

CHINESE TUI NA MASSAGE

*The Essential Guide to Treating Injuries,
Improving Health, & Balancing Qi*

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The activities, physical or otherwise, described in this material may be too strenuous or dangerous for some people, and the reader(s) should consult a physician before engaging in them.

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Common Tuina Manipulations

Manipulation refers to the way that a practitioner performs standardized technical maneuvers on the joints, along the channels, and over the specific portion of a patient's body for medical purposes. Manipulation is the primary means that tuina is used to treat diseases. Good curative effects come from good clinical choice and performance of manipulations.

Ancient and modern medical specialists have created many effective tuina manipulations, more than 110 of which are recorded in written language. However, no more than 20 or 30 of them are commonly used. Each manipulation is undertaken according to its own pattern of standardized technical movements. This pattern is called the makeup of movement, which mainly includes the following factors:

- The posture of the whole body
- Breathing
- Preparatory gesture of manipulation movement
- Stage of movement
- Essentials of movement
- Angle, amplitude, frequency, rhythm, and periodicity of each movement
- Work and interrelation of different acting muscles

The manipulating techniques of traditional tuina medicine are basically characterized by permanence, forcefulness, evenness, and softness, all of which combine to produce a deepening effect.

Permanence. Manipulations are performed for a certain required time during which the manipulation should remain the same in its makeup or in its dynamic pattern.

Forcefulness. Manipulations exert a certain power, and the volume

should be changed according to the patient's constitution, disease, and age, and according to the manipulated part as well.

Evenness. Manipulations should be rhythmic with constant frequency and pressure.

Softness. Manipulations should be gentle but not superficial, heavy but not sluggish, powerful but not rough or violent, and smooth with its maneuvers changing naturally

Deepening. Manipulations should be performed with the direction of its acting force properly adjusted so that the effect of the applied dynamic force may go deep into the body and act on the target tissue where the disorder is located.

Of course, all the above factors are closely and organically interrelated; together, they are the technical essentials of every maneuver of every kind of tuina manipulation. Manipulations are different in the makeup of each maneuver, so they are also different in technique. For instance, the manipulations of Yi Zhi Chan Tui Fa (operated with one thumb) and Gun Fa (rolling) are firm but primarily gentle. On the other hand, Ji DiAn Fa (digital hitting) is accurate, resolute, rapid, and gentle but primarily firm. Mo is slow, gentle or strong, but primarily moderate. In the course of training in manipulation techniques, it is important to study the features unique to any manipulation in order to master the techniques.

The following is an introduction to 20 commonly used manipulations and the methods for mastering them through training.

4.1 Yizhichan Tui (work with one thumb)

Explanation. Put the lateral surface of the thumb's tip on the part to be operated. Relax the shoulder, drop the elbow, and raise the wrist. Flex and stretch the elbow cyclically and swing the forearm inward and outward so as to bring about the flexion and extension of the thumb joint (See Figure 30).

Essentials. Cup the fist by flexing naturally—but not closing tightly—the index, middle, ring and little fingers. Cover the fist hole with the thumb. Relax the muscles of the arm. Exert acting force naturally and avoid forceful pressure after the thumb is fixed on the operated point. Keep steady pressure, frequency, and amplitude of swing so that the produced force can act on the part being treated rhythmically and continuously. The frequency of this manipulation should be between 120-160 times per minute.

Application. This manipulation is characterized by a small force-bearing point; great pressure intensity; a strong deepening effect;

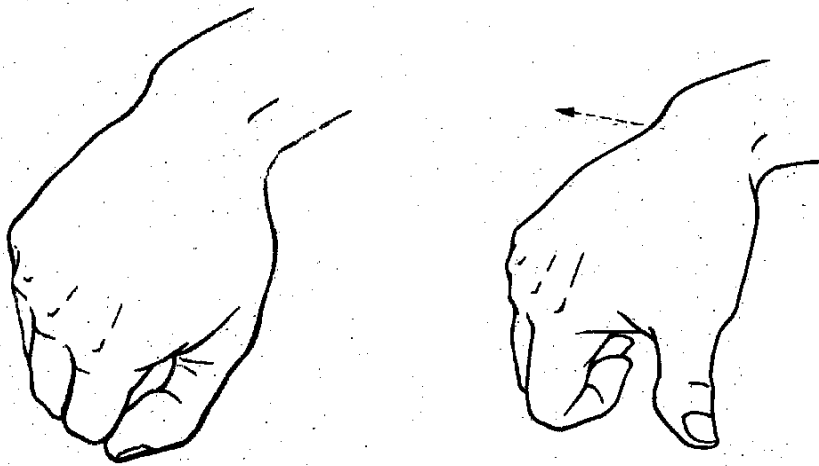


Figure 30

continuous, rhythmic, and gentle stimula given to the patient; and stimulation volume regulated as needed. It may be performed everywhere on the body, including on the channels, points, and other parts. It is used to treat common diseases of medicine, surgery, trauma, gynecology, and the five sense organs.

