the legs are more open than those in the arms. In addition, it is easier to lead the Qi downward than to the sides. Therefore, the next step is to lead the Qi to the bottom of the feet.

#### **E. Back of the Arms:**

After you have massaged the legs and feet, you massage the arms to smooth out the Qi flow and lead any excess Qi away from the body. Leading Qi to the arms is one of the most effective ways of releasing excess Qi in the head, simply because the arms are closer to the head than are the legs.

#### **F. Chest and Abdomen:**

After you have completed the massage of the back, have your partner turn face upward.

Before you start massaging the chest and abdomen, you need to help your partner regain a meditative state, which was probably disturbed when they turned over. Spend a short time massaging their head to assist them in regaining a meditative state.

The chest and abdomen, which contain most of the internal organs, are the third most important area in general massage. Your goal in massaging this area is to loosen up and relax the muscles in the front of the body, and also to improve the Qi circulation in the internal organs. Your health this determined, in great part, by the condition of your internal organs. Bringing up the Qi and blood which have accumulated in and around the internal organs improves the Qi circulation and helps keep the organs healthy.

#### **G. Front of the Legs:**

After you have loosened up the chest and abdomen and brought the accumulated Qi and blood up to the surface, lead the Qi and blood down the legs to the bottom of the feet. Follow the same theory that you used on the back of the legs.

#### **H. Front of the Arms:**

Finally, massage the arms and lead the Qi from the head and the front of the body to the arms and get rid of it.

This suggested massage procedure for the entire body is drawn from the theoretical understanding of the Qi and the physical bodies. If you do not have time to massage the entire body, still follow the same sequence with the parts that you do massage. For example, when you massage the head to relieve a headache, also

massage the back and arms in order to lead the Qi downward and sideways. If you fail to do this, the Qi and blood will remain in the head. Similarly, when you massage the back to relieve a backache, also massage the legs to lead the Qi further downward.

## **2. Pathways:**

One of the most important factors in successful Qigong massage is following the correct pathways. This is especially true in Tui Na, Dian Xue, and Qi massage. In this section we will discuss only the pathways used in general massage. Remember that the objectives of general massage are to get rid of excess Qi, smooth out the Qi circulation, and also relax the mental and physical bodies. These goals provide the rationale for the pathways.

### **A. Move From Top to Bottom:**

The first general rule in massage pathways is to lead the Qi downward so as to release the Qi accumulated in the head and body. Therefore, when you massage, your hands move from the top of the body to the bottom. If you reverse the direction, you are nourishing the Qi and leading the Qi upward. This will prevent the release of Qi and result in the body becoming more Yang, which, in turn, will cause more tension in both the mental and physical bodies.

### **B. Move From the Center to the Sides:**

The next general rule in releasing the Qi accumulated in the body is to massage from the center of the body to the sides. Therefore, when you massage, your hands move from the center of the torso out to the sides. If you reverse the direction, you are nourishing the body with Qi, and preventing the release of Qi. This will result in the body becoming more Yang, and will cause more tension in both the mental and physical bodies.

### **C. Move in Circles:**

There are many different rules for massaging in circles, and it can become very confusing. How you circle is usually more important in Tui Na, Dian Xue, and Qi massage, which are concerned with the condition of the Qi in the body. The direction of your circling determines whether you are drawing Qi in or out, and can have a great effect on whether healing takes place. The direction in which you circle is determined by the minds of the healer and the patient, and also by the channel {whether it is a Yin or Yang channel}, the cavities being used, and the time of day. You can see how it is much easier to learn general massage than the healing forms of massage.

In this sub-section, we will discuss only the rules of general massage which focus on the release of mental and physical tension. If you ever become confused about which direction to circle, just take a little time to think about it, and then see the difference in how it feels to circle in either direction.

#### **i. Leading the Qi and Blood Downward and to the Sides:**

In general massage, in order to release excess Qi and improve the Qi and blood circulation, lead the Qi and blood downward to the feet and also sideways to the arms. There are a few simple rules for this.

Let us use two examples to explain these rules. First, when massaging the back of the neck, if you circle counterclockwise on the right-hand side and clockwise on the left-hand side, you are leading the Qi and blood downward. However, if you reverse the direction on both sides, then you are leading the Qi and blood upward, which may cause the head to become too Yang.

When massaging the back, if you move in a counterclockwise circle while working on the right-hand side, and in a clockwise circle while working on the left-hand side, then you are leading the Qi downward and to the sides. However, if you reverse the direction, then you are leading the Qi upward and also to the sides. If you are trying to disperse excess Qi and release tension, then you would want to bring the Qi down and to the sides. However, sometimes you will want to lead Qi and blood from the back to the arms. In this case, you will circle in the other direction.

## **ii. Massaging the Blood and Nerve Junctions:**

The blood and nerve junctions often become tense. For example under each ear is a junction where arteries and nerves branch out and spread over the top of the head. If the top and sides of the neck are tense, the Qi and blood circulation will be affected. Massaging these junctions or knots will help the blood spread out smoothly and reduce the pressure on the junctions. Therefore, when you massage you may circle clockwise and then push upward, but you should also circle counterclockwise and then push downward. This will gently stretch the muscles around the junction and smooth out the blood and Qi circulation.

The general rule is that when you use your right hand to massage, you circle clockwise to spread the Qi and blood upward or to the right, and counterclockwise to lead the blood and Qi downward or to the left. However, if you use your left hand to massage, a counterclockwise direction will spread the Qi and blood upward and to the left, while a clockwise direction will lead the Qi and blood downward or to the left.

## **3. Power:**

The amount of power you use is probably the most critical factor in massage. General massage works on many places, including the skin, the fascia between the skin and muscles, the fascia between muscles, the fascia between muscles and bones, the muscles themselves, the tendons around the joints, the internal organs, and the bone marrow. Massage depth ranges from the surface of the body to deep inside it. How you reach these places depends not just on the techniques you use, but also on the power you apply.

The main rule in general massage is to relax your partner. If you use too much power and cause pain, your partner will tense up, and their mind will become upset. However, if you use too little power, the massage will not be effective.

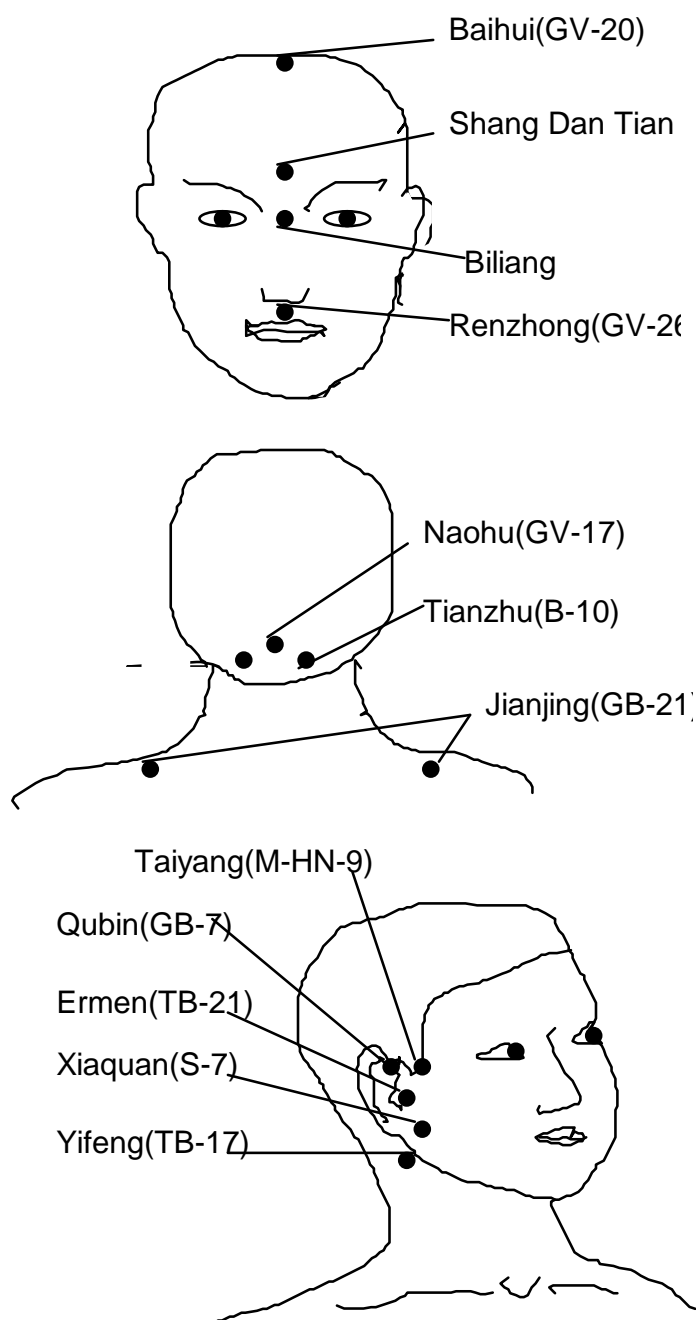
There are a few general rules which will help you reach your goals. First, the power and the pattern of the massage should be consistent. This way your partner will know what to expect, and they will be able to relax more easily. Second, start massaging lightly, and gradually increase the power. Light power gently stimulates the nerves and soothes them, so that they will not so quick to send messages to the brain. Then you can use more power without disturbing your partner. Third, massage from shallow to deep. As you stimulate the outer layers of your partner's body, the reaction of the nerves will slow down, and their body can remain relaxed as you increase the power and reach a deeper layer.

