

# ACUPRESSURE



ANXIETY, SLEEPLESSNESS, NAUSEA, AND HEADACHES

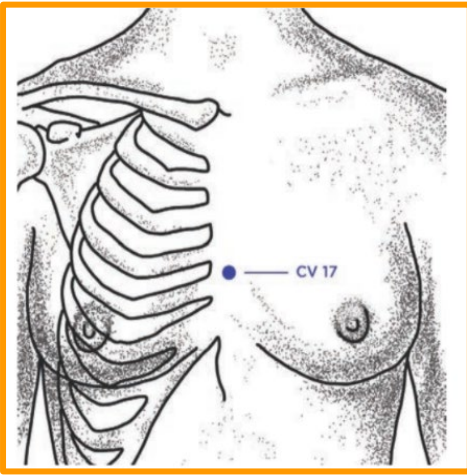
**WARNING:** Do not perform acupressure over broken, irritated, or wounded skin; bruised areas; newly formed scars; and areas with lines, tubes, or devices. Note that some pressure points in this manual are contraindicated in pregnancy (Do not use in pregnant patients <37 weeks of gestation.)

**PRECAUTION:** low platelets, increased INR, clotting disorder, and impaired or fragile skin integrity

# Nausea

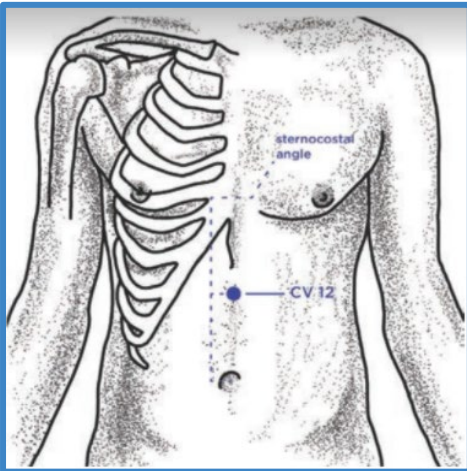
## Conception Vessel 17 Dan zhong “Chest Center”

Using the index finger, feel for a slight depression on the midline of the sternum. It may feel sensitive to the patient. Use small downward strokes.



## Conception Vessel 12 Zhong Wan “Middle Cavity”

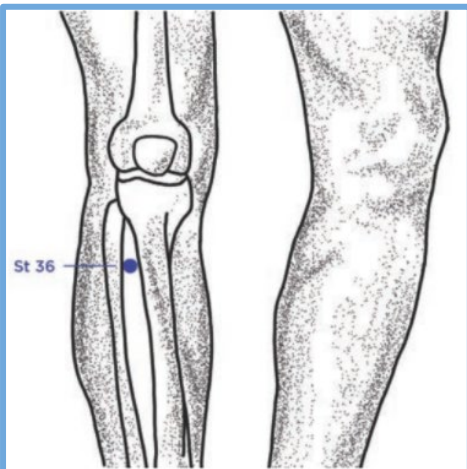
Run the forefinger along upward the lower margin of the ribcage, into the fleshy depression immediately below the solid bony edge of the sternum. This is the sternocostal angle, where the sternum and the cartilaginous xiphoid process meet. Find the midpoint between the sternocostal angle and the umbilicus. Stimulate with one or two fingers.



Pericardium 6 Nei Guan “Inner Gate” Position the hand palm up. Measure three of the patient’s fingers up from the crease of the wrist. The point is located at the level where the index finger is resting, between the two tendons that run from the wrist up the center of the arm. Stimulate with the tip of the index finger or a thumb.

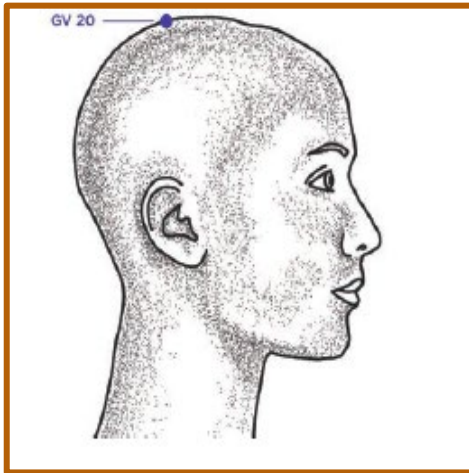


Stomach 36 Zu San Li “Three Leg Mile” Measure four of the patient’s finger widths down from the bottom edge of the knee cap. The point is at this level, one finger breadth out from the height of the shin bone.



