

# Balance Method Veterinary Acupuncture

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## ABSTRACT

Balance Method is a special acupuncture modality derived from I-Ching acupuncture that dates back thousands of years and is the oldest teachings of *Yin* and *Yang*. This method of acupuncture uses distal acupoints (Five *Shu*-transporting/Command Points) on the 12 Channels. By applying a strategic selection process using these acupuncture points, the focus is placed on where the pain or disharmony is located and the Channel coursing through the affected area. The Channel pathology is then corrected by selection of distal points on a Channel that balances it and corrects the disharmony. The approaches to acupoint selection described in this paper include: 1) “Six Systems” approach and 2) I-Ching *Ba Gua* based on *Yin* and *Yang* configurations forming hexagrams. Although scientific knowledge and clinical experience using this ancient system of Channel diagnosis in veterinary medicine is relatively limited, it has numerous benefits to offer the clinician through its minimal needle use, strong stimulation and rapid clinical effects.

**Key words:** acupuncture, Balance Method, Dr. Richard Tan Balance System, I-Ching, *Ba Guas*, distal needle acupuncture, canine, equine

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## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>BM</b>	Balance Method
<b>EAP</b>	Electro-acupuncture
<b>PL</b>	Pelvic limb
<b>TCM</b>	Traditional Chinese medicine
<b>TCVM</b>	Traditional Chinese veterinary medicine
<b>TL</b>	Thoracic limb

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The health model in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) focuses on balance.<sup>1</sup> The balance lies between man and nature as well as between *Yin* and *Yang*, *Qi* and Blood, the 5 Elements and *Zang-Fu*. It is thought that when an imbalance occurs, a disease follows.<sup>1-10</sup> Among the modalities of TCM, acupuncture, through the insertion of fine needles into specific body points provides stimulus that travels to critical areas of the brain. Methods of acupuncture stimulation include needles placed at “local” acupuncture points near the area of pain and/or stimulation at “distal” acupoints based on Meridian/Channel pathways.

Balance Method acupuncture (BM) uses the latter approach and focuses on stimulation of non-local, distal acupoints. It is a special acupuncture modality derived from I-Ching acupuncture that dates back thousands of years

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and is the oldest teachings of *Yin* and *Yang*.<sup>7,9,11,12</sup> This method of acupuncture uses distal points on the 12 Channels located below the elbows and knees known as the Five *Shu*-transporting Points. Also classically called *Wu Shu Xue* points, they are associated with the Five Elements and 5 levels of activity.<sup>1,2</sup> They consist of the *Jing*-well point (first level), *Ying*-spring (second level), *Shu*-stream (third level), *Jing*-river and *He*-sea points (fourth and fifth level, respectively).<sup>6-7,13,14</sup> In *Spiritual Pivot*, Ling Shu says: “As the *Qi* ascends and descends, it emerges at the *Jing*-well points, flows at the *Ying*-spring points, pours at the *Shu*-stream points, moves at the *Jing*-river points and enters at the *He*-sea points. As the twenty-seven kinds of *Qi* move, it is all done through the five transporting points”.<sup>6</sup> From these teachings, it is apparent that these important acupoints are related to the whole body.

From conventional medical knowledge, the powerful effects of distal acupoints are based on neurological findings that show that areas distal to the elbows and knees contain larger zones in the sensory gyrus of the brain and affect a larger area in the cortical representation of the postcentral sensory gyrus.<sup>15,16</sup> Needle stimulation of these points may induce a greater reaction and activity in the brain and supports the concept of using distal acupoints for treating diseases.<sup>1,5-7,15,16</sup> In addition, compared with local acupoints, distal points are easier to find and more conveniently used in humans. There are many different theories and approaches for Balance Method selection of needle placement and one or several of these approaches can be used in the same patient at the

same time. Two commonly used BM acupoint selection systems, which will be presented in this paper, are the “Mirror/Imaging concept (Six Systems)” and the use of “I-Ching *Ba Guas*”.