Fourth, finish up from deep to shallow. once your power can reach deep inside and remove the Qi and blood stagnation, you want to lead this accumulated Qi, blood, and acid to the surface of the skin and spread it out.

Finally, in order to keep the massage soft and enjoyable, your hands must be relaxed. The trick of doing this is, when you use your fingers to massage, generate the power and motion from your wrist, and when you use the palm or the base of the palm to massage, generate the power from your elbow and shoulder. If you try to generate power from the part of your body that your are massaging with, it will be tense, and you will not be able to apply the techniques gently. The best way to massage it to use your entire body to generate power, and not rely on muscular power. In addition to being the most effective way to massage, this is also very enjoyable for you, because you can feel your whole body moving harmoniously, and you won't tire out as quickly.



## GATES ON THE HEAD



### 1. **Biliang:**

Biliang is not an acupuncture cavity, but it is an important gate in massage. The gate at the bridge of the nose is connected to your frontal sinuses, where your Upper Dan Tian is located. When you have a sinus problem, you get a stuffy nose. When this happens, you can lightly massage the bridge of the nose to relax the muscles around the sinuses and nose, which will often relax the nerves there. When you have difficulty breathing, your Upper Dan Tian is disturbed and your mind will not be clear.

The bridge of the nose is right over the nasal cavity, through which air enters and leaves your body. When this area is tense, the membrane inside the nose will swell and interfere with the free flow of air. This is usually what happens when you have a cold.

The most common way to massage the bridge of the nose is to use both index fingers or middle fingers to lightly press the sides of the bridge of the nose and circle around. The circle should move in toward the center on the top of the nose, and out on the bottom, and then move up to the Upper Dan Tian. This leads the Qi upward to the forehead and then allows it to be spread upward or to the sides. Usually you circle a few times on the bridge of the nose and then lead the Qi up to the Upper Dan Tian.

Next, again use the middle finger to circle the bridge of the nose several times in the same direction mentioned, then lead the hands downward along the sides of the nose. Finally, spread the Qi to the sides of the face.

When you do this massage, your touch must be soft. Remember: **A SOFT TOUCH HELPS RELAXATION, A HARDER PRESS WILL TENSE UP THE MUSCLES.** The motion should be smooth and continuous. This enables you to lead your partner's mind to follow your massage, and helps them to use their own Yi to lead their Qi.

## 2. **Renzhong:**

The Renzhong {Philtrum} cavity under the nose is well known to Chinese physicians and Qigong practitioners for its ability to stimulate awareness and wake people up. Stimulating this cavity will raise the Qi of the head and stop a sneeze, and it can raise the spirit and immediately revive a person out of a fainting spell. Massaging the Renzhong cavity will open blockage of the Qi channels in the head.

To massage the Renzhong, simply use the thumb or the tip of the middle finger to gently press inward firmly and vibrate.

## 3. **Baihui:**

Baihui {Hundred Meetings} is the cavity or Qi gate on the top of the head which allows the brain to communicate with the Qi of nature. Qi can reach the brain easily through this gate to nourish the brain.

To massage this gate, simply place the center of your right palm on the crown of the head and gently circle your hand clockwise to nourish the brain. Reversing the direction and circling counterclockwise will release Qi from the brain and relieve a headache.

## 4. **Taiyang:**

The Taiyang {Sun} cavities are also known as the temples. Whenever your brain gets fatigued from too much worry or thinking, the muscles in the temple area will tense up. This can disturb the supply of Qi and blood and cause a headache. It is therefore important to open this gate by lightly massaging the temple areas to loosen up the muscles, and let the blood circulate.

The index and middle fingers are usually used to massage the temples with a circular motion. When you massage the temples, you should circle down to the neck and then to your partner's front and up to the head and finally to the back with a gentle and soft power. After you have circled a few times, move the massage downward to the chin to dissipate the Qi and blood from the temples. You may repeat the process several times to release the pressure in the temple areas.

## 5. **Yifeng:**

The two Yifeng {Shielding Wind} cavities are very important gates which are located under the ears. A major artery runs below each ear on its way to the brain. Whenever the muscles on the sides of the neck are tight, the arteries will be constricted and the brain will not receive enough oxygen. This will cause dizziness. Constriction here may also hinder the blood returning from the head to the heart and cause headache.

Massage with your thumbs or middle finger in a circular motion, up the front and down the back. This will spread the stagnant Qi backward to the neck muscles. After circling a few times, push downward to the bottom of the neck. Repeat the process several times until you feel the areas under the ears relax.

## 6. **Ermen:**

Ermen {Ear's Door}, which is located in front of the ear, is on the artery coming from the Yifeng cavity. In massage, the Yifeng, Ermen, and Qubin cavities are frequently treated as one since they are all in a line on the main artery.

While the Yifeng cavity is massaged downward, Ermen and Qubin are massaged upward to the top of the head. This helps in the blood distribution from the ears to the top of the head. To massage Ermen, simply use the middle finger or the second and middle fingers to gently rub the cavity with a circular motion a few times, and then gently push upward. Pass through Qubin and rub it a few times, and finish by pushing upward to lead the Qi and blood to the top of the head. When you circle, the direction should be downward to the neck, toward the back of the neck, upward, and finally forward. This will easily lead the accumulated Qi and blood upward to the top of the head.

#### **7. Qubin:**

As mentioned above, Qubin {Crook of the Temple} is commonly treated together with Yifeng and Ermen. The Chinese believe that when a person is getting old and gray hairs are starting to appear on the sides of the head, it is because the blood and Qi are not circulating smoothly through these three cavities.

#### **8. Xiaguan:**

Xiaguan {Lower Hinge} is located on the joint of the jaw. Massaging Xiaguan can remove any Qi and blood stagnation in the jaw joint, and also maintain the normal functioning of the parotid gland. To massage Xiaguan, use the index and middle fingers to rub the cavity with a circular motion. Rub up and to the rear of the head, and down and forward. Circle a few times, and then gently push downward to the chin.

#### **9. Tianzhu:**

Tianzhu means "Heaven's Pillar," with "heaven" referring to the head. Tianzhu is located on the neck.

The neck is the gate through which Qi and blood move from the body to the head, and any tension there will interfere with this circulation. You have to massage the neck and loosen up the muscles before the head can be really relaxed.

There are two major sets of muscles in the back of the neck which support your head. When you massage the neck, most of your attention should be on these two sets of muscles. Although there are some muscles on the side of the neck, they only turn the head, and you do not need to spend too much time with them. A light, brief massage here will be sufficient to help your partner relax more fully. You can lightly touch the front of the neck and move your hand over it, but do not massage it, since there are no major muscles there.

When you massage the Tianzhu cavities, you will be able to loosen the muscles on the neck easily. Tianzhu is always massaged together with the cavity Naohu, which will be discussed next. When you massage the Tianzhu cavity, if your partner is sitting, you may use your thumbs to gently press the cavities and then circle a few times, and finally push gently downward to the back of the body. The direction of the circle should be downward at the center of the neck, then sideways, upward and then toward the center. Alternatively, you may use one of your hands to stabilize your partner's head while using the edge of the other hand to massage Tianzhu in the direction mentioned above.

You can usually achieve maximum relaxation of the neck by massaging it with your partner lying on their back. Since the neck muscles are not supporting the head, they are already relaxed. Sit or kneel above your partner's head and gently press upward on the cavities with your index and middle fingers. Move your fingers in a circular motion in the direction mentioned above and then lead the Qi sideward to the shoulders.