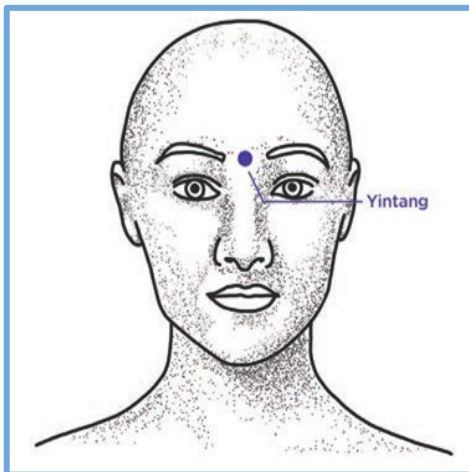
**Aromatherapy:** Un-Nausea blend (Ginger, Peppermint, Spearmint)  
**Route:** Inhalation Only

# Anxiety



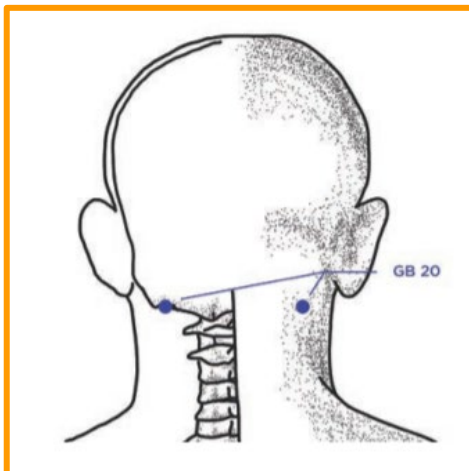
## Governing Vessel 20 Bai Hui “Hundred Meetings”

Draw imaginary lines along the long axis of the ear (from the midpoint of the earlobe to the top of the ear apex). Extend these lines to the top of the head. The point is located slightly posterior to this line, along the sagittal midline, in a small, shallow depression in the bones of the skull.



## Yintang “Hall of Impression”

Using your index finger, find the midpoint between the inner edges of the eyebrows. The point is at this location.

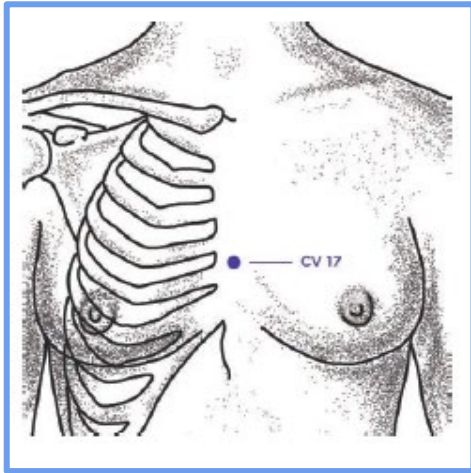


## Gallbladder 20 Feng Chi “Wind Pool”

Place fingers on the vertebra of the neck, just below the edge of the skull. Gently move the fingers laterally along the lower edge of the skull, over the thick muscles of the trapezius, until your fingers fall into a depression that feels like a small pool. This point is typically located at the most sensitive, deepest point in the hollow.

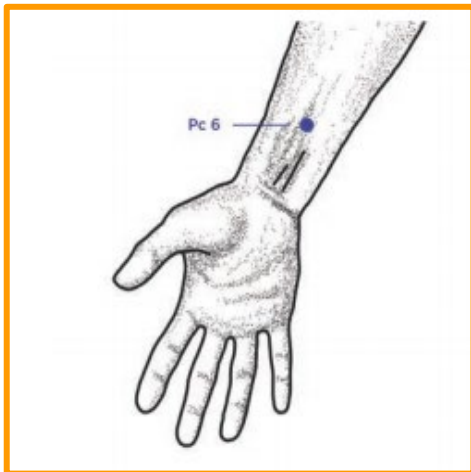
**Aromatherapy:** Calm blend  
(Frankincense, Blue Cypress, Lavender Niaouli)  
**Route:** Inhalation and Topical

