



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, Pericardium 6,
(Aka PC-6, Nei Guan, or put more simply, ‘Inner Gate’!)

See the photo just below for the point’s location.



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Saying “Pericardium 6” aloud makes for quite an unusual statement! Try it. Ah, go on. You’ll see! It does sound a wee bit like the title of a 1960’s science fiction novel, doesn’t it? Just a little bit. Anyway, you are most probably now wondering, where in this Galaxy might one find a Pericardium? And, what exactly does the number 6 have to do with it?

Well, the Pericardium is actually an integral part of our incredible internal anatomical structure. Effectively, it’s a protective buffer, which surrounds our Heart. Picture it as a fluid filled sac, completely surrounding the Heart, and protecting it by behaving rather like a shock absorber.

Some readers may remember “bumping cars” or “dodge-em’s”, which were, and hopefully still are, popular at funfairs and seaside amusements parks. Well, bumping cars had, and hopefully still have, a rather large bumping ‘buffer’ all the way around the sides. This buffer takes the very brutal edge off ramming impacts, thus keeping us safe, and allowing us to have a bit of fun by aiming a car at someone. Where else would you get away with it, without being arrested? Anyway, without this buffer, you would most certainly feel the full impact, and afterwards you would probably require hospital treatment, or a stiff drink, or both. Although these buffers don’t actually fully deflect the impact, they do however, manage to both soften and cushion the blow, before its aftershock eventually reaches you. This is also the role of our Pericardium!

As the Heart is a muscle, any direct, strong and unopposed impact to it would deaden it, and if this happened, unfortunately it would cause our Heart to stop beating. This type of occurrence would be fatal, were it not for the intervention of our heroic Pericardium. In soccer, for example, if a footballer receives a dead leg from a clumsy or malicious tackle, he or she has to hobble off the pitch and wait for the muscle to recover from the shock and impact. The leg simply won’t respond to mental command, until the shock passes. Now, if you didn’t have a Pericardium, falling onto your chest or even receiving a firm push to the centre of your chest could prove fatal. However, if we have a healthy and happy Pericardium, any and all such impacts are absorbed by it, and the Heart, although shaken by these experiences, will survive relatively unscathed, and carry on beating and pumping blood. Most importantly, we survive the experience too!

However, what you might find even more interesting is that the Pericardium also acts as a protector of our mental and emotional bodies too! This means that if we have a healthy Pericardium, cruel words, insults or taunts when directed at us, will not totally devastate our Heart. Make no mistake, these words may still sting, but if our Pericardium is healthy, we are much better positioned to cope, as

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only the tiniest fragments of this abuse will reach the Heart, if indeed, any at all. We will also recover much quicker because the Pericardium will absorb these verbal and energetic jousts, and shields our Hearts from attack. This may be somewhat akin to the popular phrase 'don't take this to Heart', or 'don't allow those words to be taken to your Heart'. Anything that impacts the Heart directly causes tremendous problems for us, as it is the most important organ we have. In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) it is considered the Emperor Organ, or as we might call it, The Taoiseach. It leads the way and is considered the best organ to do so.

As the Heart is also thought of as the residence of our Mind in TCM, and as our bloodstream and blood network provides the roads and motorways for its fluid mobility, so it is that our 'consciousness', or mind, can travel throughout our entire body. This kind of insight makes the Pericardium all the more important in our overall health, in its TCM role as The Heart Protector. In TCM, by the way, the brain is still of the utmost importance. However, it's seen more as a very sophisticated relay, which works in tandem with the consciousness that resides in our bloodstream. As the brain is bathed in blood it absorbs all kinds of information from our consciousness as it makes its regular rounds, thus it becomes aware of everything going on internally.

Furthermore, if we were ever to receive crushing news, our Pericardium would do its utmost to absorb the emotional shock, such that our Heart would not shut down in response to stunning, crippling or overwhelming information (energy).

Problems with our Pericardium begin however, when it finally begins to harden, and as a consequence of this, it loses its shock absorbing and protective qualities. This happens over time sadly, especially when the Pericardium is called upon too often, and is unable to keep pace. If the Pericardium isn't allowed sufficient time to cleanse and regenerate itself, and to heal and deal with its wounds, it becomes overburdened. As a result, it hardens and eventually stagnates. When stagnant and overworked, it loses its absorption capacity and is now powerless to cushion or protect the Heart. Hence, any blows, be they physical, mental or emotional, are felt directly by the Heart. The Pericardium then overheats, and the Heart is left wide open and feels exposed and vulnerable. When this happens, we tend to feel very emotional, anxious, heavy or burdened and we are easily overcome. We can also have all kinds of tummy issues too, as we struggle to digest our mounting woes and our unprocessed misfortunes. (In TCM, the Heart is supported by the Small Intestine, which is where we digest our food, but also where we digest our thoughts and feelings!)

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While it is quite normal for the Pericardium to take quite a pasting, it's also perfectly normal for the Pericardium to recover over the passage of time as we gradually work through our negative thoughts, feelings and challenges, and in doing so, become clearer, stronger and wiser. This may mean attending a Massage Therapist to relieve tight chest muscles or regular trips to the Counsellor or Acupuncturist for assistance with tricky and sticky parts of our journey. Of course, given that we are learning how to supplement our own healing here with Acupressure, we could also practice a little bit of therapeutic self-care to help out too!

