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Acupuncture and Chiropractic: A Clinical Relationship

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I have often heard acupuncture practitioners addressing the approximately 24,000 doctors of chiropractic in the U.S. who, by individual state law, have clinical meridian acupuncture (not TCM) included as part of their scope of practice with the question, "How would the chiropractic profession like it if acupuncture practitioners were to begin focusing their attention and treating the spine?" Personally, if you were to ask me, I think they would be darn fools if they didn't!

Just as reflex points, trigger points, ayurvedic *marma* points, and Asian/European acupuncture points cannot be claimed to be owned by any one group, nation or culture, likewise the spine does not specifically belong to the domain of the chiropractic or medical profession. Both acupuncture points and the spine, because of their primordial anatomical presence, defy specific ownership.

The chiropractic profession continues to maintain its right and guards its art, science and philosophy to be the only profession which specifically diagnoses and treats the "vertebral subluxation" through spinal manipulative therapy or the chiropractic adjustment. This does not mean that other licensed health practitioners (including acupuncturists) cannot directly treat the spine; it just means they can't utilize the detection and treatment of the vertebral subluxation. Why an acupuncturist, medical practitioner, physical therapist, massage therapist or any other professional would want to own that particular concept is beyond me. This parallels the dental profession, which is the only profession licensed to diagnose and treat disorders of the teeth and gums. However, that does not eliminate us as acupuncture practitioners from treating TMJ, facial palsy, *tic douloureux* and a host of other mouth- and face-related conditions, including neurogenic toothache. I think the last thing most LAc's are interested in doing is either diagnosing and treating subluxations of the spine or diagnosing and treating tooth and gum disorders. It seems like we have much more significant conditions to deal with.

Doctors of chiropractic feel the primary way to reduce a vertebral subluxation or impingement syndrome due to spinal fixation is to manually move the vertebrae through a low-amplitude, high-

speed thrust to the vertebral segment in question. This historically produces an audible release, which most refer to as a "pop" or "crack." The adjustment is not usually painful; however, the audible release is extremely disturbing to millions of potential patients who would never consider having a chiropractic adjustment because of the noise alone. Perhaps they are the same estimated 65 percent of the population who would never consider acupuncture because they are needle-phobic.

One of the most significant approaches to the successful treatment of somato-viscero and musculo-tendinous conditions of the body is to utilize a historic approach from the archives of chiropractic which has produced an absolutely magnificent clinical response. The procedure is one in which manipulation of the spinal segments can be substituted with stimulation of the acupuncture points directly at the vertebral level to include the *Du*, *Shu* and *Hua Tuo Jia Ji* points. This procedure has been practiced by both manipulation and reflex stimulation by DCs for decades, with spectacular clinical response. It is a very quick, easy to apply and clinically significant approach, which truly has few equals. The technique is perhaps best applied with a nonpenetrating *teishen* (pressure needle), quartz piezo stimulator, or low-level laser. If one insists on using needle stimulation, it is suggested that needles be used only at the primary vertebrae in question (the one most fixated or sore to palpation), with noninvasive methods used for all other stimulation sites. This will allow you to treat a multitude of patients instead of only a few. The results are not better with a full-needle approach, just more time-consuming.