# Anxiety



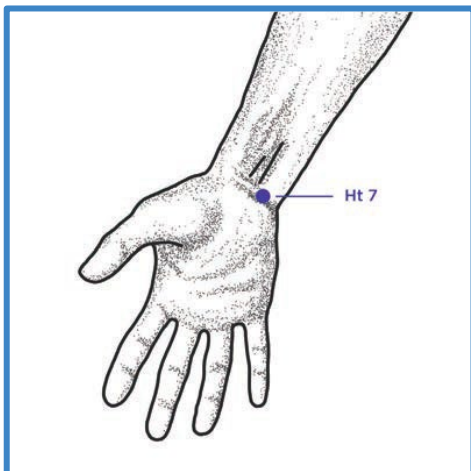
## Conception Vessel 17 Dan zhong “Chest Center”

Using the index finger, feel for a slight depression on the midline of the sternum. It may feel sensitive to the patient.



## Pericardium 6 Nei Guan “Inner Gate”

Position the hand palm up. Measure three of the patient’s fingers up from the crease of the wrist. The point is located at the level where the index finger is resting, between the two tendons that run from the wrist up the center of the arm. Stimulate with the tip of the index finger or a thumb.



## Heart 7 Shen Men “Spirit Gate”

Using the tip of the index finger, feel for a small depression located on or near the wrist crease, on the radial side of the tendon. Stimulate with the tip of the index finger or thumb.

**Aromatherapy:** Calm blend  
(Frankincense, Blue Cypress, Lavender Niaouli)  
**Route:** Inhalation and Topical

# Sleeplessness

## Anmian “Peaceful Sleep”

See page 7 to find GB 20. Draw a line between GB 20 and the auricular sulcus, the soft depression behind the earlobe. Anmian is located on the midpoint of this line. This point often falls on the sternocleidomastoid muscle. Stimulate with one finger.

**Special considerations:** *avoid firm pressure at this point to avoid damaging the styloid process.*

## Heart 7 Shen Men “Spirit Gate”

Using the tip of the index finger, feel for a small depression located on or near the wrist crease, on the radial side of the tendon. Stimulate with the tip of the index finger or thumb.

## Pericardium 6 Nei Guan “Inner Gate”

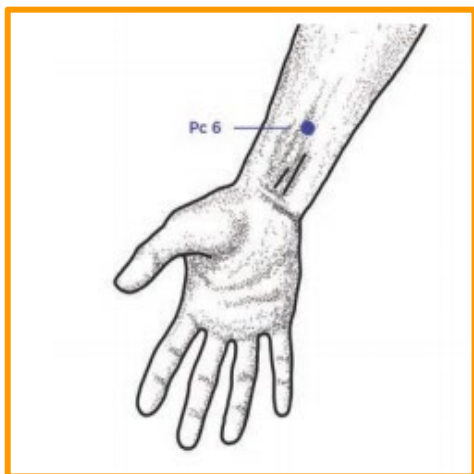
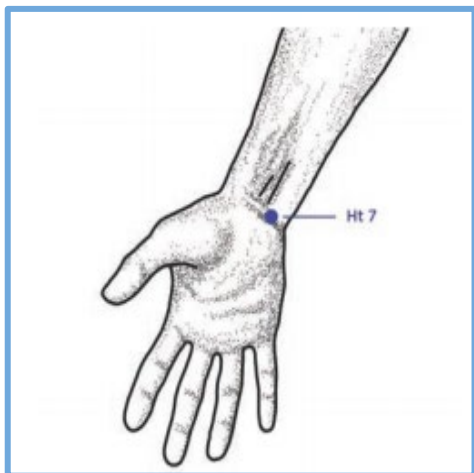
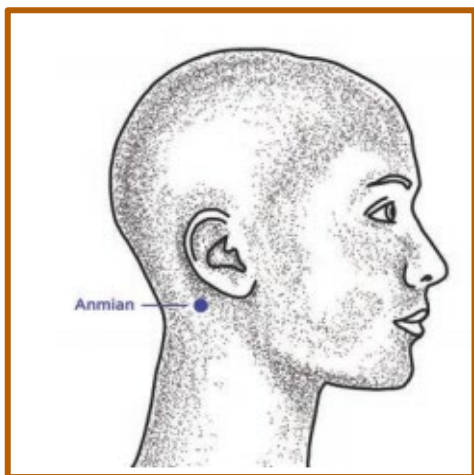
Position the hand palm up. Measure three of the patient’s fingers up from the crease of the wrist. The point is located at the level where the index finger is resting, between the two tendons that run from the wrist up the center of the arm. Stimulate with the tip of the index finger or a thumb.

