

3 ACUPOINTS

FOR BALANCE DURING TRANSITIONS

Have you ever noticed that a few weeks of “silence” can be felt between seasons? Or do you notice that at the end of the summer the days get shorter and the air gets more humid? Chinese medicine teaches that the transition weeks between seasons have their own energy. How do you move with that? Which acupressure points are the best to massage?

By: Lilian Kluivers

The transitions between seasons belong to the Earth Element according to the theory of the Five Elements of Traditional Chinese Medicine. During these transitions, the body tunes in to the vibration of the new season. After all, every part of the year is an expression of its own balance between yin and yang. In spring the energy rises, in autumn draws in again. Trees show this clearly: in spring buds appear on previously bare branches, which swell and unfold into leaves that bravely defy the night frost. This is followed by an exuberant period of growth and flowering.

Transition

By the end of July, the yang energy is still clearly tangible. The sun's rays give their warmth to the earth. But at the same time, a downward movement is sensible: the branches of plants and trees hang under the weight of the fruit. The gravity of the earth attracts everything. Autumn announces itself with the first falling leaves in mid-August. Nature is reducing its activity. Rest follows.

Earth periods in a year

The energetic seasons start on different dates than the meteorological seasons. On top of that, there are different ideas and therefore different dates.

I recommend feeling instead of purely trusting the dates given: when it's a very warm and humid day in autumn: work with the element of Metal and Earth. On an icing cold day, on the contrary, work with the element of Water – no matter what season you live in at that moment.

The following is common for the northern hemisphere (day/month):

Spring: 15/2-26/4	Earth: 27/4-15/5
Summer: 16/5-26/7	Earth: 27/7-14/8
Autumn: 15/8-27/10	Earth: 28/10-17/11
Winter: 17/11-26/1	Earth: 26/1-14/2

As you may notice, the Earth period is the longest in late summer. This is, among other things, because at this time of the year the air feels humid and heavy, both characteristics of the element Earth.

Acupressure

On the pages below I will discuss three acupoints that you can massage yourself, or apply as a Do-In or Yoga teacher in your classes. They are acupoints of the meridians that belong to the Earth element, the element of the transition phases that you can associate with the harvest (also figuratively), digestion, nutrition, stability, support, strength, and calmness. When you massage these acupoints regularly, you'll give yourself and others a relaxed transition between seasons in a very simple way.

STOMACH 36 “LEG THREE MILES”

An acupressure point that gives energy and strength, so you can follow your Tao in a centered way.

Physically it strengthens digestion, so you get more energy. It also gives strength to the muscles and gives energy when your limbs feel too heavy to start moving.

As the Earth point of the Stomach meridian, Stomach 36 optimally strengthens the Earth qualities, also **emotionally**. A massage of this acupoint gives a sense of stability and centering.



Spiritually this point gives strength to keep moving or to get moving. Certainly when you experience stagnation in your life or have trouble getting into motion and therefore get stuck in situations that don't feel right, regular massage of Stomach 36 is worth it.

The name "Leg three miles" is often explained by the story that in the Chinese army this point was treated by tired soldiers: this gave them energy to march three miles further. Similarly, the Stomach energy gives you the power to continue when you experience stagnation and to recharge with intense fatigue that prevents you from continuing your life path.

Location of Stomach 36: 3 thumb widths (cun) below the patella, 1 cun to the side from the shinbone.

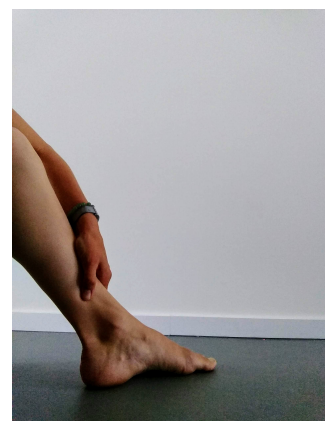
Application: Massage the tsubo on both lower legs for 2 minutes, or until you take a sigh. You can also hold the point during Do-In exercises: for example, hold it when you roll over your back, so you combine two exercises that provide energy and movement at all levels.

Contraindication: Stomach 36 is not recommended for pregnant women. It moves the energy so strongly that it could initiate the birth. For pregnant women who are past their 40 weeks, Stomach 36 is therefore used in combination with other tsubos to initiate birth.

SPLEEN 6 "THREE YIN INTERSECTION"

A tsubo to strengthen your yin energy, which gives power from inner peace.

Spleen 6 joins forces of the meridians of Kidneys, Liver and Spleen - the three yin meridians in the legs. It has a powerful **physical** effect and is widely used to balance the yin energy. The treatment of Spleen 6 allows stagnated blood to flow again. For this reason, this point is often treated in women who have menstrual problems. Spleen 6 also provides relief for menopausal symptoms, because these complaints usually result from a shortage of yin or a blockage in one of the three meridians connecting this acupoint.



Emotionally speaking, Spleen 6 reduces anxiety and thereby also improves sleep.

The **spiritual** effect of Spleen 6 is that it gives a deep connection to yourself. The point balances the three yin meridians of the legs. Yin energy stands for peace, quietness, and charging. Treatment of Spleen 6 turns so to say the volume of thoughts down so that you come into contact with the voice of your inner self - this is much wiser than your thoughts. Spleen 6 is, therefore, a tsubo that you can give acupressure to during meditation.

Location of Spleen 6: On the inside of the lower leg, just behind the edge of the shin, three thumb widths above the thickest part of your ankle bone.

Application: Massage this area or place the tip of your thumb on Spleen 6 during meditation. Connect with the silence within yourself. If you need guidance in your life, ask your inner self a question.

Contraindication: Pregnancy. Just like Stomach 36, Spleen 6 can start labor. It is therefore regularly massaged during a heavy or stagnant delivery.

SPLEEN 3 “SUPREME WHITE”

Power, grounding, and balance during transitions.

The **physical** effect of Spleen 3 is that it dissolves mucus. It, therefore, supports the functioning of the Lungs, the meridians associated with fall and closely connected to the Spleen meridian. Spleen 3 ensures that life energy *ki* flows in the right direction.

Spleen 3 is the source point as well as the Earth point on the Spleen meridian. It thereby establishes a connection between the inherited energy from the ancestral line (the jing, or prenatal energy) and the energy that you create during your life (the postnatal energy). It, therefore, has a reinforcing effect on the Spleen energy and the overall energy level.

Emotionally and mentally, Spleen 3 helps to get out of your head. It gives peace of mind and ensures that you are in the here and now.

Spleen 3 centers **spiritually**, so that you are in contact with yourself. In addition, it provides peace and balance during transitions; both the transitions between the seasons and the transitions between different phases of life and situations.

Location: on the side of the foot, just below the knuckle of the big toe.

Application:

- Massage the point daily for two minutes or until you take a deep breath.
- Hold Spleen 3 while stretching: for example, place your fingertips on Spleen 3 when you bring your heel to your buttock to stretch the front of your leg - where the Stomach and Spleen meridians run.

