



THE TREATMENT ROOM

Courthouse Square, Straffan Road, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.
 Tel: 086 879 0534. Web: www.treatmentroom.ie. Email: chris@treatmentroom.ie

19/4/21

Welcome, dear reader, to 'The Treatment Room' Acupuncture/Acupressure Point of the Week!

In association with, Tai Chi Your Way, www.taichiyourway.com

This week, we shall review Acupuncture & Acupressure point **Stomach 34** (Aka ST-34, aka Liangqiu, aka 'Beam Mound').

See the box just below for point benefits, locations and contraindications.

Stomach 34		
Benefits	Location	Contraindications
<p>This Acu-point benefits epigastric pain, reflux & breast tenderness. It also clears water retention & wind from the digestive system. It benefits swelling & pain of the knee, rigidity of the knee, pain in the leg, & numbness of the lower leg.</p>	<p>The diagram shows the Stomach Meridian (ST) points on the leg. ST 34 is located on the anterior aspect of the leg, between the knee and the ankle, and is highlighted with a yellow circle. Other points shown include ST 31, ST 32, ST 33, ST 35, ST 36, ST 37, ST 38, ST 39, ST 40, ST 41, ST 42, ST 43, ST 44, and ST 45.</p>	<p>Do NOT use these points whilst driving or while in water.</p>

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Stomach 34 is an interesting Acu-point, for a number of reasons. In this weekly series, it will mark the first 'Xi point' that we have covered. 'Xi' roughly translates as 'Accumulation' and 'Cleft'. Accumulation points or 'Xi' points are special Acu-points located where the Qi & Blood of an Acupuncture channel converge and pool within a natural space or opening. (Hence the additional use of the term 'cleft' here when describing these types of points.)

These Accumulation points are primarily at or near the joints of our bodies, where our flowing Qi has to slow down, so as to safely pass through the narrower passageways available within our joints. When considering how best to help you conceptualise Xi points, I found myself thinking of Kinnegad, in County Westmeath, long before the M4 & M6 motorways were built. Back then, all of the previously free flowing traffic had no choice but to slow down in order to pass safely through this charming, but narrow bottleneck. Of course, this type of occurrence was normal in almost every small town on a Friday evening, or on big GAA match days in 1980's & 1990's Ireland. Since then however, our new motorways have relieved a great deal of pressure, congestion and frustration from the national driving experience. So, on that note, if you would like to improve your internal traffic flow, and especially around your knees, then you would benefit from working with this specialist Acu-point.

Accumulation points are generally used in clinics for treating painful joints. However, in addition, they are also used for treating acute disorders of their related organs, which, in this particular case, would be disorders of the Stomach. They also serve to benefit the entire area serviced by the Meridian. Stimulating these points can help regulate and improve our circulation of Qi & Blood, thus augmenting our overall functional power, and just as importantly, our capacity to bend and to flow. By this, I mean mentally and emotionally as well as being able to bend the knee itself.

Whenever Qi and Blood struggle to reach an area, the area soon becomes deficient. Over time, it will become stagnant, and, if untreated, the area will become weaker and weaker. Often, it will become rigid and hot, or water bound, stiff, swollen and cold. This Acu-point, however, can be used to counteract these woes, and if used regularly, will ultimately benefit our overall motor control, in addition to benefitting some of the circulation issues afflicting our knees.

In TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine) terminology, Stomach 34 subdues rebellious Qi, removes obstructions from the channel and expels damp & wind. Therefore, it can be used for acute Stomach pain, vomiting & reflux (aka rebellious Qi), and even acute breast pain (aka mastitis). If you check out the

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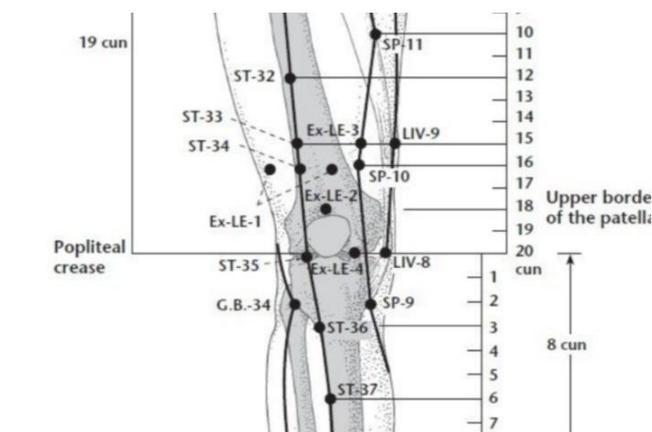
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very last diagram in this commentary, you will notice the Stomach channel passes right through the breast & the nipple at ST-17. P.S. ST-17 is never needed! It's merely an anatomical reference point or marker on the channel only)

This point also influences a number of Acu-points in the surrounding region, and as you will note from the diagram just below, there are quite a few. The Acu-points titled 'EX' are what are known as 'Extraordinary points', and I shall cover their extraordinary significance, in detail, later on in this series. However, I will say that the points marked EX-LE-1 are collectively known as 'The Mothering Point' in Medical Chi Kung. Those of you, who regularly attend Stuart Breen's T'ai Chi & Chi Kung classes at the Irish T'ai Chi Chuan Association, will have heard him refer to this point many times.

The Mothering Point greatly influences the descent of Qi, as do the Stomach channel points overall. So, these points are very helpful in assisting us to ground ourselves, by which I mean, they help us to calm down and to settle comfortably. The points denoted in the diagram by the initials SP represent Spleen points, GB stands for Gallbladder and LIV for Liver. Finally, the 'popliteal crease' is simply a fancy label, for the rather common, but significant crease at the back of our knees.