#### **10. Naohu:**

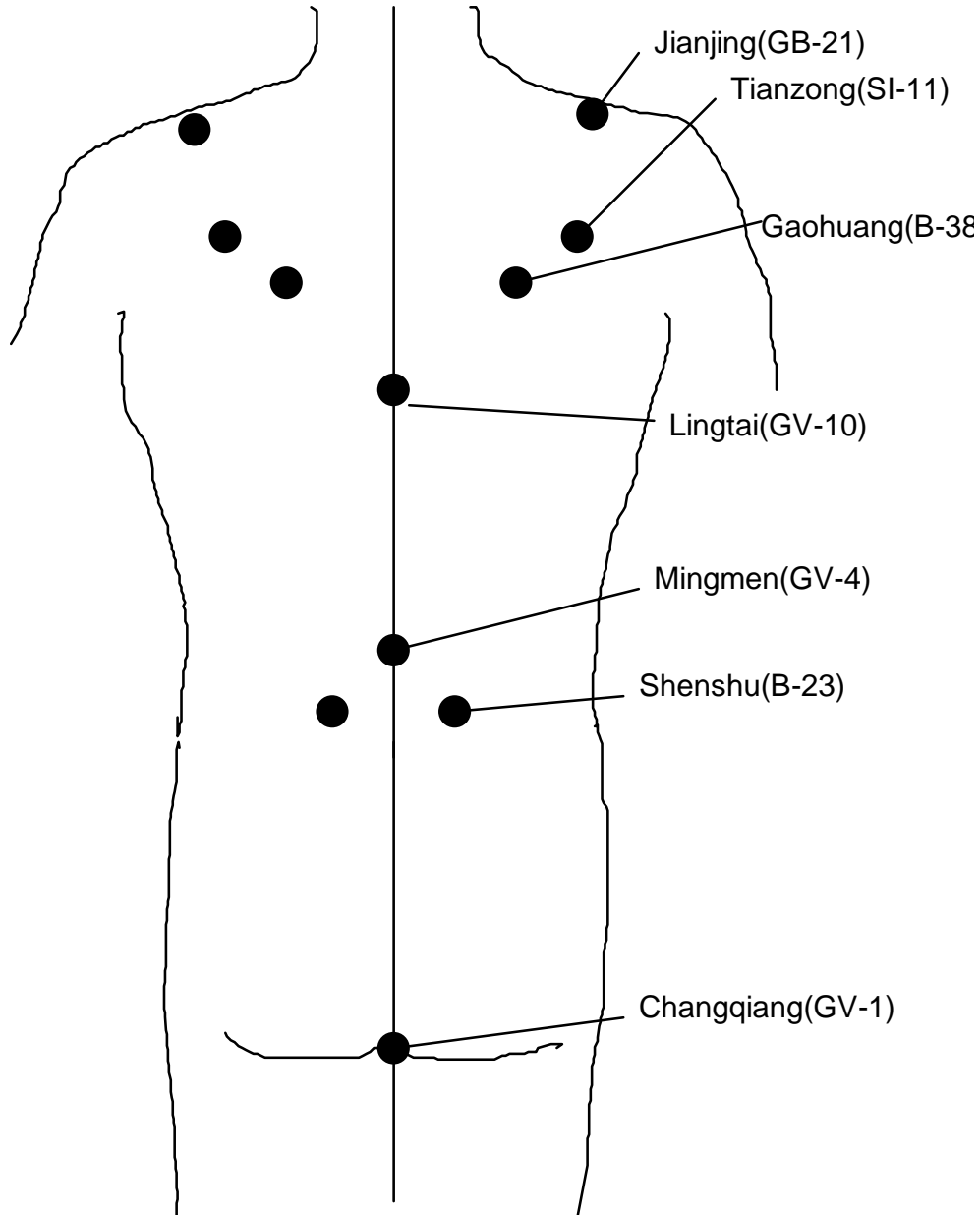
Naohu means "Brain's Household." This cavity is located in the middle of the back of the neck, between the two main muscles and just under the skeleton. It is called "Brain's Household" because it is the entrance through which Qi enters the brain. Massaging this door and relaxing the muscles there is believed to improve Qi communication between the brain and the body.

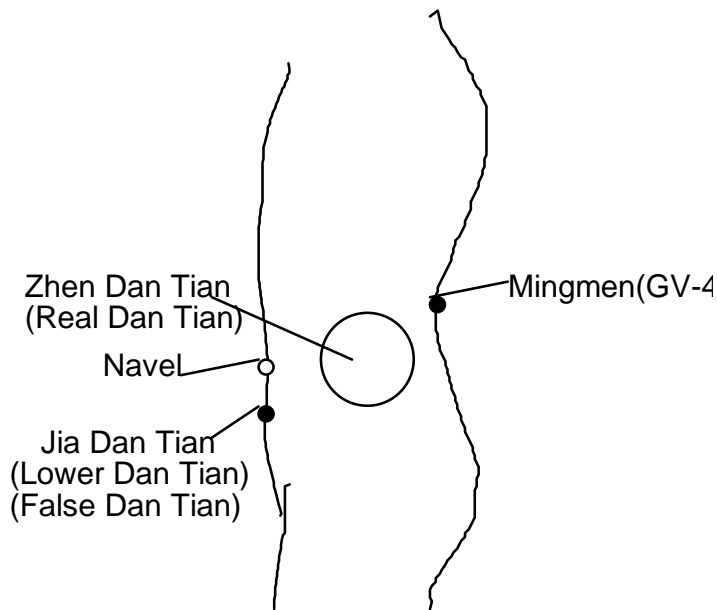
To massage this cavity, simply use your right thumb {when your partner is sitting} or the right middle finger {when partner is lying down} to gently press the cavity with a circular rubbing motion. The clockwise direction is for nourishment, while counterclockwise is for releasing.

These ten gates should be done first when you massage the head. If the muscles around these gates remain tense, the Qi and blood circulation will be affected. When you massage these gates, do not cause any

pain, since this will only make the muscles more tense. Simply massage them lightly in the appropriate direction before you start massaging the pathways. Remember to rub your hands together until they are warm before you touch your partner.

### GATES ON THE BACK





### 1. **Jianjing:**

Jianjing means "shoulder Well" and is the passageway between the neck and the arms. Stimulating the Jianjing cavity correctly will not only open up the Qi channels from the head to the arms, but also stimulate the skin and open all the pores. Stimulating this cavity causes a very pleasant, exciting feeling in the patient, and gives them goose bumps all over the body. Jianjing is frequently used in acupuncture and Qigong to lead the Qi which has accumulated in the head to the arms, thereby relieving headaches and releasing pressure in the head.

You can see that the massage of the head does not end with the neck. once you have loosened up the neck muscles and the Qi and blood start to circulate smoothly, you need to lead away the Qi which was accumulated there and has come up to the surface. Therefore, you should continue on to the Jianjing cavity area which will lead Qi from the neck to the shoulders and spread it out so that it can get back into circulation.

To open this gate, simply grasp the shoulder muscles with your thumb and fingers, and rub the muscles forward and backward, vibrating them gently. Do not use too much power when you do this, as it will be painful and cause the muscles to tense. This will seal the gates, rather than open them. After rubbing a few times, the shoulder muscles should be loose and more relaxed. Then press the cavity with your index and middle fingers, and make a circular motion to stimulate the cavity more deeply. Finally, slide your hands or the edge of your hands along the shoulder muscles and down to the shoulder joints.

### 2. **Tianzong:**

The Tianzong {Heaven's Ancestor} cavity is located in the center of the shoulder blade and belongs to the small intestine channel. Tianzong is the Qi passageway between the arm and the back. In the martial arts, this cavity may be struck to paralyze the entire arm. A gentle massage, however, can open this passage and allow smooth Qi communication between the arm and the back.

To massage this cavity, use your index and middle fingers to press gently with a circular motion. If you use your right hand on the cavity located on the right, circling clockwise will lead Qi to the arms, while circling counterclockwise will lead Qi downward. You may also use the base of the palm to massage this gate.

### 3. **Gaohuang:**

The Gaohuang {Vital's Hollow} cavity is located right beside the shoulder blade near the spine. In the martial arts, this cavity is struck to contract the lungs and "seal the breath." It is believed that when this cavity is seriously injured, the Qi circulation in the heart and certain other internal organs can be affected. In China, when a person is very sick and near death, it is said "Bin Ru Gaohuang," which means that "the sickness has reached the Gaohuang." The situation is then hopeless, because when the Qi is stagnant there, death is imminent.

To massage the Gaohuang cavity, push the shoulder back slightly with one hand to loosen up the area, and then use the edge of the other hand to circle the cavity and push downward.

#### **4. Lingtai:**

The Lingtai cavity, or the "Spirit's Platform," is so called because it is opposite the heart. Stimulating this cavity correctly will relax the heart. However, very strong stimulation may cause a heart attack. Massaging this cavity can balance the Qi in the front and the back of the body.

When you massage Lingtai, you should not put pressure on the bones directly and cause pain. The best way to massage this cavity is to press gently with the base of the palm or side of your fist and circle. When you circle clockwise, you are nourishing the heart. However, there is usually too much Qi in the heart, so you would normally circle in a counterclockwise direction, and then lead the Qi downward to the lower back.

#### **5. Mingmen:**

Mingmen means "Life's Door." It is called this because it is the gate through which you can reach the residence of the Qi: the Lower Dan Tian. In Qigong theory, the Lower Dan Tian in your lower abdomen is called "Jia Dan Tian," which means the "false Dan Tian," while the space between the false Dan Tian and the Mingmen is called "Zhen Dan Tian," or the "real Dan Tian." While the false Dan Tian is the furnace which generates Qi, the real Dan Tian is the residence which stores the Qi which has been generated. According to Chinese medicine, Qi is the origin of life. The Mingmen is therefore the door to reach this Qi storage place.

On the sides of the Mingmen are the two Shenshu {Kidney Admittance} cavities. Massaging these two doors can improve the Qi communication between the kidneys and the surrounding environment. When you massage Mingmen, you should also massage the Shenshu cavities.

When you massage Mingmen and Shenshu to open them, you may use the base of the palm or the side of the fist to circle them. Theoretically, you would like to nourish and increase the Qi in the Qi residence, and also nourish the Qi in your kidneys, since it is usually deficient there. Therefore, when you massage these gates, your right hand should circle clockwise while the left hand should circle counterclockwise.

#### **6. Sacrum:**

In Chinese Qigong, the sacrum is the junction where the Qi enters the spinal cord and reaches up to the brain. The sacrum is called "Xian Gu," which means "immortal bone." This is because, in the advanced practices which lead the practitioner to Buddhahood or enlightenment and then immortality, the Qi must be led upward through the Thrusting Vessel in the spinal cord to reach the brain and nourish the spirit. To do this, you need to learn how to lead the Qi into the spinal cord through the sacrum.

Massaging the sacrum, in addition to sending a pleasant sensation to the brain, also sends Qi from the back to the bottom of the feet. This is because the sacrum connects the Qi from the legs with the Qi which goes all the way to the brain.

