

Hand Pressure Points and How to Alleviate Pain

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As much as we would all love to feel 100 percent all the time, some days that's far from reality, especially as you get older. There are body parts that start to ache, chronic pains that don't let up, sniffles that keep you up at night, and headaches galore. All of which make it difficult to be a fully functioning human sometimes. If you're searching for a holistic way to manage these ailments, acupressure is one tool you can use.

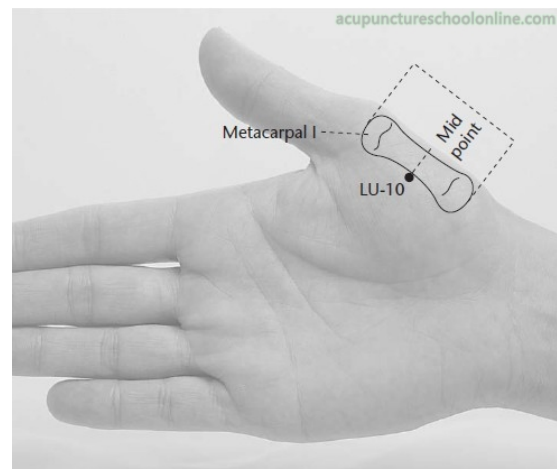
“Acupressure is a non-invasive method of stimulating the body's innate healing ability via purinergic signaling and modulation of the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems,” says acupuncturist [Jacqui Kinzig](#). “In simpler terms, stimulation of certain areas of the body can help stop many different types of symptoms, from pain to anxiety to allergies.”

The best part? Unlike acupuncture, no needles are required to reap the benefits. Even more good news: Kinzig says there are more than 400 acupressure points on the hands *alone*, which means you can inconspicuously apply pressure to these points for instant relief and no one would notice.

Note that it does matter which hand you use when doing acupressure. “For systemic or non-pain related complaints, either hand can be used,” Dr. Kinzig says. “For acute pain, it is best to use the hand on the opposite side of the body from the painful area.” So, if let's say you have lower back pain on your left side, acupressure should be done on the right hand. Ready to give acupressure a go? Here's eight pro-recommended hand pressure points you can stimulate to relieve all sorts of symptoms.

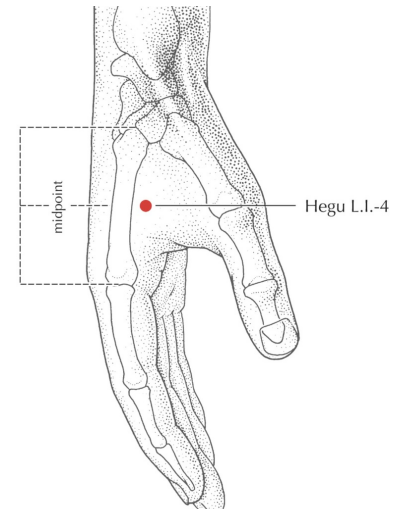
Fish Border LU 10

If you have a headache or throat pain (or both), Oakland-based acupuncturist [Janet Thomson](#), L.Ac., recommends stimulating the Fish Border acupressure point with either your thumb or the back end of a pencil, pen, or bobby pin. “To find fish border, draw a line between the outer edge of where your thumb meets your hand and your wrist,” Thomson says. “The point is located halfway between those two points, on the fleshy part of the base of the thumb at the spot where the darker skin on the back of the hand meets the lighter skin on the palm of the hand.”



Joining Valley LI 4

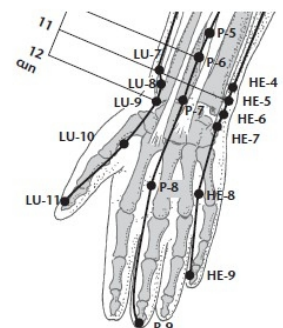
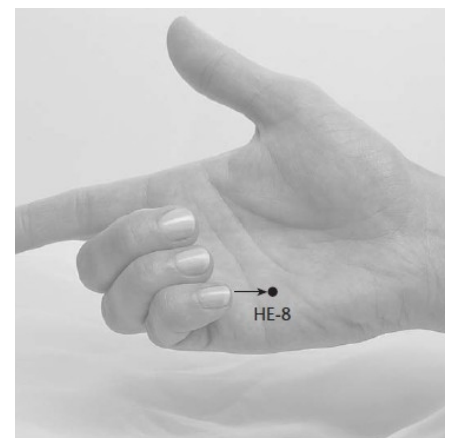
The Joining Valley hand pressure point, also known as the Large Intestine 4, is one of the most popular points because it works wonders for so many different things. “It helps with any type of headache, migraine, or facial issue, including bell’s Palsy, sinusitis, nose bleeding, sore throat, eye pain, tooth or mouth pain, and allergy symptoms,” Dr. Kinzig says. “It is also used to stimulate labor, alleviate neck pain, help constipation or diarrhea, treat hand or arm pain, and clear fever.” Tiffany Cruikshank, acupuncturist and Founder of Yoga Medicine®, adds that it’s also a great point to press on when you feel a cold coming on because it’ll give your immune system a boost.