### The Mirror/Imaging Approach to Selection of Distal Acupoints

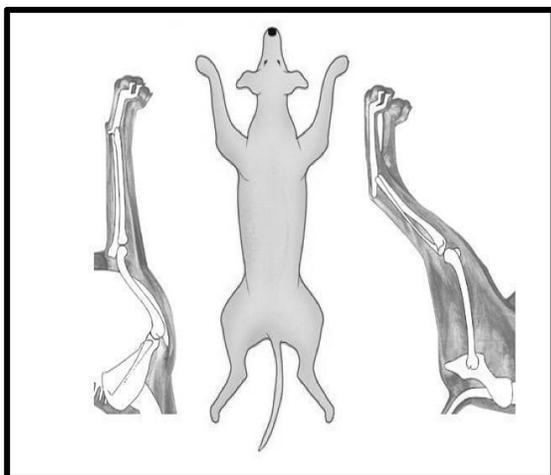
This approach recognizes there are multiple tissue similarities (anatomical area correspondence) in the body such as fingers to toes, wrist to ankle, elbow to knee, shoulder to hip. The mirror concept treats blockage of one appendicular Channel by other appendicular points (balancing Channel location) in a mirror fashion [i.e. a right thoracic limb (TL) acupoint would treat Channel blockage in a left pelvic limb (PL)]. Although this works well for the extremities, a different approach is needed for the torso. Again, recognizing tissue similarities, the torso is related to the extremities as an “image” concept. Some commonly utilized treatment scenarios would include TL/PL digits images head, carpus/tarsus images neck, elbow/knees images central abdomen, shoulder/hip images the lower abdomen/genitals (Figures 1 and 2).<sup>1,4-10</sup> In addition, some researchers have reported that the treatment outcome could be further enhanced if the treatment not only involves the acupuncture points on the opposite side but also on the opposite limb at the corresponding location.<sup>7,8</sup>

The connections of these points, the body parts, and their Five Element assignment of the *Zang-Fu* organs constitute the holographic relationship. For example, the *Jing*-well points correspond to the head region, and in *Yin* Channels correspond to Wood. *Jing*-well points of *Yang* Channels are also related to the head but they correlate to Metal in their Five Elements correspondence. *Jing*-well

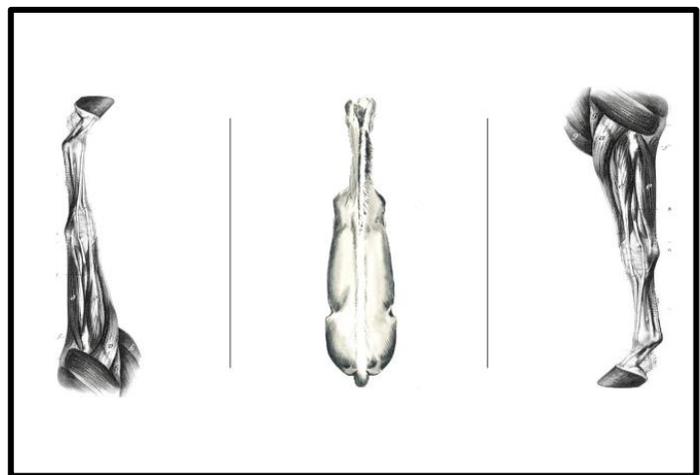
points of *Yin* Channels, therefore, could be used to treat Liver and Gallbladder disorders, sinew diseases, tremors, cramps, and Wind diseases; while *Jing*-well points of *Yang* Channels could be used to treat respiratory issues and skin problems due to their Metal relation. According to the nature of the *Shu*-transport points, the distal point method could also treat acute onset diseases by stimulation of corresponding *Jing*-well or *Ying*-spring points, intermittent conditions by the *Shu*-stream points, or chronic disorders by the *Jing*-river or *He*-sea points.<sup>1,4,6</sup>

