



THE TREATMENT ROOM

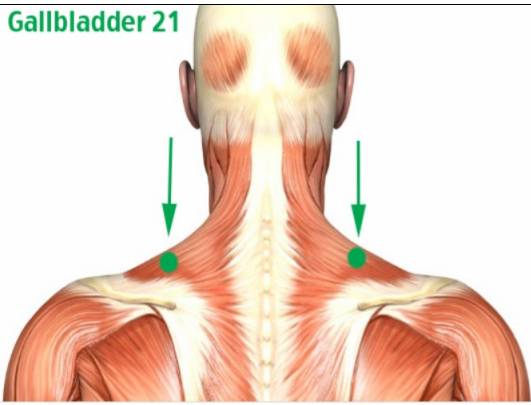
Courthouse Square, Straffan Road, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.
Tel: 086 879 0534. Web: www.treatmentroom.ie. Email: chris@treatmentroom.ie

Welcome, dear reader, to 'The Kildare School of Acupuncture/The Treatment Room' Acupuncture/Acupressure Point of the Week!

In association with Huanying Holistics – www.huanyingholistics.com

This week, we shall review the Acupuncture & Acupressure point, **Gallbladder 21**, (Aka GB21, Jianjing, or translated more simply as 'Shoulder Well!')

See the box just below for this point's benefits, location and contraindications.

Gallbladder 21		
Benefits	Location	Contraindications
Calms the Mind & greatly relaxes the neck & shoulders. Improves range of motion of neck. Soothes headaches. Benefits lactation.		Do NOT use this point if you are pregnant, whilst driving or while in water.

Safety note – Contraindication explained!

Please, DO NOT USE this point, if you suspect you may be PREGNANT, or if indeed you are pregnant, as this is a POTENT point which powerfully influences the descent of Qi (energy & matter) in the body. This, in turn, promotes labour, very rapidly!!

It is, however, most useful in the latter stages of Pregnancy when stimulated by a knowledgeable and cheerful practitioner. It's also very useful after delivery, as it promotes lactation by assisting breast milk to flow freely, and it is also helpful with breast pain and tenderness.

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- Quantum Coherence Therapy
- T'ai Chi Classes
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The Acupuncture point Gallbladder 21 may, or may not be, the pressure point Mr. Spock was so famously fond of using during the voyages of the Starship Enterprise. For those not familiar with the science fiction TV show, 'Star Trek', Mr. Spock was a leading man, whom, whenever the storyline called upon, would sneak up on someone and push his fingers into their upper trapezius muscle. (A nice illustration of the trapezius muscle is placed later in this commentary) This move, we would soon learn, was called the 'Vulcan nerve pinch', and by utilising it, Mr. Spock could render a person completely unconscious! This would then inevitably, and rather conveniently, open up opportunities for escape or advancement of the mission, depending on the plot/episode in question. Over time, astute viewers of this show would notice that this nerve pinch manoeuvre was always carried out with grace and the utmost humane consideration, as the recipient would always be lowered to the ground gently by Spock, as they lost consciousness. Mr. Spock was very considerate to all species, you see. He didn't want to harm anyone, not really.

As the use of this pressure point required no extravagant special effects, it was most probably initially conceived of for budgetary reasons, and as a clever means of quickly highlighting the character of Mr. Spock, by showcasing his superior knowledge of anatomy, and his kindly moral compass. Or, was it perhaps that one of the show's writers had been exposed to Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and knew of the actions of this incredible Acupuncture/Acupressure point, and thought that it might fit Spock's character rather nicely? Maybe, but, will we ever truly know?

Either way, Gallbladder 21 could potentially render someone unconscious, but one would have to be a very, very, very, very skilled student of energy projection and energy manipulation to actually accomplish this. So, unfortunately, those of us who may have momentarily and mischievously conceived of a day-dream in which we rob the local Bank, armed simply with knowledge of this Acu-point, would be best served retiring such notions, promptly!

However, we can still benefit greatly from knowledge of this point, as it is used in treatment to relax and calm both Body and Mind. Whenever people hold tension in their neck and shoulders, the subtle Gallbladder energies flowing to and from this point become congested. When this happens, our Lung capacity can also become affected, and in fact, diminished. Holding tension in our neck and shoulders is largely an unconscious decision, and it can eventually result in difficulty turning one's head from side to side. As well as a stiff or rigid neck, it can also lead to intermittent headaches, a cough, and/or some breathlessness.