To find the point, start by spreading your hand wide. “You’ll see a triangle forming between the base of the thumb and index finger,” Thomson says. “This point is located in the middle of the triangle where you feel the most sensitivity when you squeeze it.” Once you’ve found it, Cruikshank says to find one or two tender spots in that area and apply moderate pressure for 30 to 60 seconds each.

Lesser Palace H 8

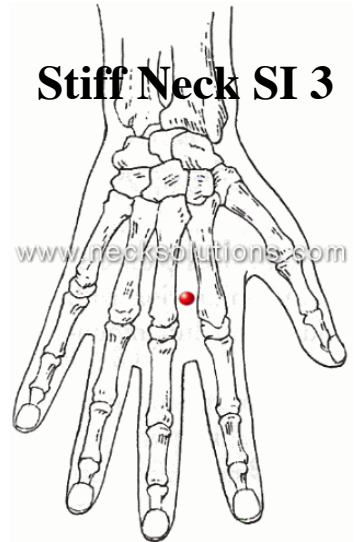
Lesser Palace is Thomson’s go-to hand pressure point for dealing with feelings of fear, sadness, worry, agitation, or anxiety. The point is located on the palm of your hand. To locate it, simply make a fist. It’ll be where your pinky finger touches the palm.



Stiff Neck SI 3, Falling from Pillow, Drop Pillow

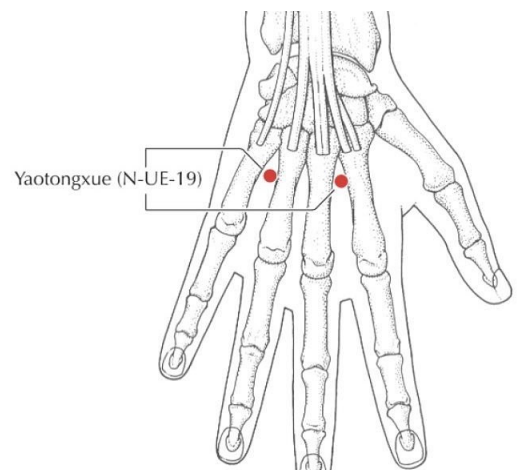
As its name suggests, the stiff neck point is great for loosening up neck and shoulder pain and tension, especially if you work behind a computer all day. “The point is located on the back of the hand in the divot just before the knuckles of the index finger and middle finger,” Thomson says. “It is great to use the pressure point at the same time as gently moving your neck from side to side to release the stiff neck.”

Stiff Neck SI 3



Yao Tong Xue

If you struggle with lower back pain and stiffness or acute lumbar spasms, this point is for you. It actually consists of two points on the top of the hand, Dr. Kinzig says. One is between the second and third metacarpals (aka the bones in your hand) and the other sits between the fourth and the fifth metacarpals. “The points are located in the depressions just before the metacarpals meet,” she says. Once you find the points on the hand that is on the same side as the back pain, apply firm pressure to both points simultaneously for 30 seconds.



Pericardium 8 Lao Gong

Feeling anxious? Give the Pericardium 8 point a good massage. “It can help quiet our minds when we can’t fall asleep,” Dr. Kinzing says. “It is also useful for palpitations or chest pain.” To pinpoint it, make a fist. It’ll be where the tip of the middle fingers hits the palm. You can use the middle finger, or another finger from the opposite hand, to press firmly on the point for 60 seconds.



Small Intestine 3

The small intestine 3 point, Dr. Kinzig says, “alleviates neck pain and stiffness, back pain, occipital headache, red and painful eyes, and hand pain.” It’s located on the pinky side of the hand. “When a loose fist is made, this point is at the end of the upper palmar crease, just below the pinky finger.” Apply firm pressure using a nail on the opposite hand and hold for 30 to 60 seconds.



Ba Xie

For hand pain and osteoarthritis in the hands, Cruikshank recommends working with the Ba Xie points situated on the webbing between each finger. “The pressure here also helps to create some mobility and space between the joints which also helps hydrate the connective tissue around the joints,” she says. “Press into the webbing between each finger for 30 to 60 seconds. Try to press in a way that creates some space between the bones there.”