So, we need to stimulate Pericardium 6, but what exactly is it useful for? Well, it's very useful for calming our Mind, and for relieving and opening our Chests. This action in itself is particularly important in these Covid times! It is also wonderful for harmonising and settling our stomachs. This last action makes it a very valuable point in the treatment of nausea, morning sickness, travel sickness and even in recovery from the nausea brought about following chemotherapy. As it's useful for calming the Mind, it is also helpful for cases of insomnia, depression, anxiety, sadness and even poor memory! Above all, it's very useful for clearing out the backlog, especially if we have been avoiding our most challenging feelings for far too long. (Sweeping them under the carpet only works for so long, unfortunately)

To find this point, please refer to your wrist. At the first (palmar) wrist crease (please see the illustration below for guidance), place your ring finger, followed by your middle and index fingers, neatly and side by side. Lining up your ring finger with said wrist crease, the point is to the edge of your index finger, when all three fingers are now side by side.

There is a depression here, so you can press inward quite a bit. You can stimulate the point by pumping it, as in pressing on it in an in and out motion, or by holding it at a depth of which you feel comfortable, for up to a minute at a time. Over time you can work your way up to five minutes, but please, slowly does it. Careful now!

Again, please do not beat the ever-loving bejesus out of yourself here. Be nice, and be careful not to use anything other than your finger or thumb, as the median nerve runs underneath this point. Also, remember to balance what you do on the right side of your body with what you do on the left.

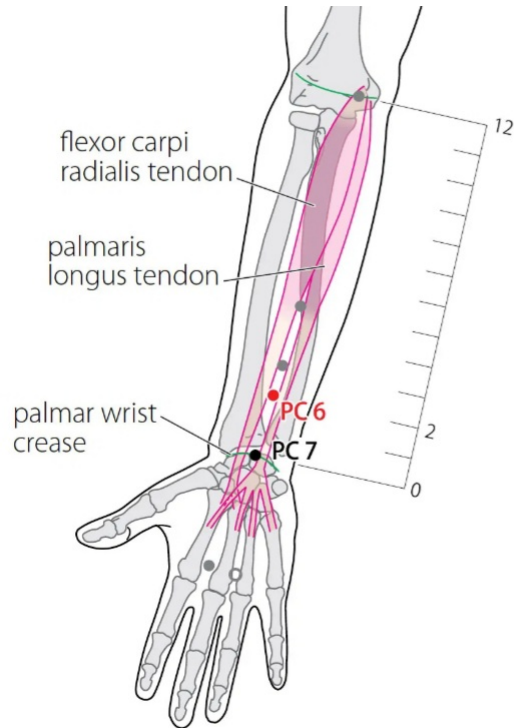
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PC6

Ok. Enjoy, and see you next week!

P.S. The number 6, in Pericardium 6, denotes the sixth point on the Pericardium Acupuncture Meridian, which in itself, is a superficial energetic pathway which runs from the chest, all the way down the arm to the tip of our middle finger, on both sides of our body. Please see the diagram just below for reference!

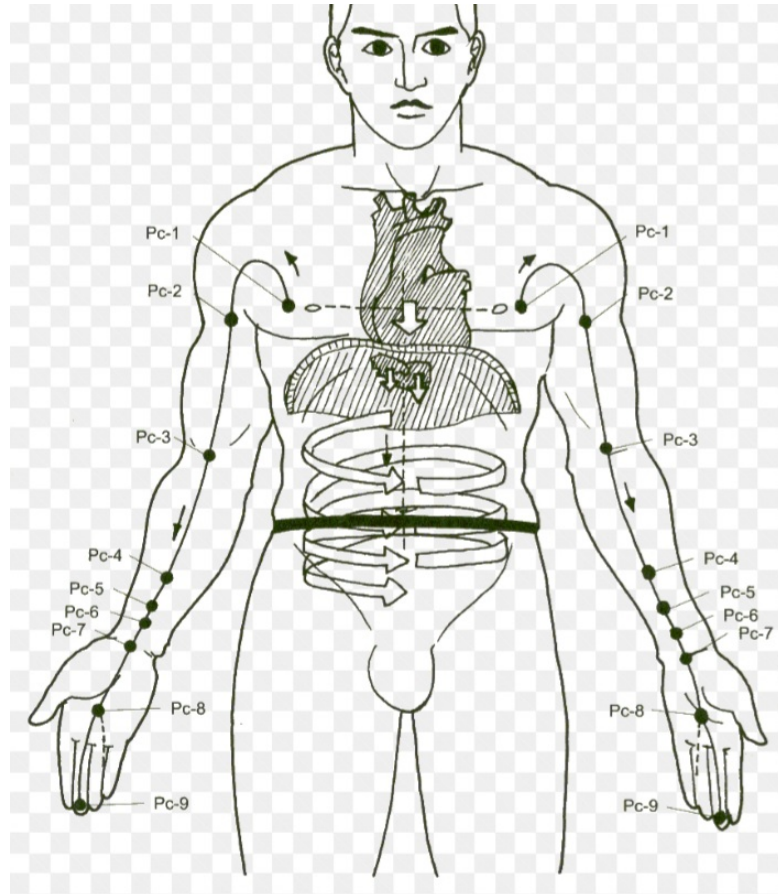
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P.S. (2) Do not try this while driving or while immersed in water!

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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