### The Six Systems of Dr. Richard Teh-Fu Tan’s Balance Method

The heart of Balance Method acupuncture is the “Six Systems”, commonly used to affect and treat imbalances in Channels.<sup>3-5,8,9</sup> The Six Systems use the internal relationship between the Channels and energetic systems as the hinge on which to bring balance to the body (Table 1).<sup>3-6,8-10</sup> Dr. Richard Teh-Fu Tan, one of the best known modern users of the Balance Method system, proposed three major stepwise criteria that should be applied to effectively use the Six Systems when constructing a BM treatment protocol.<sup>1-3,7</sup> Step 1 is to determine the Channel or organ being affected. Step 2 identifies the Channel that can be used to achieve equilibrium for the affected Channel (example: Foot *Taiyang* to balance Hand *Taiyang* using System 1). Finally, Step 3 involves selection of the acupoint(s) that will be used for treating the Channel pathology. For example, an acupoint(s) located on the balancing Channel at the same level as the affected anatomic region would be used and/or an *Ah-shi* point in the balancing Channel (elbow pathology balanced by a stifle acupoint) (Table 2).



**Figure 1:** Canine mirror (appendicular) and imaging (torso) of tissue similarities used to select distal acupoints to treat Channel blockage; “needle the lower to treat diseases located in the upper, needle the upper to treat the lower, needle the foot to treat the head, needle the popliteal fossa to treat the lumbar”.



**Figure 2:** Equine mirror (appendicular) and imaging (torso) of tissue similarities used to select distal acupoints to treat Channel blockage; “needle the lower to treat diseases located in the upper, needle the upper to treat the lower, needle the foot to treat the head, needle the popliteal fossa to treat the lumbar”.

To master these criteria requires a good knowledge of the Five *Shu*-transportation Points or Command Points. Dr. Tan described the method as “*Li Gan Jian Ying*”, which is translated as “Stand a pole under the sun and you immediately see the shadow”, to describe that this method can attain good results within minutes to seconds after needle insertion.<sup>5,9</sup>

**Clinical Case Example Using the Six Systems, Mirror and Imaging Balance Method**

A 10-year-old dressage horse was presented with a shortened stride and difficulty in going forward to the left when performing upper level dressage movements. The mare had a pale wet tongue with decreased right pulse. A Grade 1 lameness was diagnosed in the left hind leg when trotted in a straight line which increased to Grade 2 when circling to the left. Flexion tests were non-diagnostic. Acupuncture scan revealed a mild reaction at BL-23, BL-26 (+), left *Ba-jiaos* (++) , *Ba-shan, Lu-gu* (+++) and *Huan-tiao, Huan-zhong* and *Huan-hou* (++) on the left side (Table 3). There was a mild reaction on the right thoracic limb at LI-18, LI-16, LI-17 (++) and PC-1 (+). The mare was diagnosed with a left pelvic limb (PL) *Qi* and Blood Stagnation at the hip with compensatory right thoracic limb (TL) pain (*Qi*-Blood Stagnation) and an underlying Kidney *Qi* Deficiency.

The Six Systems BM was selected to treat the mare’s lameness (Tables 1, 2 and 3). Step 1 was to identify the affected Channel. Primary involvement was identified as the left PL *Taiyang* (BL) and PL *Shaoyang* (GB) Channels at the hip area with secondary issues at the right TL *Yangming* (LI) and *Jueyin* (PC). Step 2 chooses the most appropriate balance technique. Since the dysfunction was localized to the limbs, mirror technique

using the Six Systems was selected. System 1 was chosen to treat the primary issue which involved the Gall Bladder and Bladder Channels in the hip area, therefore, TL *Shaoyang* (TH) was used to treat PL *Shaoyang* (GB) and TL *Taiyang* (SI) was used to treat PL *Taiyang* (BL), opposite side. Since Balance Method allows so many choices, another good choice using System 2 would be TL *Shaoyin* (HT) to treat GB (PL *Shaoyang*) and TL *Taiyin* (LU) to balance BL (PL *Taiyang*) on either side. One of the best systems for clearing local Stagnation is System 6 which uses distal points of the affected Channel on the same limb. Step 3 selects the acupoints to treat. Bleeding of the *Jing*-well points on the left PL at BL-67, GB-44 and on the right TL at LI-1 (System 6) was the initial approach using a hypodermic needle. Pricking was also done at PC-9 right TL to help with secondary pain (System 6). Immediate relief was seen at scanning in a matter of seconds after obtaining blood from those distal points.