To massage the sacrum, use the base of your palm or the side of the fist to rub the area with a circular motion. Since this is the junction of the upward Qi and downward Qi, you should circle in both directions the same number of times.

#### **7. Changqiang:**

Changqiang {Long Strength} is also called "Weilu," which means "tailbone." The Changqiang cavity is the first cavity on the Yang Governing Vessel where the Qi circulation leaves the Yin Conception Vessel. It is believed in Chinese Qigong that, as you get older, this cavity seals up more and more, which interferes with normal Qi circulation in the Governing and Conception Vessels. When this happens, the Qi circulating in the twelve primary Qi channels will be affected and the Qi level in the twelve internal organs will not be regulated smoothly. It is believed that this is the cause of aging.

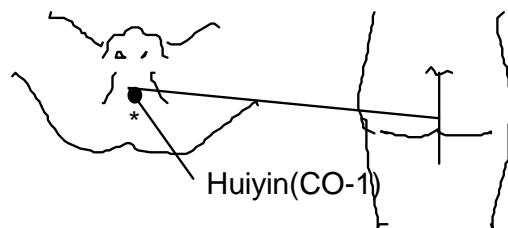
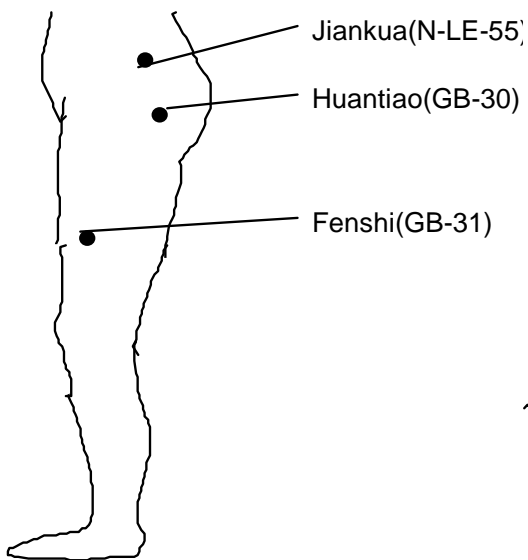
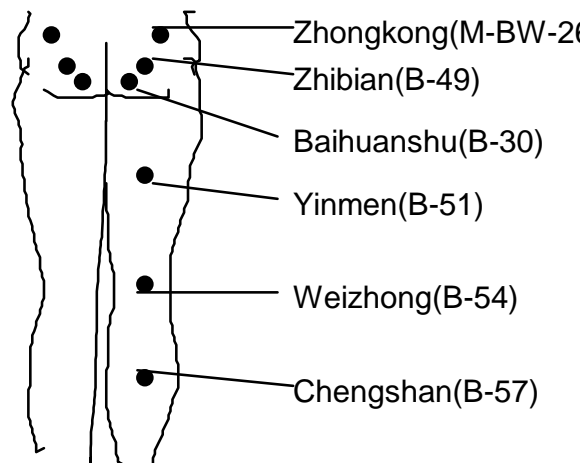
In the Chinese martial arts, Changqiang is one of the death cavities, and when it is struck it has a severe or even fatal effect.

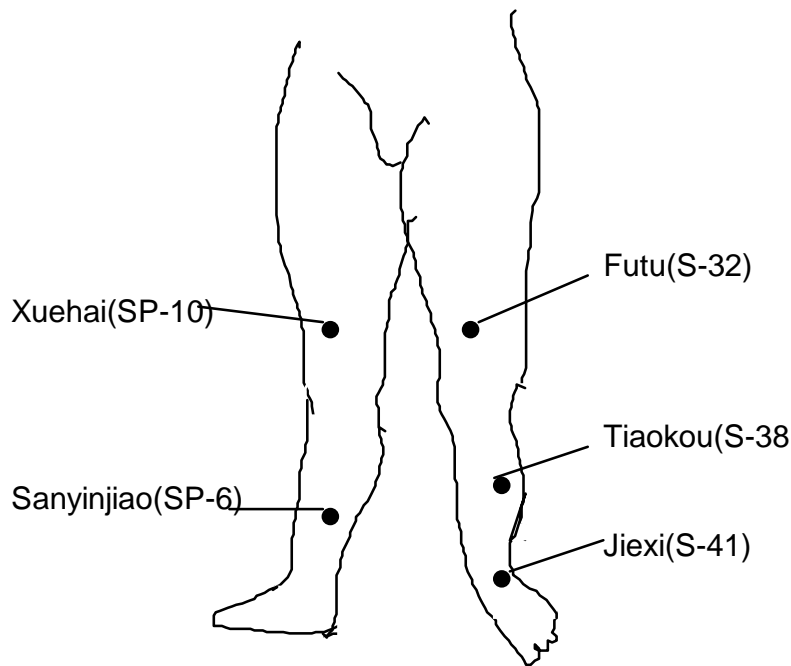
When you massage the Changqiang cavity, first use the base of your palm to push inward and upward a few times. Next, use the base of the palm or the second and middle fingers to rub the cavity gently. If you use your right hand, massage clockwise and then push upward. This will follow the natural Qi circulation which is

upward to the back from the Changqiang cavity. This can also lead the Qi to the sacrum and enter the spinal cord and bone marrow in the spine.

Before you massage the entire back, you may wish to first massage each of the above gates. You may also simply use the following techniques to massage the whole back, and extra attention to these gates.

### GATES ON THE BACK OF THE THIGHS AND LEGS.





### 1. **Zhongkong {M-BW-26}, Zhibian {B-49}, and Baihuanshu {B-30}:**

Zhongkong {Middle Space}, Zhibian {Order's Edge}, and Baihuanshu {White Circle's Hollow} are the gates which open up the Qi circulation from the lower back to the thigh. Stimulating these three gates properly can generate a strong sensation which moves from the lower back to the feet. Frequently, stimulating any of these cavities will also cause the cavity on the back of the knee {Weizhong} or the Yongquan cavity on the bottom of the foot to also be stimulated. This multiple stimulation leads the Qi straight down to the knee or to the bottom of the feet.

When you massage these cavities, you may simply use your thumb, the second and middle fingers, or even the base of the palm to press firmly on the cavity and then rub around. The direction of the circle is not as critical here as elsewhere, since you are either spreading the Qi to the side or leading it downward. When you massage these cavities, start with the top one and move downward to the bottom ones. It is important not to use too much power when you massage these cavities, since any pain will cause the hip muscles to tense and hinder the massage.

In order to build up the connection, the gates on the back of the legs will often be stimulated right after the ones on the hips. Additional gates on the back of the leg are Yinmen, Weizhong, and Chengshan, which will be discussed later.

### 2. **Jiankua {N-LE-55} and Huantiao {GB-30}:**

Jiankua {Strengthen Thigh} and Huantiao {Encircling Leap} are two important cavities located on the external sides of the thighs, and which are the gates which connect the waist to the sides of the legs.

You can use the same techniques on these two cavities that you used on the back of the hip: the thumb, the second and middle fingers, or the base of the palm. Press and rub in a circle. When you massage these cavities, start from the top one and move down to the bottom one. Again, do not use too much power, or you will cause tension.

In order to lead the Qi further downward, another cavity called Fengshi on the side of the thigh is also stimulated right after the above two cavities. We will discuss this cavity later.

### 3. **Huiyin {Co-1}:**

The Huiyin {Meeting Yin} is located in the perineum midway between the genitals and the anus. In Chinese medicine and Qigong, the Huiyin is considered one of the most important cavities. It is the junction of



many vessels, including the Conception, Governing, Thrusting, and Yin Heel Vessels. Remember, according to Chinese medicine, vessels are like reservoirs which regulate the Qi circulating in the twelve channels.

Stimulating the Huiyin cavity will improve the exchange of Qi among the vessels. According to Marrow/Brain Washing Qigong, holding up this area or pressing it correctly will lead Qi from the lower body upward through the Thrusting Vessel to nourish the marrow in the spine and also the brain. Experience in massage has shown that through stimulating this cavity, the Qi converted from the Pre-essence {hormone} which is produced by the testicles can be led downward to fill up the Qi in the Yin Heel Vessel. The Qi condition of this vessel is crucial for your leg strength.

When you massage this gate, spread your partner's legs a comfortable distance apart. Press gently on the Huiyin cavity with your middle finger and circle around. If you use your right hand, circling clockwise will lead Qi upward to the brain, and counterclockwise will lead Qi downward to the legs. Frequently, the Xuehai cavity is massaged at the same time; this will be discussed later.

#### **4. Yinmen {B-51}, Weizhong {B-54}, and Chengshan {B-57}:**

Yinmen {Door of Abundance} is located in the middle of the back of the thigh, Weizhong {Commission the Middle} is right behind the knee, and Chengshan {Support the Mountain} is on the back of the calf. All of these gates belong to the Urine Bladder Qi channel. If you massage these three cavities right after you have loosened up the hip, you will be able to lead the Qi very quickly to the feet.

Because of the thick layer of muscle over Yinmen, the best way to massage it is to use a thumb, with the other thumb on top of it for support, though some people use the elbow or the bottom of the feet.

When you massage Weizhong and Chengshan, you can simply use the thumb or the second and middle fingers to rub the cavity. Again, it is common practice when working in these cavities to massage the Yongquan cavity at the same time to lead the Qi to the bottom of the feet.