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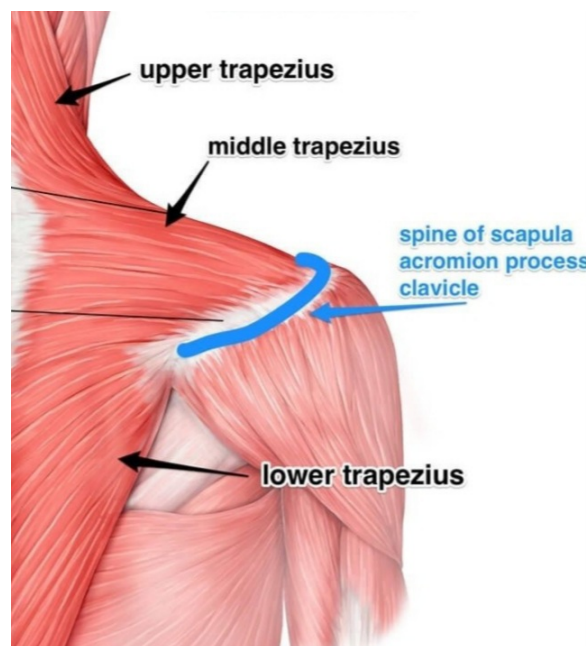
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Coughing and breathlessness can often stem from the fact that the tippy-top portions of the Lungs become inhibited when the trapezius muscles can no longer remain supple and soft. When the trapezius muscles harden, and they often do when we are stressed, worried or 'carrying the weight of the world on our shoulders', Gallbladder 21 soon becomes congested, and often on both sides of our bodies. When this happens, resting beneath the trapezius, the tips of the Lungs are then prevented from drawing in a full inhalation, and the back of the Lungs are often obstructed too by tension in the lower trapezius. Unfortunately all of this may conspire to deny us a deeper, satisfying breath. Hence, we cough at times to try to clear stale air, and struggle to force fresh air into already tight spaces.

The trapezius and GB21 can also become congested rather rapidly, if one suffers an abrupt fall or a whiplash like injury. Relieving Gallbladder 21 however, not only results in a freer neck and shoulders, but also allows our breath (aka our Lung-Qi) to descend deeper into our lower abdomen. This, in turn, has the dual effect of calming both our Body and our Mind, for the deeper and gentler our breath becomes, the calmer and quieter our Mind becomes.

Please see the illustration below for a better idea/representation of the trapezius muscle.



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From a bio-mechanical perspective, GB21 could be seen as a motor point, which controls the trapezius muscle, by way of the accessory nerve which governs this muscle. In effect, this nerve can be reset by directly stimulating this point. In addition, the Gallbladder, as seen from a TCM perspective, also benefits from stimulation/activation of this point. In TCM the Gallbladder is seen as controlling our capacity to make decisions, greatly aiding in our digestion by excreting bile as we digest, and influencing our sinews to ensure proper movement and agility. It is also said to provide us with courage and initiative. Quite a bit of responsibility there then, for one wee organ!

To find this point, we need to focus upon our shoulder area, and more precisely, halfway between the side of the neck and the furthest edge of the shoulder. The point is found here, which is also normally the highest point or prominence of our trapezius muscle.

If you wish, you can stimulate this point by pressing into and out of it a hundred times, similar to as you might do to a pen that had a clicker on top of it. You may, however, need to cup or support your elbow with your opposite hand for comfort and stability. Try to stay soft as you do this, and resist holding your breath, if you can. If you've lose your breath whilst using this point this is usually a good indicator that you're working too hard. The very same applies if you find yourself becoming tense elsewhere. It does take a while to clear these points, and that will simply mean consistency and working in a sustainable and enjoyable way. Alternatively, you can press into it and hold it at a depth of your choosing for up to one minute. In most cases, this point will be sore, but don't worry, using the point regularly and daily will help alleviate this discomfort and improve your overall health.

However, as I have often said before, please don't beat the bejesus out of yourself when applying Acupressure. Less is more, especially if you intend using this point daily. You may work the point when it is sore, and this point is almost always sore, but please be mindful of respecting your limits, and don't forget to balance what you do on one side, by repeating the same on the other.

If you have someone you trust at home, you might consider asking them to apply pressure to this point for you, while you sit comfortably on say, a kitchen chair. However, remember to caution them to listen to you when you say stop, and especially so, if they're family (wink, wink).

Enjoy!

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**The Kildare School of Acupuncture & The Treatment Room are accredited
by Huanying Holistics & by The Irish Tai-Chi Chuan Association (ITCCA).**

With best wishes from,
Chris Mc Mahon,
The Kildare School of Acupuncture & The Treatment Room.

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