ACUPRESSURE FOR LABOUR & BIRTH

simple techniques to assist you in birth

held

by Jess

DISCLAIMER

The information provided in this booklet is for general informational purposes only and does not replace the advice of your care provider.

Personal judgement and decision making should be of highest priority when deciding what is right for you and your pregnancy.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4
INTRODUCTION

5
BASICS 101

6
HOW ACUPRESSURE WORKS

7
OVERVIEW OF POINTS

8
SACRAL POINT (BL32)

9
SHOULDER POINT (GB21)

10
SHIN POINT (SP6)

11
THUMB POINT (LI4)

INTRODUCTION TO ACUPRESSURE

Acupressure for labour and birth, one of my personal favourite tools as personally experienced throughout my births and a technique I use constantly for women as a midwife. The simplicity of this technique is not to be confused or dismissed, as the results myself and many other women experience are just incredible.

Some words to describe the benefits of acupressure:

- relief
- reduces intensity
- point of focus
- 'helped the overwhelm'
- 'encouraged a straight forward labour'
- partner involvement
- easy to locate & simple to use

WHEN TO START USING ACUPURESSURE

Acupressure can be started from 38 weeks of gestation. These points must not be stimulated prior to 38 weeks

BASICS 101

- Able to use from 38 weeks (forbidden during the first 3 months of pregnancy)
- In labour, points may be used as often as required
- Not to be used on broken skin/ wounds/ areas of inflammation
- General rule of 3-5 minutes of pressure (or through a contraction)
- Firm, comfortable pressure. It should not cause discomfort. If it does, release some pressure.
- Apply pressure to both sides of the body
- Measurements are in the Traditional Chinese Medicine of 'cun'. 1 cun = 1 finger width (keep in mind to measure your partners fingers with yours, it may only be 2 of their fingers to 3 of yours!)
- Use acupressure in combination\ with the power of the breath

TIP!

Once you have located the points, mark them with a sharpie pen. This simple trick will be a visual reminder for your partner and avoid having to remember where the points are or how to locate them. They all work to assist labour, dont get too caught up in 'what to use when'.

HOW DOES ACUPRESSURE WORK?

The foundations of acupressure stem from Traditional Chinese Medicine, a therapy in which firm pressure is applied to specific points on the body. Acupressure moves stagnant energy (or Qi) within the body and releases endorphins (one of our main birthing hormones which provide natural pain relief).

Invisible pathways within our body carry energy. These pathways or meridians, flow all throughout our body, connecting our body entirely.

With this connection in mind, acupressure points are sometimes not directly on the site of discomfort/ symptom, rather they are on different parts of the body, connected to the relieving the point of discomfort through the meridian channel.

Acupressure is a fantastic tool birthing couples can learn and implement through their journey of labour and birth to lessen the intensity, assist in the progression of labour and create meaningful connection between each person.

OVERVIEW OF ACUPRESSURE POINTS

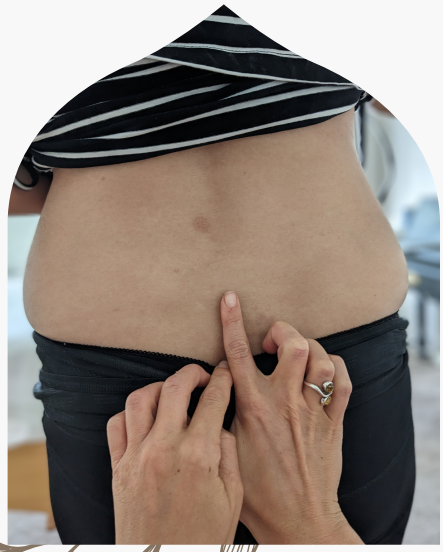
SACRAL POINT - BL32

SHOULDER POINT - GB21

SHIN POINT - PC6

THUMB POINT - LI4

SACRAL POINT BL32



1

2

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WHAT THIS POINT IS USED FOR

- Assists in stimulating contractions
- Incredible for relieving the intensity of contractions
- Assists labour to progress
- Assists the cervix to dilate

HOW TO LOCATE THIS POINT

- Locate the top of you bottom line. from here, place your finger and measure to the top of your index finger, then again outwards both sides one knuckle length, this is where the point is located.

WHEN SHOULD WE USE THIS POINT?

- Throughout contractions in both labour and birthing

SHOULDER POINT GB21

1

2

3

WHAT THIS POINT IS USED FOR

- Assists in decent in the body
- For engaging baby, throughout labour, the birth of placenta and milk letdown in breastfeeding

HOW TO LOCATE THIS POINT

1. Locate the center of the backbone at the base of the neck
2. Secondly, locate the tip of the shoulder bone
3. Locate halfway between these two points at the crest of the trapezius muscle

- There is a 'dip' where your finger naturally falls
- Can use knuckles, thumbs or elbows for pressure

WHEN SHOULD WE USE THIS POINT?

- From 38 weeks
- Throughout contractions
- Great to use with labour breathing techniques

SHIN POINT
PC6

WHAT THIS POINT IS USED FOR

- Assists the cervix in dilation
- Strengthens and/or reinvigorates contractions (great if labour has slowed)
- Encourages the release of the placenta
- Eases afterbirth pains of the uterus
- Relieves intensity of contractions

HOW TO LOCATE THIS POINT

1. Locate the medial malleolus (ankle bone) on the inside of your partners leg. measure 3 'cun' up the leg
2. There is natural 'dip' found on the edge of the tibia bone

WHEN SHOULD WE USE THIS POINT?

- From 38 weeks
- Early labour to establish labour
- Throughout labour to strengthen contractions and relieve intensity
- Birth of placenta
- Afterbirth pains / breastfeeding

THUMB POINT
LI4

WHAT THIS POINT IS USED FOR

- Assists labour to start
- Strengthens contractions
- Decent of baby
- General pain reliever
- Used commonly for headaches

HOW TO LOCATE THIS POINT

- Placing your thumb and index finger together, you will notice a 'mound' between the two fingers
- Located at the top of the mound, allow fingers to separate and stimulate point

WHEN SHOULD WE USE THIS POINT?

- From 38 weeks
- Early labour to establish labour
- Transition to reduce pressure felt/ relieve intensity
- 1st & 2nd stage of labour for decent of baby

held

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Questions?

ACUNEEDLING AVAILABLE FOR LABOUR/BODY PREPERATION & RELAXATION

HELDBYJESS@GMAIL.COM

WWW.HELDBYJESS.COM

@HELDBYJESS