

# Patient Help Sheet

## Liver Function

Here are some tips that you can use to help balance and support your health during this time. Please feel free to call me if you have further questions or concerns.

"To insure good health: eat lightly, breathe deeply, live moderately, cultivate cheerfulness, and maintain an interest in life." – William Londen

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## Acupuncture to Strengthen the Liver

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) looks at the human body quite differently than Western medicine. In TCM, there are energetic pathways associated with specific organs in the body. When these pathways, or meridians, are out of balance the body may become diseased.

In TCM, the liver and its corresponding meridian are responsible for the smooth flow of Qi (pronounced "chee") or energy, blood and emotions. The liver is easily affected by excess stress and uncontrolled emotions. Anger is the emotion commonly associated with the liver and gallbladder. If a person is frequently irritable, gets angered easily, has difficulty relaxing or letting things go, and is unreasonable, it is safe to guess their liver Qi isn't functioning properly.

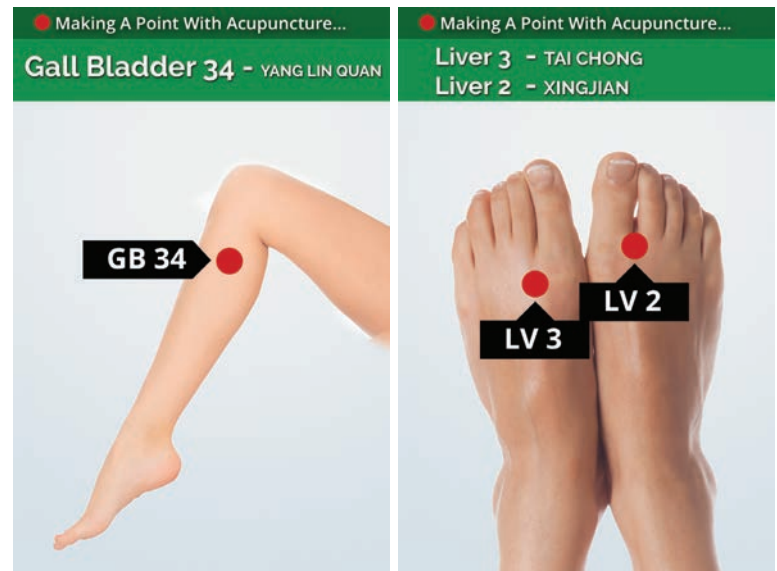
### Acupuncture for Liver Problems:

In TCM, the liver has multiple functions. The liver is responsible for the movement of Qi throughout the body. When the Qi becomes blocked or stagnant, then disease can occur. Regarding the liver, this can manifest as anger, irritability, frustration, eye problems, tendon tightness, menstrual issues or even things like cirrhosis. Liver imbalances are one of the most commonly treated issues in TCM. Almost everybody has some degree of liver imbalance. Acupuncture is very good for releasing emotions, decreasing stress and eliminating pain associated with liver imbalances. TCM can bring the body back into balance by improving circulation and increasing blood flow to areas that may need the extra nutrients carried by bodily fluids.

### Dietary Recommendations for the Liver:

Nutrition is also very important for proper liver function. Starting the day with fresh squeezed lemon juice in a glass of warm water will help decongest the liver and flush out toxins. Beets are good for cleansing the liver and tonifying the blood of the liver. Foods like ginger, peaches, scallions and garlic are good additions to the diet of anybody who is exhibiting signs of liver Qi stagnation because they move and regulate liver Qi.

A TCM practitioner can guide you along the path to wellness and they can also work cooperatively with your doctor to give you the best chance of success for strengthening your liver or helping it heal.



### Acupuncture Points for the Liver:

**LV 3** This point is located on top of the foot in the depression formed where the first and second toes meet. Liver 3 is used to spread liver Qi and nourish the blood.

**GB 34** This point is located on the outer lower leg, in the depression found behind and below the head of the fibula bone. This point should be used for almost anybody who has liver issues because it is a powerhouse at dislodging stagnant liver energy.

**LV 2** Liver 2 is located on the top of the foot, between the first and second toe, just above the web of the skin. This point is very effective at strengthening the liver, as well as harmonizing it.

### Chinese Herbs and Formulas for the Liver:

Another integral part of TCM is the use of herbs and herbal formulas. Many times the herbs can be used alone, but there is a more synergistic effect when single herbs are combined to make a formula. One such herb is the chrysanthemum flower, also known as Ju Hua, which clears liver heat. Lycium fruit, also known as Gou Qi Zi, enriches the liver to help with tendon and blood issues. Then there is a formula known as Da Bu Gan Wan. This formula is commonly called the liver nutrition formula. It can help with everything from hepatitis to general liver Qi stagnation.

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