

Week 4: Importance of Sleep and Acupressure

In this session, we will discuss healthy sleeping behaviors and the importance of maintaining healthy sleep for overall health and well-being. We will also discuss acupressure.

Daily Agenda

- Centering meditation: Grounding and Arriving Meditation (GAM)
- Go around- Rose and Thorn
- Home practice review
 - Pleasant Events Chart
- Break
- Health topic: Sleep and Long Covid
- Health topic: Establishing Healthy Sleep Patterns; Stress and Mindfulness
- Health topic: Acupressure
- Requests for Nutrition Information
- Home Practice

Sleep and Long Covid

- Research suggests that about 40% of people with Long COVID report sleep issues among their symptoms. Problems can include insomnia, daytime sleepiness, waking up several times a night, or not feeling refreshed in the morning.
- Both pain and poor sleep can be symptoms of Long COVID. In addition, pain and poor sleep are intimately connected outside of Long COVID. Studies of healthy people who are woken from sleep every hour or so show that lack of sleep makes them more sensitive to pain. In addition, their immune systems do not work properly.
- Disturbed sleep can be part of the condition and is one diagnostic criterion. Having disturbed sleep is probably not because of something you are doing wrong, but because of the disease. We have some suggestions for tools to hopefully help with establishing healthy sleep patterns to counteract the symptoms from the disease and support with acceptance of new sleep routines.

The Importance of Sleep

What is insomnia?

- Insomnia is a common sleep disorder where individuals have a challenging time falling asleep, staying asleep, or both.
- Insomnia can be acute, meaning short-term, or chronic, meaning long-term.
 - » Acute insomnia can last for a few days or even weeks.

» Chronic insomnia can last for a month or longer.

- Sometimes insomnia can be related to another medical condition, medication, or substance. This is called secondary insomnia.
- Other times insomnia is its own distinct disorder. Many changing life circumstances can trigger insomnia, such stress or a traumatic event.

How does sleep affect my overall health?

- The short-term effects of insomnia can include a lack of energy, irritability, lack of motivation, and trouble focusing. There are many long-term effects of insomnia, including anxiety disorders, depression, suppressed immune function, stress in the stomach and intestines, headaches, and weight gain.

Establishing Healthy Sleep Patterns

Joyful movement is great, but not too late in the day. Movement too close to our bed times can make it harder to relax and transition into sleep. Not being able to move much because of Post Exertion Malaise and fatigue could possibly have an effect on sleep. Notice on days you do have movement, how it effects your sleep.

Try to get outside in natural sunlight for at least 30 minutes each day. If possible, wake up with the sun or use very bright lights in the morning. Sleep experts recommend that, if you have problems falling asleep, you should get an hour of exposure to morning sunlight and turn down the lights before bedtime. **If you can't get outside, Bright Light Therapy is a great alternative.**

Focus on foods and beverages that promote sleep. Chamomile tea, warm milk, bananas, soy, whole grain cereal, apples, almonds, and walnuts are all great choices. Try to consume these beneficial snacks at least 1 hour before bed so that the body has time to absorb the sleep promoting nutrients. Alcohol does not help us sleep better.

Take a supplement to help support healthy sleep. Taking a melatonin supplement (0.5-3 mg) one hour before bedtime. Melatonin can have side effects so consult your doctor with questions.

Be mindful of caffeine. Caffeine is in coffee, colas, certain teas, and chocolate, and its effects can take as long as 8 hours to wear off fully. Therefore, a cup of coffee in the late afternoon can make it hard for you to fall asleep at night. Be mindful of nicotine. Nicotine is also a stimulant, often causing smokers to sleep only very lightly. In addition, smokers often wake up too early in the morning because of nicotine withdrawal.

Avoid large meals and beverages late at night. Some commonly prescribed heart, blood pressure, or asthma medications, as well as some over-the-counter and herbal remedies for coughs, colds, or allergies, can disrupt sleep patterns. If you have trouble sleeping, talk to your doctor or pharmacist to see whether any drugs you're taking might be contributing to your trouble sleeping and ask whether they can be taken at other times during the day or early in the evening.

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Try to find a sleep schedule that works for you. Getting into a rhythm of going to bed and waking up at the same time each day can be very helpful for training your body to sleep well.