The second step of this treatment strategy consisted in placing needles at BL-65 and GB-41 on the left PL. These are third level for pain and at the same time points from System 6 for local balancing. *Ah-shi* points were looked for at left LU-1 area and several needles placed in the *Ah-shi* points found, which is considered TL *Taiyin* treating PL *Taiyang* in System 2 ipsilateral. This area is quite muscular, so it mirrors muscle to muscle at gluteal and semimembranosus-semi-tendinosus regions. Using System 2, needles are placed in left LU-5. *Ah-shi* points found distal from LU-5 to LU-7 “Image” lumbosacral hip area to thoracolumbar area (elbow to knee images lumbosacral to thoracolumbar) can be treated. SI-3 and TH-3 are placed on the right TL using System 1 [opposite: TL *Taiyang* balances PL *Taiyang* (BL), TL *Shaoyang*

**Table 1:** The Six Systems of Dr. Richard Tan’s Balance Method

System Name	Application of System
System 1: Anatomical Mirror Image	Treat patients by anatomical mirror (limbs)/imaging (torso) on the contralateral, corresponding energetic level and Channel; R TL <i>Yangming</i> Channel (LI) treats L PL <i>Yangming</i> Channel (ST) for limb pathology
System 2: <i>Bie-Jing</i> (Branching) Channel System	<i>Taiyang</i> treats <i>Taiyin</i> , <i>Shaoyang</i> treats <i>Shaoyin</i> , <i>Yangming</i> treats <i>Jueyin</i> ; using contralateral or ipsilateral points; R/L TL <i>Shaoyin</i> (HT) treats PL <i>Shaoyang</i> (GB)
System 3: <i>Zang-Fu</i> pairs Interior/Exterior	Related contralateral <i>Zang-Fu</i> pairs (husband-wife) balance each other; R TL <i>Yangming</i> (LI) treats L TL <i>Taiyin</i> (LU); husband-wife at same energetic level
System 4: Chinese clock, Opposite	The Opposite Channel on the Circadian Clock is selected, which is 12 hours ahead or behind; the system uses opposite or same side depending on strength of <i>Ah-shi</i> points found; PL <i>Yangming</i> (7 AM- ST) treats TL <i>Jueyin</i> (7 PM-PC)
System 5: Chinese clock, Neighbors	The affected Channel is treated with the neighbor on the Circadian Clock in a <i>Yin/Yin</i> and <i>Yang/Yang</i> relationship; use contralateral side; L PL <i>Jueyin</i> (1 AM-LIV) is treated with R TL <i>Taiyin</i> (3 AM- LU)
System 6: Channel Clearing	Distal points on the affected Channel are used; pathology at GB-29 would be treated on same leg with GB-41

TL=thoracic limb, PL=pelvic limb; R=right, L=left

balances PL *Shaoyang* (GB)]. In addition to being third level for joint pain, these points are the reverse mirror of the hip area. Finally, the strategy also would suggest placing KID-3 and LIV-3 on the right hind (opposite PL) not only to balance GB and BL by System 3, but also, because they are third level for pain and the correct reverse mirror of the hip (Figure 2). Being a *Yuan*-source point, KID-3 also addresses the underlying KID *Qi* Deficiency and any bone and joint considerations. Another *Yuan*-source point, LIV-3 functions to help with pain and moves *Qi*. In addition, the tenderness noted at LI-16 and LI-17, at first scanning, suggested suspensory ligament secondary involvement which would benefit from the addition of an acupoint beneficial to tendons and ligaments such as LIV-3. This protocol was followed for 4 more treatments at weekly intervals. The mare made a complete recovery and training was resumed on the second week of treatment.