#### **5. Fengshi {GB-31}:**

Fengshi {Wind's Market} is located in the center of the outside of the thigh. If you stimulate this cavity right after you stimulated Jiankua and Huantiao on the side of the hip, you will be able to lead Qi from the waist downward to the legs very easily.

When you stimulate this cavity, you may use a thumb or the base of a palm to press in firmly and then vibrate. Frequently, the Jiexi cavity on the ankle will also be pressed to build up the connection. Jiexi will be discussed below.

#### **6. Xuehai {Sp-10} and Sanyinjiao {Sp-6}:**

Xuehai {Sea of Blood} is located on the inner side of the thigh near the knee. Sanyinjiao {Three Yin Junction} is located on the lower inner section of the calf. When these cavities are pressed and stimulated, the Qi circulating in the inner side of the leg can be led downward.

When you massage these cavities, simply use the thumb to press in firmly and then vibrate.

#### **7. Tiaokou {S-38} and Jiexi {S-41}:**

Tiaokou {Line's Opening} is located half-way down the shin, and Jiexi {Release Stream} is located in the middle of the crease in the front of the ankle. They both belong to the stomach channel. When Tiaokou and Jiexi are pressed and stimulated, the Qi on the front of the thigh can be led downward.

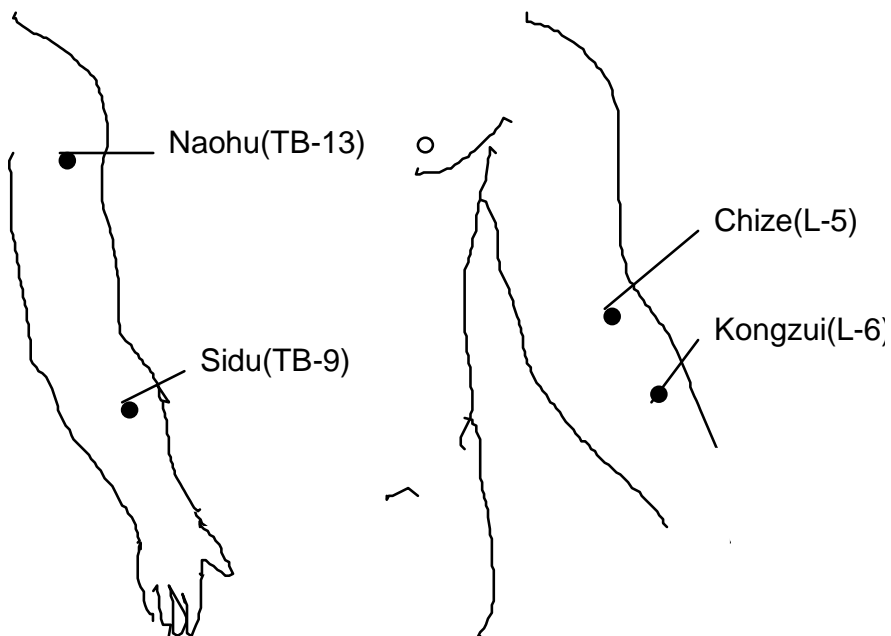
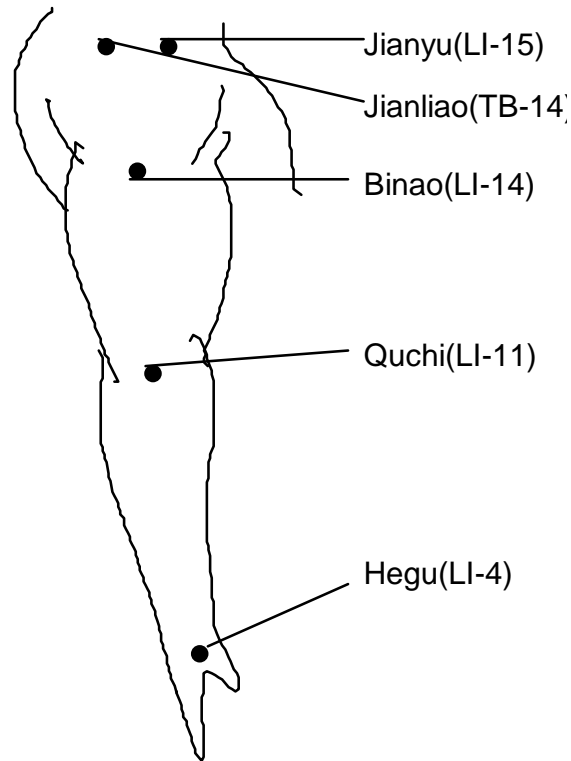
When you massage these two cavities, you may use a thumb or the second and middle fingers to press in firmly and rub around.

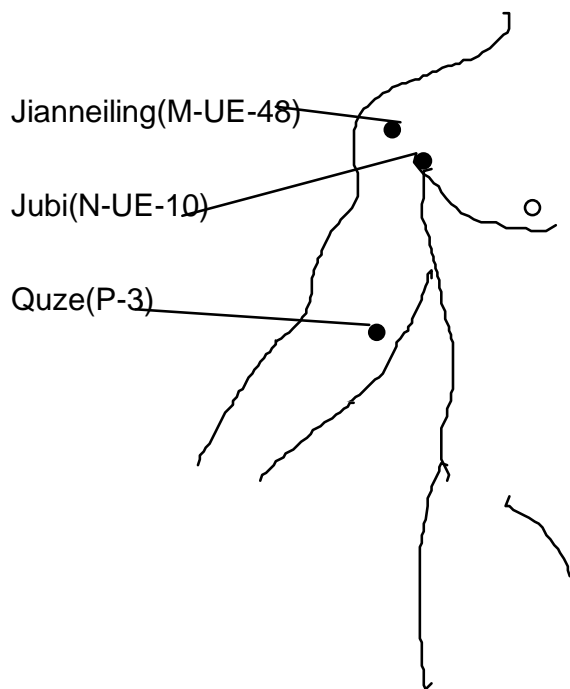
#### **8. Yongquan {K-1}:**

Yongquan {Gushing Spring} is located on the sole of the foot, one third of the way from the base of the second toe to the heel. It is the final point on the kidney channel. It is an important Qi gate which can regulate the Qi in the kidneys. Like the Laogong cavity in the hand, stimulating this cavity will lead Qi from the torso downward to the bottoms of the feet and spread it out there.

When you massage Yongquan, you can use a thumb to press in and circle firmly. When you use your right hand to circle clockwise on the right foot, you are nourishing the kidneys. However, if you use your right hand to circle clockwise on the left foot, you will release Qi.

### GATES ON THE BACK OF THE UPPER ARMS, FOREARMS, AND HANDS





**1. Jianliao {TB-14} and Jianyu {LI-15}:**

Jianliao {Shoulder Seam} and Jianyu {Shoulder Bone} are located in the shoulder area. When these two cavities are massaged and stimulated, Qi in the upper body can be led to the upper arms.

To massage these two gates, you may use your thumb, second, or the middle finger to press on the cavity. If you are using the right hand on the right shoulder, you should circle in a counterclockwise direction. Naturally, if you are using the left hand on the left shoulder, you should circle in a clockwise direction.

**2. Naohui {TB-13} and Binao {LI-14}:**

Naohui {Shoulder's Meeting} and Binao {Arm and Scapula} are located on the outside of the upper arm. When these two cavities are massaged and stimulated, the Qi in the shoulders can be led to the arms.

To massage these two gates, you may use the thumb, the second and the middle fingers, or the middle finger to press on the cavity and then rub in a counterclockwise circle if you are using your right hand, or clockwise if you are using your left hand.

**3. Quchi {LI-11} and Chize {L-5}:**

Quchi {Crooked Pool} and Chize {Cubit Marsh} are located near the elbow. When they are massaged and stimulated, Qi in the upper arm can be led downward to the elbow.

To massage these two gates, you may use your thumb or the middle finger to press on the cavity and then rub in a counterclockwise circle if you are using your right hand. If you are using your left hand, you should circle in a clockwise direction.

**4. Kongzui {L-6} and Sidu {TB-9}:**

Kongzui {Opening Maximum} is located on the inside of the forearm, while Sidu {Four Ditch} is located on the outside. When they are massaged and stimulated, Qi in the upper arm can be led downward to the forearm.

To massage these two gates, you may use your thumb or middle finger to press on the cavity and rub in a counterclockwise circle if you are using your right hand, and clockwise if you are using your left hand.

**5. Hegu {LI-4}:**

Hegu {Adjoining Valleys} is located on the base of the thumb and the second finger. When this cavity is massaged and stimulated, Qi in the back of the arm can be led to the hand.