Find ways to relax before bed. Try not to overschedule your day so that you can set aside time to unwind. A relaxing activity, such as reading, journaling, taking a bath, or listening to music, is a wonderful addition to your bedtime ritual.

Have an inviting sleeping space. Get rid of anything in your bedroom that might distract you from sleep, such as noises, bright lights, an uncomfortable bed, or warm temperatures. You sleep better if the temperature in the room is kept on the cool side. ATV, cell phone, or computer in the bedroom can be a distraction and deprive you of needed sleep. Turn the clock's face out of view so you don't worry about the time while trying to fall asleep.

Try a body scan or seated meditation. If you find yourself still awake after staying in bed for more than 20 minutes or if you are starting to feel anxious or worried, get up and do some relaxing activity, like deep breathing, a body scan, or seated meditation, until you feel sleepy. The anxiety of not being able to sleep can make it harder to fall asleep.

Promote Positive Thoughts. Once sleep becomes a problem negative thought will quickly follow. These thoughts often come to mind automatically, but usually they are not completely true. Despite that fact, they still trigger the stress response, (also called "fight or flight") and worsen insomnia.

The good news is that the opposite is also true. Positive thoughts can lead to positive changes in the mind and body. This is one of the principals behind a very successful type of therapy called Cognitive Behavioral Psychology.

- » Step 1: Identify Negative Sleep Thoughts--Write them down.
- » Step 2: Assess any distortions; is there another way of looking at the situation?
- » Step 3: Reframe the negative statements in a more positive way

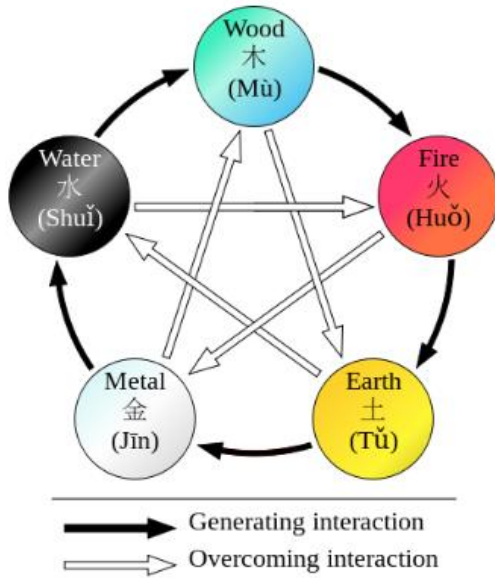
Acupressure

What is acupressure?

- Acupressure is a bodywork technique with roots in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). To cite the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, the ancient beliefs on which TCM is based include the following:
 - The human body is a miniature version of the larger, surrounding universe.
 - Harmony between two opposing yet complementary forces, called yin and yang, supports health, and disease results from an imbalance between these forces.
 - We each have yin and yang forces within us. Yin forces include feminine and dark forces. Yang includes masculine and light forces.
 - Five elements—fire, earth, wood, metal, and water—symbolically represent all phenomena, including the stages of human life, and explain the functioning of the body and how it changes during disease.
 - Qi, a vital energy that flows through the body, performs multiple functions in maintaining health.

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- Traditional Chinese medical theory describes special acupoints, or acupressure points, that lie along energy meridians, or invisible channels, in your body. These points are named after body organs and are numbered along the meridian line. They also have Chinese names. Acupressure targets the same energy meridians as those targeted with acupuncture. It is believed that through these meridians flows vital energy --qi. It is also believed that 12 major meridians connect specific organs or body parts, organizing a system of communication throughout your body. According to this theory, when one of these meridians is blocked or out of balance, illness can occur. Acupressure and acupuncture aim to help restore balance in the body.
- For example, if two people sprain their ankle, one may heal quickly and the other may develop chronic pain. Using TCM, one could say that the person who develops chronic pain has an imbalance in their qi, so they are not able to heal themselves. Once this imbalance is corrected, their body's natural healing mechanisms will begin to work.

What conditions can acupressure help alleviate?

- » Chronic pain
 - » Mental stress
 - » Migraine headaches
 - » Tension headaches
 - » Chronic fatigue
 - » Emotional imbalances
 - » Recovery from addiction
 - » Nausea and vomiting
 - » Fibromyalgia
 - » Irritable bowel syndrome
 - » Hot flashes
 - » Female infertility
 - » Insomnia
- You can benefit from routine self-acupressure treatments when used in collaboration with appropriate medical care.