### Using the I-Ching *Ba Guas* to Select Distal Acupoints

The initial understanding of TCM was based on the symbolism that represents *Yin Yang* and the comparisons of opposition, interdependence, mutual consumption and inner transformation that can be seen in so many aspects of life as it is first incorporated in the classic book I-Ching.<sup>1</sup> In this ancient text, *Yang* is represented as a solid line (bar) such as —, and *Yin* as an interrupted one or two separate lines such as - -. Two solid bars atop each other represent the utmost *Yang*, and 2 broken bars atop each other are the utmost *Yin*.<sup>12</sup> A broken line atop a solid line or solid line atop a broken line represent *Yin* within *Yang* or *Yang* within *Yin*. The addition of another broken or unbroken line to these four diagrams form the eight trigrams (Figure 3).<sup>12</sup> The eight trigrams are known as *Ba Guas* in Chinese language and it is *Fu Xi* of the *Xia* Dynasty that described them 5,000 years ago (*Fu Xi Ba Gua* or Early Heaven *Gua/Xian Tian*).<sup>10,11</sup>

**Table 2:** Three Step Approach to Application of Balance Method

	Application of Balance Method Technique
Step 1	Diagnose which Channel/Meridian is affected
Step 2	Choose a Balance Technique Local Balance - Dysfunction is localized Global Balance - Systemic, Functional, Widespread Pain
Step 3	Select Acupoints to Treat Mirror - Limbs Image - Axial Skeleton, Systemic Dysfunction <i>Ba Gua</i> , Meridian conversion Four Exceptional Meridians

**Table 3:** Channel/Meridian Abbreviations, Energy Levels and Limb Location

Abbreviation	Channel/Meridian	Channel Energy Level	Limb
LU	Lung	<i>Taiyin</i> (1 <sup>st</sup> )	TL
SP	Spleen	<i>Taiyin</i> (1 <sup>st</sup> )	PL
LI	Large Intestine	<i>Yangming</i> (1 <sup>st</sup> )	TL
ST	Stomach	<i>Yangming</i> (1 <sup>st</sup> )	PL
HT	Heart	<i>Shaoyin</i> (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	TL
KID	Kidney	<i>Shaoyin</i> (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	PL
SI	Small Intestine	<i>Taiyang</i> (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	TL
BL	Bladder	<i>Taiyang</i> (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	PL
PC	Pericardium	<i>Jueyin</i> (3 <sup>rd</sup> )	TL
LIV	Liver	<i>Jueyin</i> (3 <sup>rd</sup> )	PL
TH	Triple Heater	<i>Shaoyang</i> (3 <sup>rd</sup> )	TL
GB	Gall Bladder	<i>Shaoyang</i> (3 <sup>rd</sup> )	PL

In the I-Ching, the trigrams are paired atop each other to compose sixty-four hexagrams which symbolize all possible phenomena in the universe.<sup>12</sup> The lines (bars) of a hexagram are called *Yaos*. The hexagrams are read from bottom to top, and each line (*Yao*) of the hexagram represents an acupuncture point. These acupoints are the *Shu*-transportation points plus the *Yuan*-Source point on the *Yang* Channels and the *Luo*-Connecting point on the *Yin* Channels. This allows hexagrams (6 bars or *Yaos*) to be translated into acupuncture points using the Balance Method. Thus, the first *Yao* is *Jing*-well, the second *Yao* is *Ying*-spring, the third is *Shu*-stream. The fourth in the *Yang* Channels has been assigned to the *Yuan*-Source points and in the *Yin* Channels to the *Luo*-Connecting points. An exception is the Lung (LU) and Liver (LIV) that have the *Luo*-Connecting point in the 5th *Yao* and *Jing*-river in the 4th *Yao*. The remaining *Yin* Channels have *Jing*-river in the 5th space and *He*-sea at the 6th *Yao* (Figure 4).

