



CLINICAL CORNER

## Three Points for Hypertension

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Hypertension is frequently encountered in the acupuncture clinic and most typically is treated via the conceptual frameworks of heat (excess and deficiency), wind, and *qi* stagnation / blood stasis. While clinicians must always take into account the unique patterns patients present with, in almost all cases of hypertension, the above-mentioned concepts apply.

With that in mind, let's discuss two three-point acupuncture point prescriptions that can be employed to effectively ameliorate the presentations of heat, wind, and *qi* stagnation / blood stasis often at the root of the patient's hypertension.

### The Two-Point Foundation

The fundamental two-point combination we will build upon is the duo of Liv 3 + LI 11. Liv 3 is the *shu* stream / *yuan* source point of the liver channel and has the actions of spreading the liver *qi*, subduing liver *yang*, extinguishing wind, nourishing liver blood / *yin*, clearing the head / eyes, regulating menstruation, and regulating the lower *jiao*.



LI 11 is the *he sea* point of the large intestine channel and has the actions of clearing heat, cooling the blood, eliminating wind, draining damp, alleviating itching, and benefiting the sinews / joints.

When these two points are combined, the two-point prescription targets all the fundamental root issues that are commonly contributing to the manifestation of hypertension.

Often these two points alone are effective in resolving the patient's hypertension; however, if more nuance is needed, one to two extra points can be added to personalize the point prescription to accurately address the patient's unique pattern presentation. In this case, we can consider adding one point to the two-point prescription to increase the efficacy of the treatment.

#### Adding a Third Point

Du 20 is the meeting point of the governing vessel with the bladder, gallbladder, *sanjiao*, and liver channel. It has the actions of pacifying wind, subduing *yang*, raising *yang*, countering prolapse, benefiting the head / sense organs, nourishing the "Sea of Marrow," benefiting the brain, and calming the spirit.

Kid 1 is the *jing* well point of the kidney channel and has the actions of descending excess from the head (heat, wind, fire, etc.), calming the spirit, reviving the consciousness, rescuing *yang*, restraining uprising of liver *yang* / heat, and harmonizing the heart / kidneys; as well as being an important point of focus for *qi gong* practice.

Depending upon the pattern, tongue, pulse, and unique symptoms the patient expresses within the framework of hypertension, a three-point prescription can be formulated. Use Liv 3 + LI 11 as the foundation and then add either Du 20 or Kid 1. Both Liv 3 + LI 11 + Du 20 and Liv 3 + LI 11 + Kid 1 can elegantly and efficiently address issues of heat, wind, and *qi* stagnation / blood stasis.

## Other Point Combinations

Clinicians can also be creative and substitute various other points in lieu of *Du* 20 or Kid 1. For example, try adding *Du* 16 or Heart 5 / 6 / 7 to the foundation two-point prescription of Liv 3 + LI 11. If unsure of which heart meridian point to choose, simply thread one needle through all three heart points. Another option: use the foundation of Liv 3 + LI 11 and add back *shu* points for the heart, pericardium or blood: BL 14, BL 15 and BL 17.

You can also do the three-point formula of BL 14 + BL 15 + BL 17 as a back treatment first, retaining the needles for 10-15 minutes. Then remove and use the foundation formula of Liv 3 + LI 11, plus the addition of either *Du* 20 or Kid 1, as the front treatment. In this example, the three-point formula on the back and three-point formula on the front is an extremely effective solution for targeting the various patterns manifesting as hypertension, with minimal discomfort to the patient.

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