How do I administer acupressure?

- You can learn acupressure and perform self-treatments at home on yourself and others. It is extremely cost-effective. No special equipment is required; the only items a person needs to perform acupressure effectively are their own fingers and/or toes.
- It can be performed anywhere and anytime and as often as you like. No drugs are involved with acupressure; hence, there is no opportunity for drug-related side-effects to occur.
 - Before applying acupressure, it is important to prepare. Wear comfortable, loose clothing. You may want to trim your fingernails. It is best to avoid acupressure immediately after a large meal, and make sure your body is not cold try to relax in a comfortable position, close your eyes, and breathe deeply. Meditation will develop your ability to feel the effects.
 - You can use your hand or other body parts to stimulate an acupoint. The middle finger is often the strongest and most sensitive, and thus the best finger to use. If you prefer, or if it is more comfortable, you can use a blunt object, such as a pencil eraser.
 - When applying pressure, do not massage the point. Instead, press firmly enough so that the sensation is somewhere between pleasure and outright pain. You should not be pulling the skin. Instead, push down at a 90-degree angle and imagine the pressure going deep into your body.

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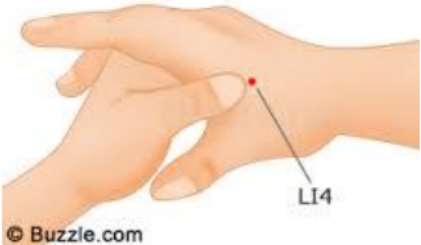

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- Use the force of your body to get behind your finger so that you do not tire. The amount of force needed depends on the body part. Apply pressure for about two minutes. If your hand gets tired, take a moment to shake it out, then reapply the pressure. Note that this is not a test of strength or endurance!
- You may experience the following sensations. These are common and normal: a pulsation under the acupressure point, pain appears at a different location (this is called referred pain and means that those two points are related), a sensation of energy or a current moving through your body.
- Acupressure points are often tender. Pay attention to the effects that different points have on you. If a point is uncomfortable, move onto another point.
- Sometimes points on opposite sides of the body will have different effects. If symptoms increase, do not use that side or point.

Avoid acupressure if:

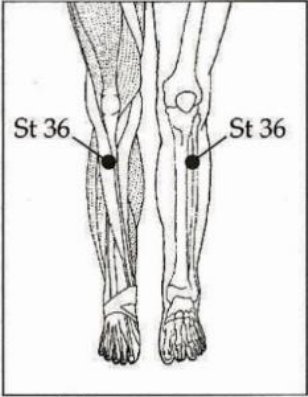

- You are seriously injured or have persistent symptoms; instead, you should seek urgent medical treatment.
- As the only treatment for illness; do not discontinue medications without talking to your primary doctor
- If the point in question is under a mole, wart, varicose vein, abrasion, bruise, cut, or any other breaks in the skin
- If you are pregnant, you should see a trained medical acupuncturist before starting any acupressure treatments.

What are some common acupressure points?

Acupressure points:	Useful for:
<p>Name: Large Intestine 4 (LI4)</p> <p>How to find: Found by sliding your finger from the knuckle of your index finger towards your wrist stopping in the depression where the thumb and the index finger bones meet and pressing where most tender.</p> <p>Or try this: Push the thumb against the base of the index finger. The point is located on the highest point of the bulge of the muscle, level with the end of the crease.</p>  <p>© Buzzle.com http://www.buzzle.com/articles/pressure-points-for-nausea.html</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stress ✓ Headaches: migraines and tension type ✓ Toothaches ✓ Facial pain ✓ Neck pain ✓ Cold and sinus symptoms ◆ Avoid if pregnant as it can induce labor
<p>Name: Heart 7 (HT7)</p> <p>How to find: Found by sliding your finger across your wrist crease from the thumb side towards the pinky side and stopping when you hit the bone and pressing where most tender.</p>  <p>Shenmen (HT-7)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Anxiety ✓ Insomnia ✓ Heart palpitations ✓ Depression