## Spleen 6 San Yin Jiao “Three Yin Intersection”

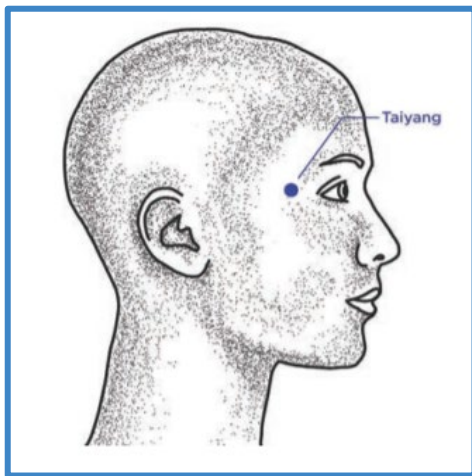
Find the highest point of the inner ankle bone. Measure four of the patient’s finger widths up from that high point. The point is located at that level, in line with the ankle bone.

**Special considerations:** *contraindicated in pregnancy*

**Aromatherapy:** Calm blend (Frankincense, Blue Cypress, Lavender, Niaouli)  
**Route:** Inhalation and Topical

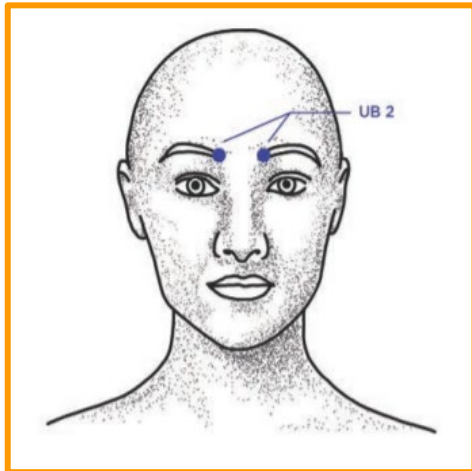


# Headaches



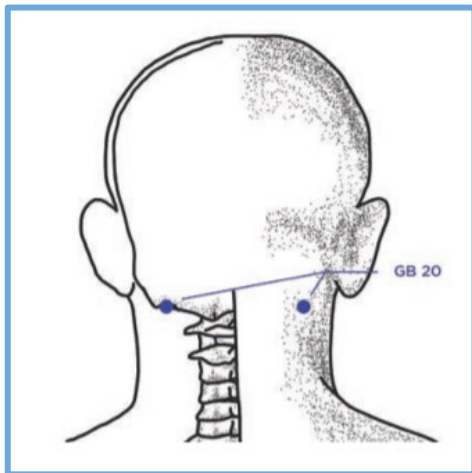
## Taiyang “Supreme Yang”

Find the midpoint between the lateral edge of the eyebrow and the outer canthus of the eye. Move approximately one fingers-width posterior to this location, to the tender depression located at the temple.



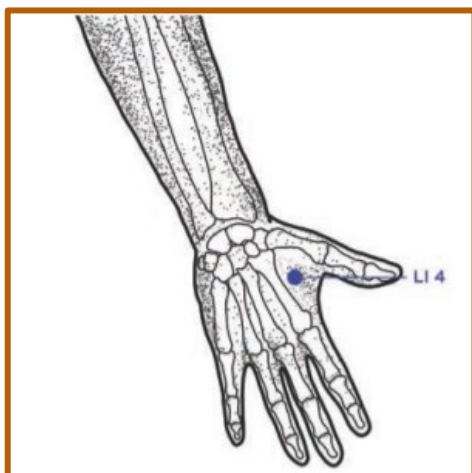
## Urinary Bladder 2 Zan Zhu “Gathered Bamboo”

Using your index finger, find the inner edge of the eyebrow directly above the inner corner of the eye. Feel for a small vertical notch. This point is often located at the most sensitive location. Start with light pressure, increasing with patient tolerance.



## Gallbladder 20 Feng Chi “Wind Pool”

Place fingers on the vertebra of the neck, just below the edge of the skull. Gently move the fingers laterally along the lower edge of the skull, over the thick muscles of the trapezius, until your fingers fall into a depression that feels like a small pool. This point is typically located at the most sensitive, deepest point in the hollow.



## Large Intestine 4 He Gu “Joining Valley”

When the thumb and pointer finger are pressed together, the point is located at the highest point of the muscle between the first and second metacarpal bones.

