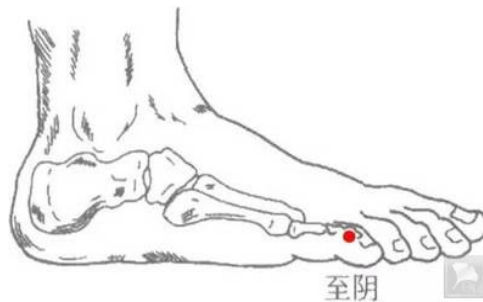


Acupressure Points for The Sustainable Doula

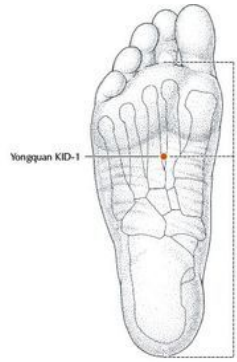
Acupressure can be used during labor in many ways to produce an energetic shift for our clients, whether that involves inducing calm, stimulating contractions, encouraging baby's descent or other effects. The following are the most helpful for doulas and commonly used during birth. Pressure to these points can be applied either during or between contractions and should be held firmly and/or with intention for at least a minute for greatest effect. Please note that these points are also contraindicated during pregnancy:



1. Bladder-67

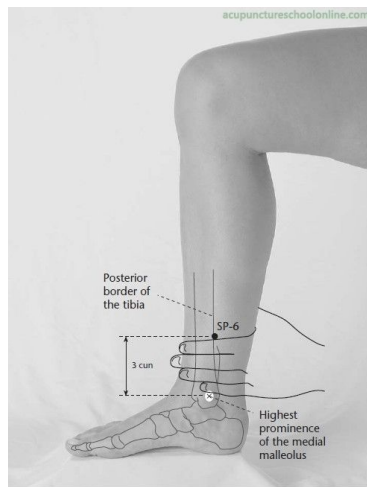
Bladder 67 is most well known for its use in moxibustion for turning breech babies. To amazing effect by the way! Its spiritual name is "extremity of yin". In Chinese medicine and philosophy, when something reaches its extreme, it transforms into its opposite, like day into night and vice versa. Due to this quality it is a strong energetic turning point that energizes us and in particular during pregnancy it energizes the baby to flip! First energetically, then literally. It's like saying, "hey baby, enough nesting and floating around in there, start getting ready for the action of being born".

It can be a handy point to use during labor for this quality of perking up baby. When client's arrive to the hospital they are typically monitored for 20-30 minutes. If baby is sleeping and doesn't show enough heart rate variability they will want the mother to stay on the monitor until they get the tracing they want. To get her off the monitor and into a more labor friendly position as fast as possible, you can press this point to offer the command, "perk up baby, it's time for action!" and you will see baby's heart rate respond immediately. Sometimes a snack or sip of something sweet can help with this too.



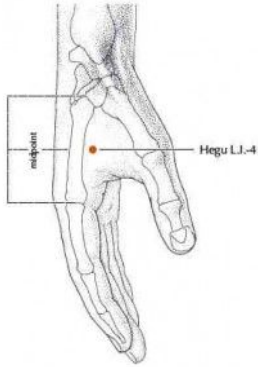
2. Kidney-1

The kidneys are associated with the adrenals in Chinese medicine which controls our fear and stress response. This kidney point helps calm anxiety. Due to its location, it can help a person feel more grounded and rooted if labor starts to feel out of control in some way. **The command is “calm down, you’re safe”.** Read more here: <http://www.yiskaobadia.com/single-post/2017/03/14/Bubbling-Spring>



3. Spleen-6

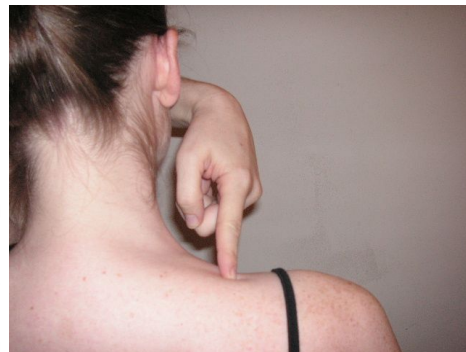
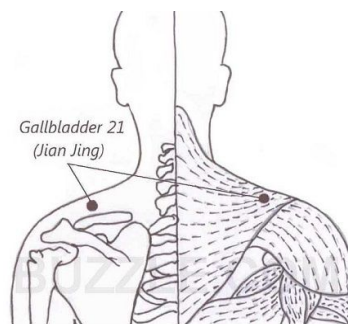
The 3 meridians of the inner leg (spleen, liver and kidney) all meet at this point, located 4 finger-breadths up from the inner ankle bone bilaterally, and travel upward toward the pelvic bowl and uterus. This point can positively affect blood flow to the uterus, even stimulating contractions. Once positional considerations have been addressed, this is a great point to use if there is a lull in labor, perhaps after a rest, as an alternative to other interventions such as pitocin. **The command here is “go uterus go!”**



4. Colon-4

The movement of the colon or large intestine is all about letting go and descending so this point is perfect for birth! It helps draw energy downward and releases tension. It is also thought to have an effect on encouraging contractions and reducing the feeling of pain especially when pressed during contractions. Be aware to actually pinch the point in the muscle as demonstrated in the image, not just press the skin in the webbing.

A fun way to hold these points bilaterally is to criss-cross your arms at the wrist standing opposite the laboring person and hold this point on both of their hands at the same time, creating an infinity shaped loop between the two of you. Only you cross your arms, their arms should remain open and relaxed. The command here is "let go".



5. Gallbladder-21

GB-21 is located in the middle of the line between the base of the neck and the outer tip of the shoulder blade. Downward pointed pressure here can be both relaxing as well as encouraging the progress of labor by stimulating the descending movement of energy in the body and its subsequent effect on the baby. The command here is "drop down" which can be used to effect mother or baby. You may also come to this point if you notice your client raising their shoulders and holding a lot of tension in that area.