### Global Balance

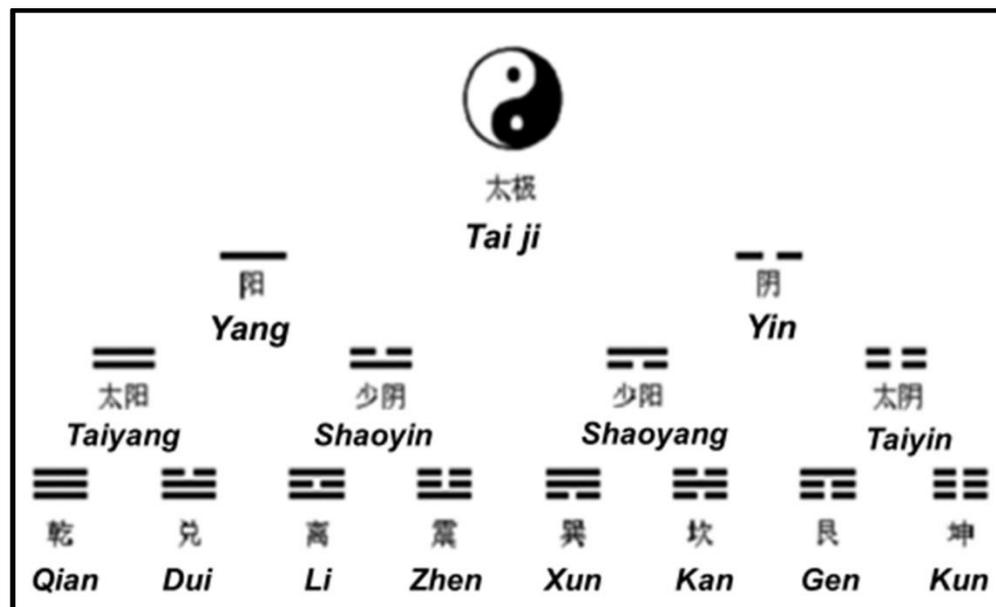
Global Balance is used to address multi-system disharmony or non-localized pain. It is used with both selection of acupoints from the Six Systems BM and *Ba Gua* BM. It is based on establishing dynamic balance and static balance. The dynamic balance assures that distal points are placed in alternating patterns of *Yin* and *Yang* on limbs. Static balance is the selection of strong points to balance each other (*Ba Gua* and Six Systems) like a truss applied to a building to create a very strong and static foundation (Figure 5).

### Sense Organs

Balance Method can also be used to address internal conditions associated with the Five Sense Organs in traditional Chinese veterinary medicine (TCVM). These refer to the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and tongue, which are closely related to the viscera. The inspection of the five sensory organs is not only helpful for the selection of treatment of sense organ lesions based on syndrome differentiation but is also helpful in understanding the pathological changes of the viscera. A problem in one of the five sense organs may reflect an imbalance of the associated internal organ. For example, red and painful eyes often reflect a Liver problem; a tongue problem may indicate a Heart imbalance; a mouth and lip problem may be related to the Spleen; a nose problem may be related to the Lung; and deafness may be related to deficiency of the Kidney as much as sight or vision is.<sup>9,10,13,14</sup>

### Eyes

In TCVM, Liver and Kidney Meridians are the internal pathways to the eyes.<sup>13,14</sup> Vision as it relates to the optic nerve or the cortical vision center (vision impairment) is related to KID *Jing* Deficiency, but vision is also related to LIV Blood, and certain areas of the eyes are related to *Zang-Fu* organs.<sup>13,14</sup> Eye pain such as eye irritation (swelling, redness, burning, dryness) as well as allergies, conjunctivitis, uveitis, keratitis, and pannus, are usually the result of External Wind-Heat invasion, Liver *Qi* Stagnation, Liver *Yang* rising, and when caused by trauma is associated with Stagnation as well as inflammation.<sup>13,14</sup>



**Figure 3:** Representation of *Yang* (one bar) and *Yin* (interrupted bar); greater *Yang* with 2 solid bars (*Taiyang*) and greater *Yin* with 2 interrupted bars (*Taiyin*); addition of a third bar represents a trigram (*Gua*) and 1 trigram on top of another represents a hexagram. Each bar is called a *Yao*, and in a hexagram each *Yao* corresponds to an acupuncture point. The bottom row is the 8 trigrams or *Ba Guas*.