**Special considerations:** *contraindicated in pregnancy*

**Aromatherapy:** Ache-ease **Route:** Topical Only

# Special Considerations and Contraindications

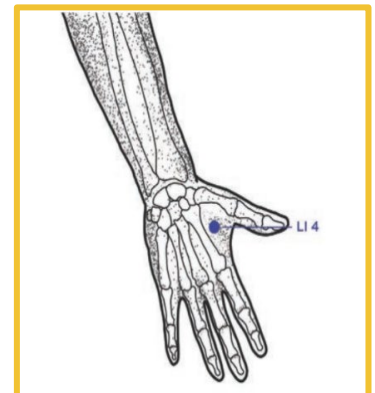
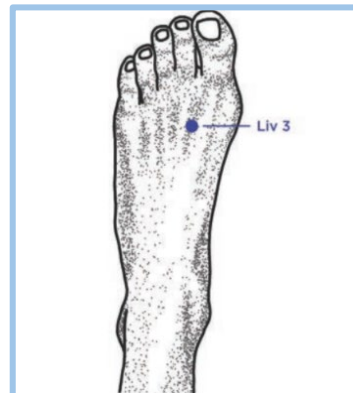
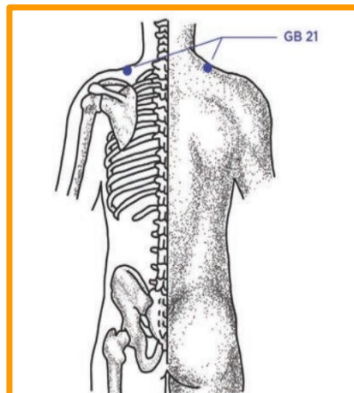
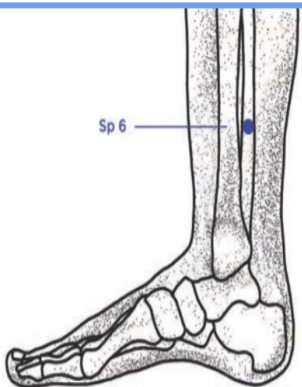
- Please only use acupressure if the patient prefers it as a treatment modality.
- Reminder that acupressure by nurses is **NOT** intended to replace the services performed by the Integrative Health Service, but instead to augment the patient's care.
- Nurses should continue to ask their primary team to request consults from the Integrative Health Service/Acupuncturists for complex cases and for more expertise.
- Do **NOT** perform in areas with: impaired/fragile skin, wounds, bruises, newly formed scars, burns, lines, IVs, devices.
- Use caution on patients with low platelets, increased INR, or clotting disorders.
- Start softly and increase pressure with patient feedback/tolerance to the pressure.
- Use the applicable UCI aromatherapy blend to reduce friction and skin breakdown.
- Acupressure should **NOT** be performed on patients <37 weeks of gestation.
- Do **NOT** use these points during pregnancy:

**Spleen 6 San Yin  
Jiao "Three Yin  
Intersection"**

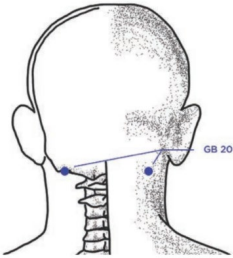
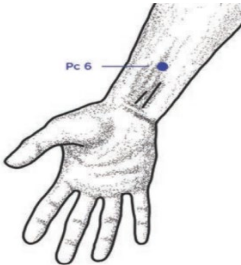
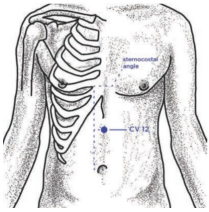
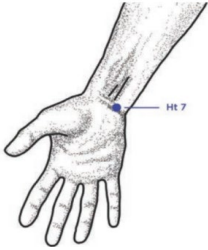
**Gallbladder 21  
Jian Jing  
"Shoulder Well"**