To locate Stomach 34, sit comfortably, with your knees softly bent, and place your feet upon the floor. The point is located 2 cun back from the outside edge of your knee bone. The term cun, pronounced 'chun', is a measurement design in TCM in which you can use your fingers rather like a measuring tape. Please see the next illustration below for a better example of what I am talking about.

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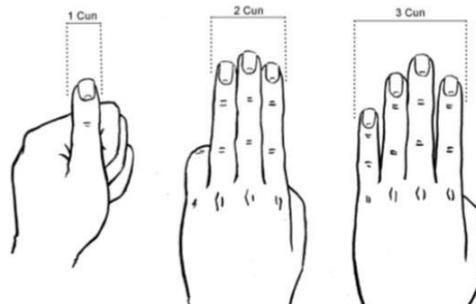
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If, for any reason, you would like to appear to be rather fancy when practicing Acupressure, you may, like the good lady, Hyacinth Bucket, from the British TV Show 'Keeping Up Appearances', (pronounced Boo-kay, you do understand) wish to refer to this point's location as "being two cun from the laterosuperior border of the patella". However, all that this rather fancy anatomical jargon means is that the point is located three finger widths back from the side edge of the very top of your knee bone. The point is directly in line with the knee edge, as is illustrated in the diagram above.



If you wish, you can stimulate this point by pressing into and out of it up to a hundred times, similar to as you might do to a pen that had a clicker on top of it. Try to stay soft and relaxed as you do this, and resist holding your breath if you can. If you lose your breath whilst using this point, then this is usually a good indicator that you are working too hard. The very same applies if you find yourself becoming tense elsewhere. It does take a while to clear these points, and that will simply mean consistency, and working in a sustainable and enjoyable way.

Alternatively, you can press into and hold this point at a depth of your choosing, for up to one minute. In most cases, these points will be tender, perhaps even hard or quite sore, but don't worry, using these points regularly and daily will help alleviate this discomfort and improve your overall health. Be warned, there is a natural mound here, which is formed by interweaving musculature, so don't be alarmed if you find it. Rest assured, it's supposed to be there. It's even referred to in the name of this point, 'Beam Mound'.

For those interested, the item in the photo just below is called a 'Body Go Massage Bar'. I recently picked one up online at www.homestoreandmore.ie for a mere €9.99, including delivery fee. What a bargain! This Massage Bar is a handy tool if you feel you would benefit from deeper stimulation, and/or if your muscles are very tense above and around your knee. If these muscles are hard or

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tense, and/or your fingers are sore, then you will need a tool, and this is a very good one.



To use it, you simply roll the massage bar over the area, but never over the knee bone itself. This will sting, so please be warned! Also, if you intend to use it, wear some loose, comfortable clothing, but not your best trousers, as the massage spikes may leave a wee mark. I also wouldn't recommend using it on naked skin! It will pepper your skin with marks, but these are only temporarily, unless you go too hard, for too long, which I certainly wouldn't advise.

Following this work, it is very nice to massage the area around the knee by hand. Employing both hands, adopt soft open palms, and gently rub around the knee in a gentle circle. You can motion across the top and front of the lower thigh, down the insides of the knee, and back up the outsides. In doing so, you will activate 'The Mothering Point' and many of the other Acu-points seen in the diagram on page 3. It will help if you're wearing soft trousers at this stage too. P.S. Massaging an area inadvertently activates Acupuncture points, so consider this as you work away.

Remember, as I have said before, please don't beat the bejesus out of yourself when applying Acupressure! Less is more, especially if you intend using these points daily. You may work a point when it is sore, and these points are almost always tender, but please be mindful of respecting your limits, and don't forget to balance what you do on one thigh, by repeating the same on the other.

Ok, enjoy! See you next week!

P.S. Coming next week, an Acupuncture Point for Hayfever!

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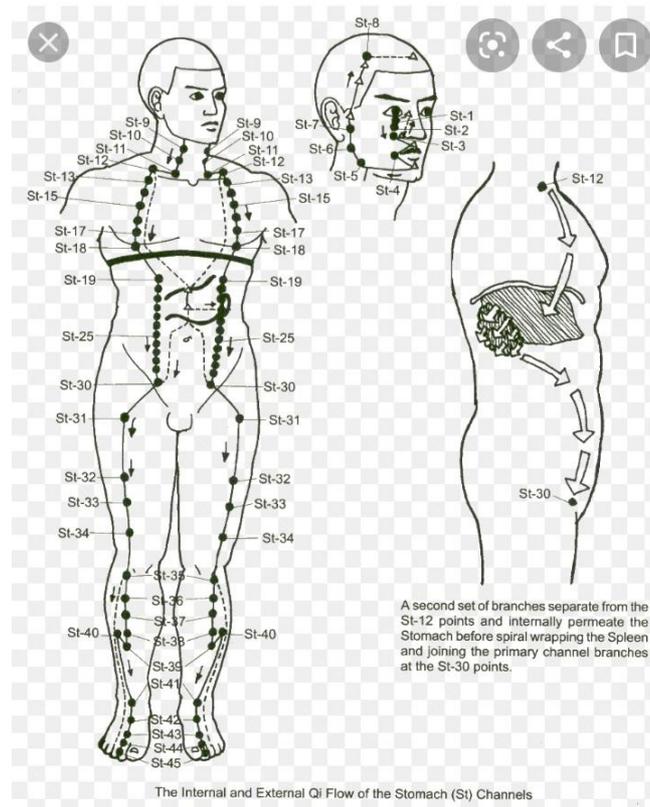
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P.S. (2) Below you will find a schematic of the pathway of the entire Stomach Meridian (aka channel).



The Treatment Room is accredited by The Acupuncture Foundation Professional Association. (AFPA Membership number: 8556) & by The Irish T'ai Chi Chuan Association (ITCCA).

Best wishes,
Chris Mc Mahon,
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