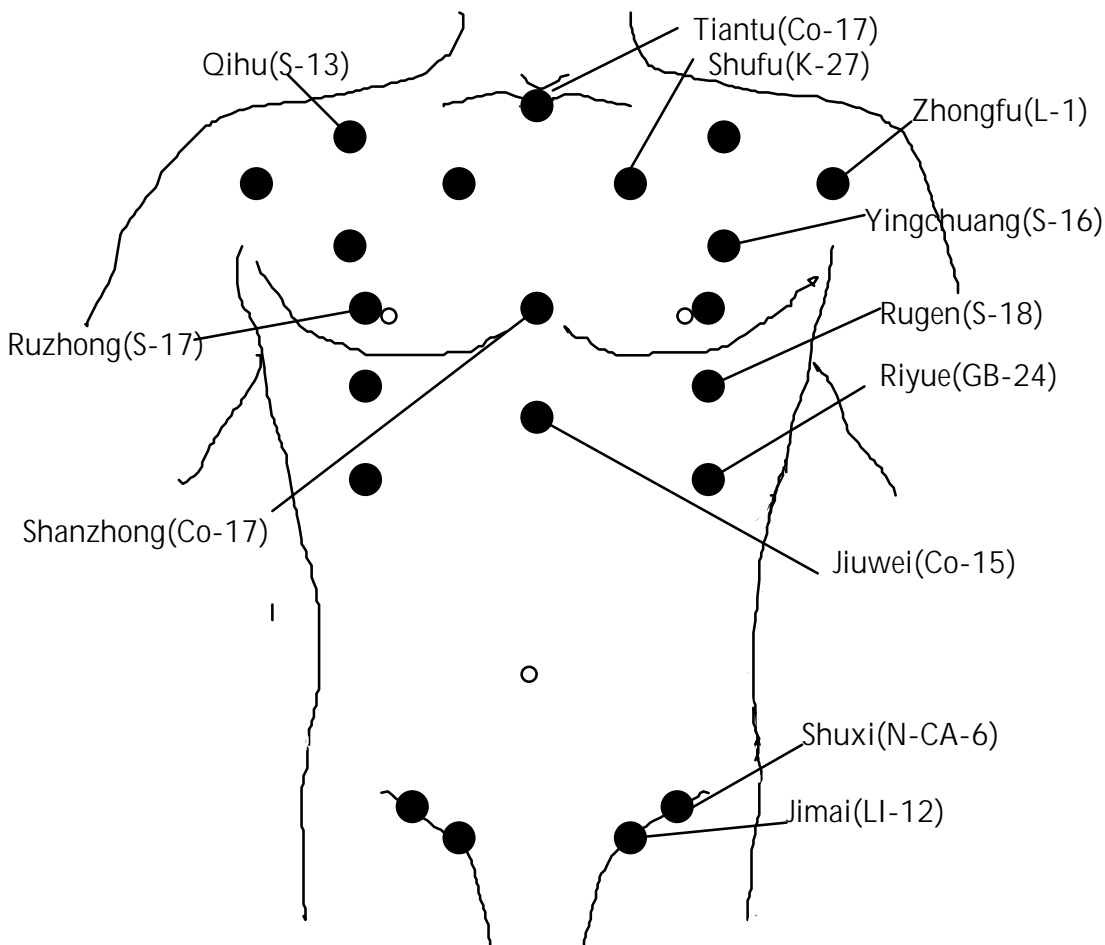
To massage these two gates, you may use your thumb to press on the cavity and then rub in a counterclockwise direction if you are using your right hand, and in a clockwise direction if you are using your left hand.

**6. Laogong {P-8}:**

Laogong {Labor's Palace} is located in the center of the palm. The exact point is where the tip of the middle finger touches the palm. The two Laogong cavities are two of the four main gates on the limbs from which Qi inside the body can communicate with the Qi outside of the body. When the Laogong is massaged and stimulated, Qi can be led to the palms.

To massage Laogong, you may use your right thumb to press on the cavity and rub in a counterclockwise direction. If you circle in the other direction, you will be nourishing the Qi instead of releasing it.

**GATES ON THE CHEST AND ABDOMEN**



### 1. **Tiantu {Co-22}:**

Tiantu {Heaven's Prominence} is located on the base of the throat and is the junction of the neck and the chest. In acupuncture, the function of the cavity is to facilitate and regulate the movement of lung Qi in order to cool the throat and to clear the voice. When this gate is relaxed and wide open, the Qi communication between the throat and the chest can be smooth.

When you massage this gate, you must be very gentle. Start from the side of the gate and follow the bone, using the fingers of both hands to brush toward the Tiantu cavity a few times. Next, use your thumb or the second and third fingers to rub the cavity very gently with a circular motion. Circle in a counterclockwise direction and lead the Qi downward to the chest.

### 2. **Shufu {K-27} and Qihu {S-13}:**

Shufu {Hollow Residence} and Qihu {Qi's Household} are located above the nipples. Shufu belongs to the kidney channel. The kidneys have a primary role in water metabolism and controlling the body's liquids. When the Shufu cavity is massaged and stimulated, the water in the body can be led upward to the lungs. In Chinese medicine, this cavity is related to bronchitis, asthma, chest pain, vomiting, and abdominal distension.

When Qihu is massaged and stimulated, the Qi accumulated in the center of the lungs can be spread to the sides of the lungs, which will relax the chest. In addition, massaging Qihu will lead the Qi accumulated in the neck downward to the chest. In Chinese medicine, Qihu is related to such illnesses as bronchitis, asthma, hiccups, and intercostal neuralgia.

When you massage these two cavities, rub in a circle with your second and middle fingers. Circle to the center and then up, and finally to the sides of the chest and out the arms.

### 3. **Zhongfu {L-1}:**

Zhongfu {Central Residence} is located in the upper chest near the shoulder joint. According to Chinese medicine, this cavity is connected to the throat area, as well as to the lungs and stomach. This cavity is the junction of the throat and upper chest with the arms. Therefore, massage will lead the Qi accumulated on the front on the neck and upper chest out to the shoulders and finally to the hands, where it can be dissipated. In Chinese medicine, this cavity is related to coughing and wheezing, coughing blood and pus, throat blockage, nasal congestion, excessive sweating, tumors and nodular growths on the neck.

When you massage this cavity, simply use the second and middle fingers to press in and circle a few times, and then brush with your hands out to the arms. When you massage, circle toward the center and then upward and finally to the side. This will lead the Qi to the arms.

### 4. **Shanzhong {Co-17}:**

Shanzhong {Penetrating Odor} is located directly between the nipples. When Shanzhong is massaged correctly, the Qi accumulated in the center of the chest can be spread outward. This can significantly regulate the Fire Qi which has accumulated in the solar plexus {Middle Dan Tian}. This will release pressure and tension in the front of the body. In Chinese medicine, treating this cavity can regulate and suppress rebellious Qi, and expand the chest to benefit the diaphragm.

To massage this cavity, use the base of a palm to gently press the cavity and rub in a circle a few times, then lead the Qi to the sides and away from the solar plexus. Use your right hand to circle clockwise, then spread to the side of the chest a few times, and then circle with your left hand in a counterclockwise direction the same number of times. Finally, use the palms to push downward to the abdominal area. In order to avoid leading Qi to the solar plexus, do not stop your pushing at the solar plexus area.

### 5. **Jiuwei {Co-15}:**

Jiuwei {Wild Pigeon's Tail} is called the solar plexus in the West, and the Middle Dan Tian in Chinese Qigong. The Middle Dan Tian is the residence of Fire Qi or Post-birth Qi, which is converted from air and food. Physically, this place is the junction between the lungs and the stomach, which is beneath the diaphragm. Whenever too much Qi accumulates in this area, you will feel uncomfortable and experience tension or heartburn in your chest. Because of the excess Yang, you will feel tired, One of the practices of Chinese Qigong

is to lead the Qi accumulated here downward to the Lower Dan Tian. In Chinese medicine, this cavity is related to such illnesses as angina pectoris, seizures, hiccups, mental illness, and asthma.

Massaging Jiuwei correctly will loosen the area so that the Qi can be moved easily and spread either to the sides or downward to the lower body. The method of massaging this cavity is very simple. Gently rub the cavity in a clockwise circular motion with the base of your right palm, and then lead the Qi to the side. Repeat several times. Then change to the left hand and repeat the same massage, only now use a counterclockwise motion and lead the Qi down. Finally, use the palms to push downward to the abdomen.

#### **6. Yingchuang {S-16}, Ruzhong {S-17}, and Rugen {S-18}:**

Yingchuang {Breast's Window}, Ruzhong {Middle of Breast}, and Rugen {Breast's Root} are located above the nipple, in the middle of the nipple, and under the nipple. These three cavities are usually treated as one in Qigong massage. They are related to bronchitis, mastitis, asthma, intercostal neuralgia, intestinal noises and diarrhea.

Beneath these cavities is a large section of muscle which extends out to the front of the shoulder. When these muscles are relaxed, the Qi can be led easily to the sides of the chest and also to the front of the shoulder. When you massage these three cavities, first place your index, middle, and ring fingers in all three cavities at the same time, and move your fingers in circles. In order to avoid leading Qi toward the solar plexus, you should lead the Qi to the sides of the chest and shoulders.

#### **7. Riyue {GB-24}:**

Riyue {Sun Moon} is located below the ribs in front of the liver and spleen. When there is an abnormal Qi condition in the liver and spleen, these two cavities may be tense, which will cause tension in the stomach and abdomen. In Qigong massage, in order to relax the internal organs below the diaphragm you need to relax these cavities. In Chinese medicine, this cavity is related to intercostal neuralgia, cholecystitis, acute and chronic hepatitis, peptic ulcer, and hiccups.

To massage these cavities, use the base of your palms to gently press the cavities and rub in a circle a few times, and then lead the motion to the center and move downward. When you massage, the right hand should circle counterclockwise and the left hand clockwise. You should also massage in the opposite direction and follow the ribs to lead the Qi to the sides.