**Liver 3 Tai  
Chong "Great  
Rushing"**

**Large Intestine 4  
He Gu "Joining  
Valley"**



# Commonly Used Acupressure Points

Location	Description
<p>Gallbladder 20</p> 	<p>Place fingers on the vertebra of the neck, just below the edge of the skull. Gently move the fingers laterally along the lower edge of the skull, over the thick muscles of the trapezius, until your fingers fall into a depression that feels like a small pool. This point is typically located at the most sensitive, deepest point in the hollow.</p> <p><u>Indications:</u> Headache, migraine, facial pain, eye irritation, cold symptoms, pain and tension of the neck, shoulders, and upper back</p>
<p>Pericardium 6</p> 	<p>Position the hand palm up. Measure three of the patient's fingers up from the crease of the wrist.</p> <p>The point is located at the level where the index finger is resting, between the two tendons that run from the wrist up the center of the arm. Stimulate with the tip of the index finger or a thumb.</p> <p><u>Indications:</u> Nausea, heartburn, anxiety, headache, dizziness</p>
<p>Conception vessel 12</p> 	<p>Run the forefinger along upward the lower margin of the ribcage, into the fleshy depression immediately below the solid bony edge of the sternum. This is the sternocostal angle, where the sternum and the cartilaginous xiphoid process meet. Find the midpoint between the sternocostal angle and the umbilicus. Stimulate with one or two fingers.</p> <p><u>Indications:</u> Low appetite, nausea, vomiting, heartburn, abdominal pain and distention</p>
<p>Heart 7</p> 	<p>Using the tip of the index finger, feel for a small depression located on or near the wrist crease, on the radial side of the tendon. Stimulate with the tip of the index finger or thumb.</p> <p><u>Indications:</u> insomnia, emotional imbalances, fear, nervousness, anxiety, forgetfulness</p>

Reference:

Grochow, D., Nunez, M., Simkins, C., Martin, N., Wood, C.M., Yanitelli, K. (2021). *UCI Health Integrative Nursing*. UC Irvine Health. Retrieved at <http://uci.policystat.com/policy/9006877/>.

Kreitzer, M.J., (2015). *Integrative Nursing: Application of Principles Across Clinical Settings*. *Rambam Maimonides Medical Journal*, 6(2), e0016. <http://doi:10.5041/RMMJ.10200>

Voss, M. E., Christensen, K., Anderson, M., & Hanscom, K. (2020). *Integrative Nursing: Acupressure Acupoint Locations & Common Indications*. (K. Hanscom, Illus.) Regents of the University of Minnesota.



# Acupressure in Practice

Acupressure can be offered in a variety of healthcare settings including, but not limited to, inpatient, outpatient, procedural care, chiropractic offices, and when receiving a massage. Acupressure can also be used for self-care.

It is important that the person receiving acupressure is in a relaxed and comfortable position, either sitting upright or lying down. Acupressure can be performed over clothing or directly on the skin. Acupressure is not a substitute for medical care, but is an effective, safe, and easily performed complementary treatment.

## Safety Precautions

While acupressure is safe most of the time for the majority of people, there are instances when it should be avoided or delivered with caution. Acupressure should not be performed on areas of the body presenting with the contraindications listed below. If acupressure is utilized with the precautions listed below, clinical judgment should be used to determine if acupressure is appropriate, and if so, to adjust the amount and duration of pressure applied.

### Contraindications

- Broken, irritated or blistered skin
- Bruised areas
- Newly formed scars
- Areas with lines, tubes or devices

### Precautions

- Low platelets
- Increased INR (Blood Clotting time)
- Clotting disorder
- Pregnancy
- Impaired (fragile) skin integrity

### Additional Pregnancy Considerations

- Care should be taken when working with pregnant patients. When performed appropriately, acupressure is typically safe for pregnant patients, however, it is always good practice to carry out an individualized risk/benefit assessment before performing or suggesting acupressure. Based on TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine) theory, specific acupoints are historically contraindicated for use in pregnancy prior to a gestational age of 37 weeks.
- The safest way to receive any form of acupoint therapy during pregnancy is to receive care from a Licensed Acupuncturist or a provider trained in Chinese Medicine, and to consult with the patient's obstetric care provider. There may be special circumstances when it is medically appropriate for a Licensed Acupuncturist, a provider trained in Chinese Medicine, or a birth professional to use the acupoints listed above for a pregnant patient who is not yet full-term.

### Points to be avoided before 37 weeks gestation:

- Large Intestine 4
- Spleen 6
- Gall Bladder 21
- Urinary Bladder 60
- Urinary Bladder 67
- Points located on the abdomen
- Points located over the sacrum

Acupressure can be a useful complementary approach to prepare for labor, as well as to reduce pain and discomfort and promote calm and focus during labor. Many of the points that are historically contraindicated for use before 37 weeks gestation are utilized when preparing for labor.