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Unwinding Meridians to Reverse Anemia

By Kenneth R. Koles, PhD, DSc, RAc, LMT; guest author for John Upledger, DO, OMM

One of my patients has a mother, who we will call "Helen," out of respect for privacy. She was in the hospital recently for heart surgery. At 87 years old she was in fine health, but she had been feeling a bit rundown. Nonetheless, her doctor recommended she go ahead with the surgery because she was "so healthy."

While the operation went well, within a few days Helen was suffering from anemia. Either she was leaking blood internally or her bone marrow was no longer making blood. Her doctors gave her a transfusion and she said she felt better, but only for several days. Then she had another transfusion and another, and a pattern began repeating itself: transfusion, anemia, transfusion, anemia.

Finally, the dear woman had enough. She refused any further transfusions and was preparing to die when her son called me to treat her with a combination of techniques from acupuncture and CranioSacral Therapy (CST). Together, these two modalities are highly effective at strengthening the flow of energy throughout the body. If you think of the cranial rhythm as ocean waves, acupuncture meridians would be ocean currents. Combining the two can dramatically increase your ability to resolve a wide range of medical issues.

When I first worked with Helen, I focused on "unwinding the meridians" using the craniosacral rhythm as my guide. To unwind an acupuncture point along a meridian or energetic pathway, you simply place a finger on the point using virtually no pressure, just allowing light energetic or electrical contact. Then you feel for the craniosacral rhythm. You might experience this as a very subtle wave that flows first in one direction then in the other for three seconds each way.

Once you feel the craniosacral rhythm, you blend and harmonize with it to encourage it to move more easily and fully. Enhancing the craniosacral rhythm this way is like using your legs to pump yourself back and forth on a swing. As you move in one direction, you swing your legs up at the height of the arc to go higher. Use this same principle to enhance the craniosacral rhythm by adding your intention to the flow of energy through the points, moving in the same direction of the craniosacral rhythm.

Energizing the Sea of Marrow and the Sea of Blood

The first time I treated Helen, I focused on stimulating blood production at the sea of marrow, where blood and cerebrospinal fluid are created. The sea of marrow encompasses the acupuncture points named governing vessel 20 (GV20) and governing vessel 16 (GV16), which are both in the middle of the skull.

GV20 is on the sagittal suture at the approximate midpoint of the line that would connect the top of the two ears. There's a slight depression on the suture at GV20. GV16 is at the base of the head just below the external occipital protuberance (the bump at the base of the skull on the midline). I unwound Helen's Sea of Marrow by first harmonizing with the cranial rhythm at one point, then the other, then harmonizing both points together.

The second time I treated Helen, I focused on unwinding her [sea of blood](#) to make sure I covered all the bases. The sea of blood includes the stomach 37 (ST37), stomach 39 (ST39) and bladder 11 (B11) points.

If you measure using the widest part of your thumb, ST37 is six thumb widths below the base of the patella, and one thumb width lateral to the crest of the tibia. ST39 is three thumb widths below stomach 37, and one thumb width lateral to the crest of the tibia. And B11 is one-and-a-half thumb widths lateral to the spine at the level of the base of the first thoracic vertebra.

Shortly after her second treatment, Helen said she was feeling fine. She was finally making and circulating enough blood to go to rehab and then return home. With a combination of light touch and healing intention, I was able to help strengthen her flow of healthy energy, allowing her body to create more blood and reverse her anemia. Having the privilege of supporting Helen as she moved from a state of not wanting to live to being up and ready to go is a tribute to the wisdom of the meridians and the craniosacral rhythm.

Click [here](#) for previous articles by John Upledger, DO, OMM.

Kenneth R. Koles is a certified Upledger Institute instructor who teaches "Unwinding Meridians: Applying Acupuncture Principles to CranioSacral Therapy." To learn more visit www.upledger.com.