#### **8. Shuxi {N-CA-6} and Jimai {Li-12}:**

Shuxi {Mouse Path} and Jimai {Urgent Pulse} are located in the crease between the thigh and abdomen. These two cavities are the junctions of the Qi circulation from the body to the legs in the front of the body. In Chinese medicine, Shuxi is related to tuberculosis of the inguinal lymph glands, and weakness of leg adductors. Jimai is related to prolapsed uterus, pain of hernia, and pain in the penis.

When you massage these two cavities, simply use the edge of your palm to press in and circle while raising your partner's thigh to relax the area.

## GATES ON THE FRONT OF THE THIGH

#### **1. Futu {S-32}:**

Futu {Hidden Rabbit} is located in the lower section of the front of the thigh. When the Qi circulation in this cavity is stagnant, the lower limb can be paralyzed. Blockage of the Qi in this cavity can cause pain in the waist and the groin area. Futu is frequently used for treating arthritis in the knees.

When this cavity is stimulated properly, the Qi in the lower body can be led downward. To stimulate this cavity, the thumb is generally used to press down on the cavity and then vibrate. However, the elbow is

sometimes used to generate a more penetrating power. Normally, right after stimulation, the side or the base of the palm is used to rub downward to the knee.

**2. Xuchai {Sp-10}:**

This cavity was covered in the section on massage of the back of the leg.

## GATES ON THE FRONT OF THE UPPER ARM

**1. Jubi {N-UE-10}:**

Jubi {Raise Arm} is located on the front of the upper arm near the shoulder joint. When the Qi circulation in this cavity is blocked or stagnant, the arm will become numb.

To massage this cavity, simply rub the cavity with your thumb in a circular motion. Many people also use a thumb or index finger to press on the cavity and then release it a few times.

**2. Jianneiling {M-UE-48}:**

Jianneiling {Shoulder's Inner Tomb} is also located on the front near the shoulder joint. Like Jubi, when the Qi circulation in this cavity is blocked or stagnant, the arm will become numb. This cavity and Jubi are frequently used in the treatment of arthritis in the shoulders.

To massage this cavity, simply rub the cavity with a circular motion with your thumb or index finger.

**3. Quze {P-3}:**

Quze {Crooked Marsh} is located near the elbow joint. Its functions are opening the heart Qi draining heat from the blood, and regulating the intestines.

When the Qi circulation is blocked or stagnant, chest pain can be experienced. This cavity is also known to be related to emotions such as fright. In addition, it is significantly related to heat exhaustion, diarrhea with vomiting {acute gastroenteritis}, fever, irritability, and fullness in the body.

To massage this cavity, use the thumb to press on the cavity and rub in little circles.

## SELF MASSAGE

**1. HEAD AND NECK:**

**First Path:**

Use your middle fingers to massage the bridge of your nose with a circular motion about five times. Then rub the fingers upward to the center of your forehead. Finally, gently stroke your hands to the top of your head, down the back of your neck, and out to your sides. Do this five to ten times. This path smoothers out the superficial Qi and blood circulation on your head.

**Second Path:**

Again circle your middle fingers on the bridge of your nose about five times and rub them upward to your forehead. Then brush with your middle and index fingers to the sides of your forehead, circle the temples a few times, and brush down to the jaws and chin. When you do this movement you may place your thumbs on

the jaw to steady your hands. Repeat the procedure five to ten times. This path improves Qi and blood circulation in your face.

### **Third Path:**

Again start at the bridge of your nose. Circle your middle fingers on the bridge of your nose five times, and then use your index and middle fingers to gently circle your eyes about five times. Finally, rub to the sides of your eyes and downward to the jaw. You may again use your thumbs to stabilize the massaging fingers. Repeat the procedure about five to ten times. Then rub your hands together until they are warm, and gently place the bases of your palms on your eyes to nourish them with the Qi from the palms. This is called "ironing the eyes" {Tang Yan}. This path improves the Qi and blood circulation around the eyes and slows the deterioration of the eyes.

### **Fourth Path:**

Gently press your index fingers in front of your ears, and rub lightly up and around the ears and finally down to the sides of the neck. Do this about five times. Next, cover your ears tightly with your hands and move your hands in a circle five times in one direction, and then five times in the other direction; finally, press your ears with your palms and then release to pop the ears five times. This path keeps the ears functioning properly.

### **Fifth Path:**

This path leads the Qi and blood downward from the back of the neck. When you massage this path, lean your head slightly backward to relax the muscles in the back of your neck. Starting at the base of your skull, press and push with your thumbs down along the neck muscles on both sides of the spine. Repeat ten times. Then use your right hand to grab and rub the back of your neck ten times, and do the same thing with your left hand. This loosens up the neck, and allows the Qi and blood to pass through the neck more smoothly. However, you also need to lead any excess Qi down out of your head so that it doesn't stagnate there. The procedure is very simple: simply grab and massage your shoulder muscles on both sides with your fingers.

After you have massaged your head, you may slowly and gently move your head in a small circle ten times in each direction to help the neck muscles relax even more. Do not tilt your head all the way back, because this puts too much stress on the discs between the vertebrae.

## **2. CHEST:**

### **First Path:**

Brush with both hands from the back of your neck to the upper chest, and then follow the centerline downward to your abdomen. When your hands are on the back of your neck, inhale deeply, and when they are moving downward in front of your chest, exhale deeply while at the same time relaxing inside your chest. Repeat ten times.

### **Second Path:**

This path starts under your throat. First place both of your hands under your throat, inhale deeply while staying relaxed, then exhale and at the same time brush your hands over both sides of your chest down to the bottom of your ribs. Repeat five times.

### **Third Path:**

First, use the second and middle fingers of your left hand to gently massage the area just above your right nipple for one minute. Then use the second and middle fingers of your right hand to massage the area just above your left nipple. This will lead the kidney Qi and water upward to moisten your lungs.

Next, place both palms on the center of your upper chest, inhale deeply, and then exhale and gently expand your chest as you move your palms to the sides of your upper chest. This will spread the Qi and moisture which was led upward to the sides of the lungs. Repeat five times.



Finally, place your palms on your solar plexus while inhaling, and then exhale and gently expand your chest while moving your palms to the sides of the middle of your chest. Repeat five times.

**Fourth Path:**

Rub the upper right side of your chest with the fingers of your left hand in a circular motion, and gradually move the motion downward to your lower ribs. Repeat five times. The direction of your circling is very important. When your left hand is circling clockwise {from the point of view of someone looking at you from the front}, you are leading the Qi downward, which will cool down your body. If you reverse the direction, you are leading the Qi upward to your head, which is not desirable. Repeat the same movements with your left palm another five times.

Finally, massage the left side of your chest with your right hand, first with your fingertips, and then with your palm. Make sure that you are now circling counterclockwise so that you are leading the Qi down the center of your body.

**Fifth Path:**

Use your right thumb and fingers to grab and rub the tendons in front of your left armpit. Continue the grabbing and rubbing downward to the area of the nipple, and then use your palm to smooth and lead Qi down from your armpit. Repeat the same procedure about five times, and then do the other side.

**3. STOMACH, ABDOMEN, AND LOWER BACK:**

**First Path:**

First, place both hands on your stomach, and circle to the left and downward, continuing up the right side to the center of your stomach. Circle from ten to thirty times. While circling your hands, your mind should be very calm and relaxed. The more you relax deeply into your body, the more you can lead the Qi inside, and the more benefit you will receive.

**Second Path:**

Place your hands on either side of the centerline of your body at the level of your diaphragm. Inhale and then exhale deeply, while at the same time brushing both hands downward to the groin area.

**Third Path:**

Gently grab the tendons on the side of your waist and rub them for a few minutes, then use your palms to push down to the front of your thighs.

**Fourth Path:**

Close your hands into fists, and place the thumb-sides over your kidneys. Circle your fists for a few minutes. In the wintertime, circle your fists in toward the spine and down, and in the summertime, reverse the direction. When you finish circling, use the back of your fists to lightly strike your kidneys, sacrum, and the top portion of your hips for a few minutes. This will bring the stagnant Qi to the surface of the skin. Finally, starting in the area of the kidneys, brush downward with your hands past your hips and down to the back of your thighs.

**4. LEGS:**

Starting at your hip, use the base of your palms to rub and move from the hip joints down the front of your thighs to your knees. There are three main parts on the front of the thighs: the center and the two sides. Next, grab and rub the muscles on the top of the thighs, moving from the hips down to your knees on each of the three pathways.

Next, use the base or the edge of your palms to rub and move from your hips down the outside of the thighs, and from your groin down the inside of your legs to the knees. Then grab and rub the muscles on the sides and back of your thighs. When you massage the inside of your thighs, it is better to use the right hand to massage the left thigh, and vice versa.

Next, use your thumb, second finger, and/or the middle finger {whichever is easier} to press and vibrate some of the acupuncture cavities in your thighs. This will stimulate the cavities and enhance the Qi circulation in the primary channels. When you stimulate the cavities, start on the hips and work downward. When you have finished, brush downward with your hands from your hips to your knees. Repeat ten times.

Next, massage your knees and calves. First, use the base or the edge of your palms to massage your knees. Then use the base or the edge of your palms to press and rub downward from your knees to your ankles. After this, grab and rub the calf muscles. Then, stimulate the cavities in the calves. Finally, use your hands to brush downward to lead the Qi to your feet.

## 5. FEET:

We know from Chinese medicine that the hands and feet are actually connected and closely related to the internal organs. Six primary Qi channels end in the fingers, and six in the toes.

