

# February Newsletter



By Ka Hang Leoungk



## Hello...

The arrival of February can only mean one thing: Valentine's Day and with that, hearts. In traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) the heart's responsibilities are mainly that of controlling the blood circulation (easy enough) as well as mental and emotional activities (hold on, what?). To understand the heart's functions I find it's a lot easier if you step back and look at the symptoms when things go wrong.

## Taking care of your (TCM) heart

Think of the fragile invalid typical of Victorian literature: delicate constitution, weakness due to prolonged illness, shortness of breath, palpitation, pale complexion, dizziness. These are all typical symptoms of a heart deficiency syndrome, which makes sense due to the poor/blocked blood circulation.

*Heart deficiency can also result in anxiety, restlessness, insomnia or frequent dreaming and this is what we mean by mental and emotional disturbances.*

On the other end of the spectrum, common symptoms of excess conditions affecting the heart include palpitation, an oppressed feeling on the chest, dizziness, and in extreme cases, chest pains. There may also be signs of confusion, insomnia or difficulty falling asleep and a tendency to be easily frightened.

Acupuncture can be very useful in balancing the heart's functions and

## settling the mind. **But what can you do on your own?**

1. Avoiding stress is a good start as stress greatly influences the heart's ability (it's no coincidence it houses the body's mental and emotional activities). This includes violent images from tv or movies; swap watching the news with just reading headlines online but not the entire story- you don't need to know all the details.

*The general idea here is one of gentleness: gentle exercises, mild (not bland) meals, simple nurturing of your body. Rather than the pounding of a boxing match imagine the slow stretch of a ballet dancer.*

2. Add a relaxation routine into your day: try tai chi, yoga, swimming or just simple walking. Rather than just doing nothing, your relaxation should have a positive sense of gentle activity.
3. At the same time incorporate some concentration training like crosswords or meditation.
4. Have a regular bedtime routine to ensure you get good quality sleep (and enough of it!).
5. Cut back on sugar and caffeine. If you can cut them out completely, that's even better.
6. Eat regularly and eat mild, easily digested food. Avoid chillies or really spicy meals.

## Lessons from everyday life

Waiting till something needs attention is often too late, maintenance is key. As an acupuncturist I am often stressing the value of prevention over cure. After all you wouldn't wait till your house started to crumble before you got in expert help, would you? Read more: <http://bit.ly/bathstory>

## How did your resolutions go?

Apparently around the third week of January was when most people broke theirs, and it appears that's because they ran out of willpower. Read the article: <http://nyti.ms/xDZuhi>

## Referrals

If you have been kind enough to refer someone to me – I want to say a big THANK YOU. That is the highest compliment and it's warmly appreciated every time.

## Other news

27 Feb to 2 March is the UK's first Acupuncture Awareness Week, supported by the British Acupuncture Council (BAcC). Stay posted for more details and a fantastic pointspace offer.

## ...And finally

Here's a really sweet collection of photos of dogs looking out windows. It's a great reminder for us to take a few minutes break just gazing out the window. Try it! <http://bit.ly/dogwindows>

## That's all for this month

As always you can email me at [hello@pointspace.co.uk](mailto:hello@pointspace.co.uk) about anything you've read here.

*Have a fantastic month and enjoy the extra day!*

## Coming Next Month

A workaholic's guide to staying healthy. . . Special offer for Acupuncture Awareness Week

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