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<p>Name: Stomach36 (ST36)</p> <p>How to find: Slide your 4 fingers up your shin against the outer side edge of your bone. Stop when your fingers hit the lower edge of your kneecap. The point is under your pinky. If you are in the right place, a muscle should pop out as you</p>  <p>move your foot up and down.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Knee pain ✓ Gastrointestinal discomfort ✓ Muscle aches ✓ Depression ✓ Anxiety ✓ Health promotion and longevity
<p>Name: Liver 3 (LV3)</p> <p>How to find: You need to take off your shoe to find this point. Found in a depression by sliding your finger between the first and second toes, until where the tendons meet, on the top of your foot, then press where it is most sore.</p>  <p>© Buzzle.com http://www.buzzle.com/articles/how-to-put-someone-to-sleep-using-pressure-points.html</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stress ✓ Anger ✓ Irritability ✓ Headaches ✓ Limb pain ✓ Insomnia ✓ Emotional upset ✓ Menstrual cramps
<p>Name: Kidney 3 (KD3)</p> <p>How to find: This is the squishy space between the inner ankle bone and the Achilles tendon. It is behind the inner ankle bone, in line with the ankle bone.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Low back pain from weak knees ✓ Ankle pain ✓ Heel pain ✓ Insomnia ✓ Anxiety

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 <p>© Buzzle.com http://www.buzzle.com/articles/how-to-put-someone-to-sleep-using-pressure-points.html</p>	
<p>Name: Kidney 1 (KD 1)</p> <p>How to find it: Found by sliding your finger along the bottom of your foot between the big toe and the second toe falling into a depression slightly below the bottom of the big toe joint, pressing where it is most sore.</p> <p>Or try this: Squish your toes down toward the middle of your foot. This point is located in the dimple that results near the middle of your foot.</p>  <p>© Buzzle.com http://www.buzzle.com/articles/how-to-put-someone-to-sleep-using-pressure-points.html</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Insomnia✓ Poor memory✓ Anxiety✓ Palpitations✓ Hot flashes

Healthy Recipe: Black Bean and Corn Salad

Ingredients (salad)

- 2, 15-ounce cans of black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1, 15-ounce can of corn (no added salt), drained and rinsed (or thawed, frozen corn)
- 1 large carrot, diced
- 1 red or orange bell pepper, seeded, scored, and diced
- 1 ripe avocado, peeled and diced
- 2 tablespoons chopped parsley or cilantro

Ingredients (dressing)

- ¼ Cup of extra virgin olive oil
- 1 clove of garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon ground chili powder
- ¼ teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- Juice from one lemon or lime



Image credit: www.onceuponachef.com

Instructions

1. Combine rinsed and drained beans with corn, carrots, bell pepper, and chopped herbs
2. Whisk together dressing ingredients and splash over salad.
3. Top with diced avocado. Can be eaten immediately, and it gets even better as it sits. Refrigerate leftovers.

Health Benefits

- » When black beans and corn are combined, they have all 9 essential amino acids, creating a complete protein. Complete proteins are the “building blocks” of the body.
- » Plant proteins like beans, whole grains, nuts, seeds and vegetables offer the body a wide variety of nutrients, like healthy fats, minerals, vitamins and compounds called antioxidants, which can prevent disease.

Poem and Quote

Weather

All our feelings, thoughts and sensations
are like the weather
that passes through, without affecting
the nature of the sky itself.
The clouds, winds, snow and rainbows
come and go, but the sky is always
simply itself, as it were, a container for these passing phenomena.
We practice to let our minds be that sky,
and to let all these mental and physical phenomena
arise and vanish like the changing weather.
in this way, our mind can remain balanced and centered,
without getting swept away in the drama of every passing storm"

-Segal, Williams & Teasdale 2002 Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy

"I have great respect for the past.
If you don't know where you've come from,
you don't know where you're going.
I have respect for the past, but I'm a person of the moment.
I'm here, and I do my best to be completely centered at the place I'm at,
then I go forward to the next place."

-Maya Angelou

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Home Practice

Mind-Body Practice

- Listen to the Tree Roots Meditation

Daily Life Practice

- Utilize the acupuncture resources listed in the participant manual

Manual Activity

- Try to do a Body Scan before sleeping
- Practice 1 or 2 Healthy Sleep Patterns

Manual Activity

- Complete the Unpleasant Events Chart:

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Session 4	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Situation							
Body Experience							
Emotions							
Thoughts							