Variations.

1. Pressing with the lateral surface of the thumb is called Luowen Tui. This variation is especially suitable for performance on the abdomen and chest and for treating diseases of the digestive system and female reproductive system
2. Pressing with the tip of the thumb is called Zhongfeng Tui. This variation is most effective in treating diseases of medicine such as headache, dizziness, insomnia, hypertension, and disorder due to stagnation of the liver-qi
3. Pressing with the very tip of the thumb is called Chanfa. This variation is smaller in amplitude of the swing. It is performed at a faster rhythm (200-240 times per minute). Chanfa creates unique curative effects when used to treat laryngological diseases and surgical carbuncle and furuncle
4. Pressing with the side of the thumb radius is called Pianfeng Tui. This variation is suitable for the craniofacial region and is often used to treat myopia, rhinorrhea with turbid discharge, stuffy or running nose, headache, distending sensation in the head, tinnitus, facial paralysis, prosopalgia, and toothache.

4.2 Na (grasp)

Explanation. The thumb and the index and middle fingers—or the thumb and the other four fingers—exert slow and symmetrical forces to hold and pull and simultaneously twist and knead the treated part, which is then released. This maneuver is repeated again and again (See Figure 31). [insert figure 12 and renumber]

Essentials. Stretch each interphalangeal joint of the thumb and the other four fingers and do the work with finger surfaces. Do not flex the fingers lest you dig the treated part with fingernails. Ensure harmonious and rhythmical movements of the wrist and finger joints. Add force slowly and gently when pulling until it optimal. Avoid a sudden decrease or increase of the force, as well as sudden holding and releasing of the part with violent force.

Application. This manipulation produces strong stimulation that, in the short run, will make the patient feel strongly sore and distending. It is often applied to the cord-like soft tissues such as muscles and tendons of the neck, shoulder, back, lateral abdomen, and limbs. It is used to:

- Induce resuscitation and restore consciousness
- Relieve superficies syndrome by means of diaphoresis
- Expel wind and clear away cold
- Relax muscles and tendons to promote blood circulation
- Relieve spasm and pain

When performed in clinical practice, the practitioner can use either one hand or two. The decision is based on the treated part and the disease being treated.



Figure 31

4.3 An (press)

Explanation. With finger or palm, press the operated part vertically: with each press, start slowly, gently, and superficially and then proceed forcefully and deeply until the specific depth is reached. Press for five to ten seconds. When you stop pressing, leave the finger or palm on the operated part, then slowly take away the finger or palm. Repeat as prescribed.

Essentials. Breathe naturally during the entire manipulation and do not hold back breath when emitting force. Exert force steadily, a little less at the beginning, and gradually more and more until the patient experiences soreness, distension, numbness, and/or radiation.

When more powerful and repeated operations are needed, the best way to save strength and affect good results is as follows: Stretch both arms straight; put one thumb or one palm on the other and press the operated part one time after another. Each time, lean your body slightly forward as if you are supporting it on the operated part with your arms. This way, your body weight is utilized instead of the force exerted actively by the fingers or arms.

Applications. An is a manipulation whose stimulation should be changed from mild degree to moderate one. It should be performed until the patient has got the above-mentioned sensations. Pressing with the fingers may be conducted on the points of all parts of the body, while pressing with the palm, on the loins, back and abdomen.

Variations.

1. Pressing with the thumb is called Muzhi An.
2. Pressing with the middle finger is Zhongzhi An.
3. Pressing with the palm is Zhang An.
4. Pressing digitally is DianAn-An.
5. Pressing with the palm base is Zhanggen An (Figure 32).

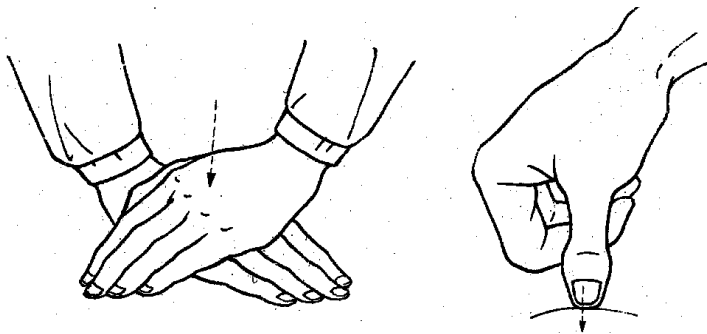


Figure 32