### Order of Chi Circulation

| From                      | To                 | Channel       | Name            | Time Period  |
|---------------------------|--------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Top of Chest              | Outside of Thumb   | Hand Taiyin   | Lung            | 3 to 5 A.M.  |
| Tip of Index Finger       | Side of Nose       | Hand Yangming | Large Intestine | 5 to 7 A.M.  |
| Under the Eye             | Second Toe         | Foot Yangming | Stomach         | 7 to 9 A.M.  |
| Big Toe                   | Top of Chest       | Foot Taiyin   | Spleen          | 9 to 11 A.M. |
| Armpit                    | Little Finger      | Hand Shaoyin  | Heart           | 11 to 1 P.M. |
| Little Finger             | Front of Ear       | Hand Taiyang  | Small Intestine | 1 to 3 P.M.  |
| Inner Corner of Eye       | Little Toe         | Foot Taiyang  | Bladder         | 3 to 5 P.M.  |
| Little Toe                | Collarbone         | Foot Shaoyin  | Kidney          | 5 to 7 P.M.  |
| Chest                     | Middle Finger      | Hand Jueyin   | Pericardium     | 7 to 9 P.M.  |
| Ring Finger               | Outside of Eyebrow | Hand Shaoyang | Triple Burner   | 9 to 11 P.M. |
| Outside Corner of the Eye | Fourth Toe         | Foot Shaoyang | Gall Bladder    | 11 to 1 A.M. |
| Outside of Big Toe        | Side of Nipple     | Foot Jueyin   | Liver           | 1 to 3 A.M.  |

Table. Qi circulation in the twelve primary channels.

There are many other zones on the hands and feet which are related to internal organs or even other parts of the body. Stimulating these channels and zones can improve the functioning of the related organs or parts of the body. This kind of stimulation of the hands and feet is now commonly called "reflexology." We recommend that, when you finish the following general hand and foot massage, you devote some time to zone reflexology.

To massage your feet, first hold your foot and move it in a circle about twenty times in each direction. Then rub every portion of your feet with your thumb, using the other four fingers to stabilize the thumb and help regulate the power. Start with the back of the feet and toes. Pay special attention to the spaces between the bones. Next, press your thumb into the gaps between the bones, and drag or push from the ankle to the base of the toes. This will stimulate deep inside the foot. It will also remove any Qi and blood stagnation between the bones, which can interfere with the functioning of the foot, and even cause arthritis.

Repeat the massage on the bottoms of the feet, then press in with the thumbs between the bones and press or drag from the heel to the toes. Finally, grab the last section of each toe and gently pull and shake it.

After you have massaged your feet, stimulate the zones of the feet. To do this, press your thumb on each zone and rub in a circle.

## **6. TESTICLES:**

Massaging the testicles increases the production of hormones. According to Chinese Muscle/Tendon Changing and Marrow/Brain Washing Qigong {Yi Jin Jing and Xi Sui Jing}, massaging the testicles correctly will increase hormone production and increase the amount of Qi led upward to the brain. Other effects are increasing the amount of Qi stored in the body and strengthening the immune system. There are many ways to massage the testicles. For example, you may hold the testicles gently between your palms and move your hands in a circle. You may also simply hold them in your hand and gently press and rub them.

## **7. ARMS:**

After you have finished massaging your legs, you finally massage your arms and hands. When you massage your arms, start with the muscles and tendons between the neck and the shoulders. Use the grabbing techniques to grab the muscles and rub around. Gradually move from your shoulders down to your hands to loosen up the muscles in your arms. Then use your thumb and your index and/or middle finger {depending on which is easier} to press and vibrate some of the acupuncture cavities in your arms. This will stimulate the cavities and enhance the Qi circulation in the primary channels. When you stimulate the cavities, start at your shoulders and work downward. Repeat several times. After you finish the cavity press, brush downward with a hand from your shoulder to your hand. Repeat ten times.

## **8. HANDS:**

First, use your thumb to rub every portion of your wrist, hand, and fingers, starting on the back of the hand. Use the other four fingers to stabilize your thumb and help to regulate the power. Pay special attention to the spaces between the bones. Next, press your thumb into the spaces between the bones in the hand, and drag or push from your wrist to the base of the fingers. This will help to stimulate the deeper places in your hand, and remove any Qi and blood stagnation between the bones which can hinder the functioning of the hands or even cause arthritis.

Repeat the rubbing massage on the palm side of your hand, and press in while dragging or pushing from your wrist to the base of the fingers.

Grab one finger at a time and pull lightly, letting the finger slip out of your grasp. Do each finger three times. This will lead the Qi to the fingertips. Finally, grab the last section of each finger and gently pull and shake it a few times.

When you have finished one hand, repeat the same process on the other one, then stimulate the zones mentioned earlier. To do this, simply press on the zone with your thumb and rub in a circle. Again, use the other four fingers to stabilize the thumb and control the power.

## SELF-MASSAGE FOR YOUR INTERNAL ORGANS

Regulating the Qi in the internal organs requires that the mind be in a more meditative and concentrated state so that you can reach deeply inside your body. You also need to build up your Qi so that it will be stronger and more penetrating. This takes more time than when you are only giving yourself a general self-massage.

### **1. Large and Small Intestines:**

To massage your abdomen and regulate the Qi circulation in your large and small intestines, place one hand on top of the other on your lower abdomen. If you are right-handed, it is better if you place your right hand on the bottom and the left hand on the top, and if you are left-handed, place your left hand on the bottom. The reason for this is quite simple: the Qi is strongest in the hand you use most often, and it is easier for you to lead the Qi from it.

When you massage your abdomen, it is best if you lie down so that your lower body is relaxed and the Qi can circulate more easily and smoothly. Hold your hand lightly against the skin and gently circle your hands clockwise, which is the direction of movement within the large intestine. Circling in the other direction would hinder the natural movements of peristalsis. Massage until you feel warm and comfortable deep inside your body.

As you massage, your breathing should be relaxed, deep, and comfortable. Place your mind a few inches under your palms. The mind will then be able to lead the Qi inward to smooth out and blood stagnation.

### **2. Liver, Stomach, Spleen, and Gall Bladder:**

In Qigong massage for the internal organs, the liver, stomach, spleen, and gall bladder are usually included in the same techniques because they are all located in the middle of the front of the body. Maintaining healthy Qi circulation in an organ requires not only that the circulation in the organ itself be smooth, but also that the circulation between the organs be smooth. Therefore, when you massage these four internal organs, you should treat them as one instead of four.

Hold your hands as you did when massaging the lower abdomen, only now place them above the navel. Experience has shown that clockwise is again more effective than counterclockwise. It is also easiest to do this massage when you are lying down. Massage until you feel warm inside.

### **3. Kidneys:**

Chinese medicine considers the kidneys one of the most important internal organs. The kidneys affect how the other organs function, so almost all forms of Qigong place heavy emphasis on keeping them healthy.

To massage your own kidneys, close your hands into fists and place the thumb/index finger sides on your kidneys. Gently circle both fists until the kidneys are warm. In the summer, when your kidneys are normally too Yang, it is desirable to dissipate some of the Qi. This can be done by circling your right hand clockwise and your left hand counterclockwise. This leads the Qi to the sides of your body. However, when you massage your kidneys in the wintertime, when the kidney Qi is normally deficient, then you should reverse the direction and lead the Qi to the center of your back to nourish the kidneys. As usual, the breathing and the mind are important keys to successful practice.

There are other methods of improving the Qi circulation in the kidneys. The most common of which is to massage the bottom of your feet. There is a Qi gate in the front center of each sole which is called "Yongquan" {Gushing Spring}. Massaging these two cavities will stimulate the Qi circulation in the kidneys and help to regulate them.

#### **4. Lungs:**

According to the five elements theory, the lungs belong to Metal while the heart belongs to Fire. According to this theory, the Metal lungs can be used to regulate the heart Fire just as metal can absorb heat. If you pay attention carefully you will notice that when you feel heat around your heart because of excitement, you will normally thrust out your chest and greatly expand your lungs while inhaling. Doing this a few times reduces the pressure and the feeling of heat in the heart.

To do Qigong massage for your lungs, place both hands on the center of your chest just above the solar plexus. Inhale deeply, and then exhale while lightly pushing both hands to the sides. Do this until your lungs feel relaxed and comfortable. This massage is also good for the heart.

#### **5. Heart:**

Qigong teachers do not normally encourage students to massage their own hearts unless they are fairly advanced in skill. The heart is the most vital organ, and if you mistreat it you are in big trouble.

When you massage your heart, unlike all the other internal organs, you cannot place your mind on it. If you do place your mind on your heart you will lead more Qi to it and make it even more positive. You may have noticed that when your heart is beating fast after exercising, if you pay attention to your heartbeat it will start beating even faster. A person who is prone to heart attacks can possibly bring one on by paying too much attention to his heart. If your heart is beating too hard, the best thing is to pay attention to your lungs and breathe deeply and gently. After only a few breaths your heart will slow down and regain its regular pace.

Therefore, when you massage your heart, your mind should not be on your heart. Instead, keep your mind on the movement of your hands. To massage your heart, place your right hand over your heart at least three inches above your chest. Move your hand in a small clockwise circle, and gradually increase the size of the circle. This takes the Qi in the heart and spreads it out around the chest. Finally lead the Qi past the liver and down the right leg.