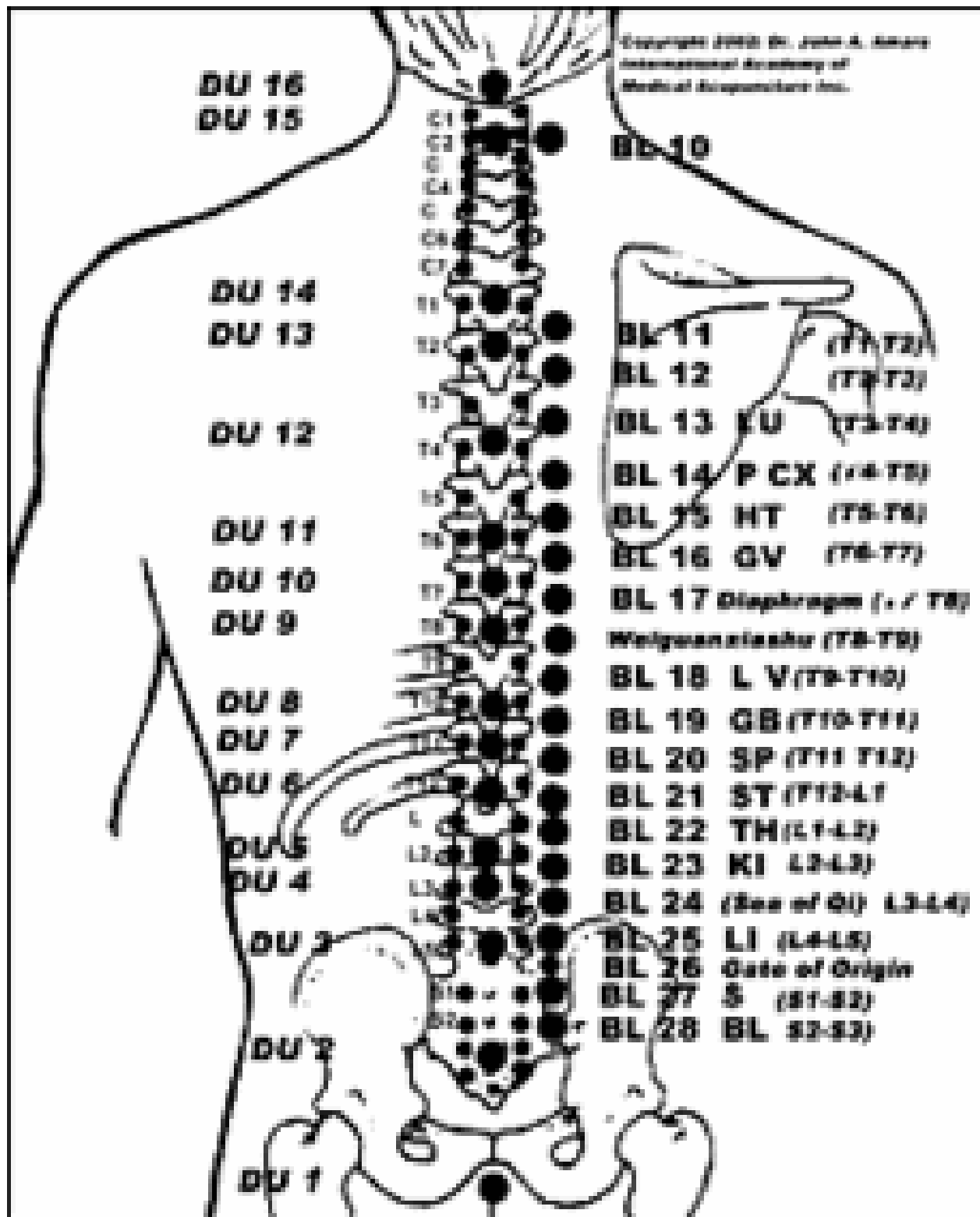


Figure 1: Reflex zones and acupuncture points.

There are six different reflex zones that specifically control significant vertebral segments of the body. Any time a person has a particular health condition affecting one or more of the named reflex zones, there are four specific vertebrae attributed to each and every zone. Palpate each of the four vertebrae, and determine which is the most painful on palpation. Treat the *Du* meridian point, the *Shu* point (if it is present) and the *Hua Tuo* point one-half human inch bilateral to each vertebra. Please note there are many references to a point being located "between the spinous process" of a particular vertebrae. This means it is on the *Du* channel, but no specific *Du* point is located at this

point. Also note that the *hua tuo* points have been extended in this graphic to include the entire cervical spine instead of from just T1 down to the sacrum. These reflex points have been used in chiropractic procedures for over 100 years. I have made specific reference to the acupuncture point number, as well as the vertebral segment as it was historically described in the practice of chiropractic. It is imperative to stimulate all points, namely the *Du*, *Shu* and *Hua Tuo* points at each specific level. This is extremely important. Please refer to Figure 1 for the precise locations of points.

Glandular zone: The glandular system controls all glands of the body, and any diagnostic conditions related to the glands to include the thyroid, adrenal, spleen, pancreas, thymus, maxillary, sudoriferous (sweat), lymph, prostate, ovaries, uterus, appetite, energy, pituitary, pineal and every other bodily structure that falls under the "glandular" category. The four specific reflex acupuncture points are GV16 (Occiput/Atlas), Du 14 (C7/T1), Du 13-T1/T2-BL 11, Du 5-L1/L2-BL 22, and between the spinous process of L5/S1-BL 26.

Eliminative zone: This zone relates to the skin, bowels (large intestine, rectum, small intestine), nasal passages, mucus, urinary tract (kidneys, bladder) lungs and sinuses. The four specific reflex acupuncture points are Du 15-C1/C2-BL 10, Du-12 T3/T4-BL 13, between the spinous process of T12/L1-BL 21, and Du 4-L2/L3-BL 23.

Nerve zone: This zone controls all functions of the central, peripheral and autonomic nervous systems, along with sympathetic, cerebro-spinal, ganglionic, and all neurogenic dysfunctions. The four specific points are between the spinous process of C3/C4, between the spinous process of T4/T5-BL 14, Du 8-T9/T10-BL 18, and between the spinous process of L3/L4 (BL 24).

Digestive zone: This zone regulates all matters of digestion and assimilation. The four specific points are between the spinous process of C4/C5, between T4/T5-BL 14, between the spinous process of T8/T9 (*wei guan xia shu*), and between the spinous process of L4/L5-BL 25.

Muscular zone: This zone does exactly what its name implies; namely, any and all dysfunction, affliction or symptomatology of the musculoskeletal-ligamento-tendino system of the body. The specific points are between the spinous process of C5/C6, Du 11-T5/T6-BL 15, Du 10-T6/T7-BL 16 GV, Du 6-T11/T12-BL 20, Du 3-L4/L5-BL 25, and between the spinous process of L5/S1-BL26 (gate of origin).

Circulatory zone: This zone controls any and all conditions related to impaired circulation, the heart, arteries, veins, lymphatics, high/low blood pressure, capillaries, etc. The four specific points are between the spinous process of C6/C7, between the spinous process of T2/T3, Du 7-T10/T11-BL 19, and Du 5-L1/L2-BL 22.

Stimulate each specific point by utilizing a *teishen* for 20 strokes in short blasts of five strokes. The piezo may be used with 3-5 plunges over each specific point. A laser is used for 12-15 seconds per point, with a 635-nm, 5-milliwatt red laser. *Gua sha* is an extremely versatile instrument, which has an exceptional approach to this treatment.

If one studies and applies the principles shared in this article, I can assure you that successful cases will abound. This might well be one of the most significant approaches to health one will ever be presented with. Unfortunately, this procedure has been lost to the vast majority of DCs; however, it's one that definitely made chiropractic a much sought-after treatment in the early days of its existence. Those acupuncturists who develop this procedure will be amply rewarded.

What you will learn by simply studying the chart provided here will no doubt alter the way you as a

practitioner will approach and treat illness as it reflexes back to the spine. Should you desire a full-page copy of this extremely important chart, please contact me with your request.

Best wishes for success utilizing this approach.

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