When treating eye disease with the Balance Method approach, the area of discomfort should be identified and several steps followed for effective treatment: Step 1 identifies the affected Channel (GB, ST, TH, BL).<sup>1,2,3,5,7</sup> Next to satisfy the TCVM criteria, the inner pathways to the eyes, which are the domain of the Liver and Kidney, are considered. This gives 6 Channels which should be evaluated and one by one either eliminated or pinpointed as the area of imbalance.<sup>5</sup> A TCVM practitioner usually looks at LIV, KID, and PC to balance the entire eye (Table 4).<sup>5,9</sup> When eye disease is unilateral or 1 eye more severe in bilateral disease, the strategy is to place the points in a *Yin* and *Yang* dynamic pattern to create better movement of *Qi* and Blood.<sup>11,12</sup> Acupuncture points treated should be on the opposite extremity to the more affected eye.<sup>5,9</sup> Step 3 incorporates choice of distal acupoints. For this step, consideration of the “Image” format, either as a straight image or as a reverse image is considered. If the TL or PL points are selected, the Image of the whole extremity can be used. Imaging the whole face, will locate the eyes around the elbows, and in the case of the PL, the points will be located around the stifles either in straight or reverse image formats.

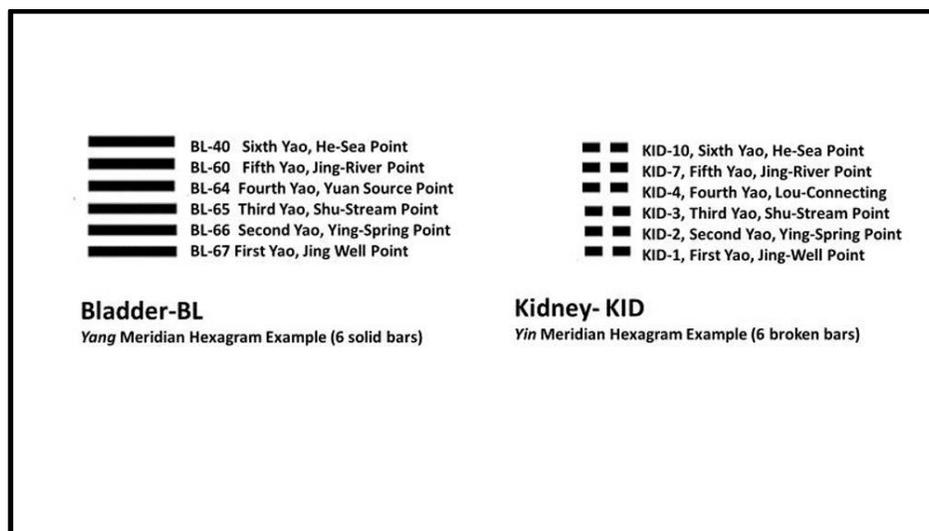
### Ear

The ears are the opening of the Kidneys and controls hearing, but it also connects to the Liver and the lesser *Yang* Meridians (Gallbladder, Triple Heater).<sup>11,12</sup> Any *Yang* rising related to the Liver could go into the Gallbladder as Damp-Heat which is associated with otitis and characterized by moist, “malodorous ears”.<sup>13,14</sup> Step 1

of treatment is to identify the affected channels (GB, TH, SI) with consideration also given to LIV and KID (as in the eye). The next step (step 2) is to identify the Channel(s) through the Six Systems that will balance the sick one(s). Choose the Image format or Global Balance. In step 3, the points to be used should be identified. The PC, TH, LIV, and GB Channels will be the most commonly used to balance the ears (Table 4).

### Nose and Mouth

Only nasal congestion and sinusitis are discussed here, but the mouth includes gingivitis, teeth, stomatitis, throat and tonsillitis and can be treated in a similar fashion.<sup>5</sup> Nasal congestion and discharge (*Liu Bi*) includes sinusitis, rhinitis, infectious diseases and common respiratory allergies.<sup>5,13,14</sup> They are caused by Wind-Cold, Wind-Heat pathogens, Spleen/Stomach Damp/Heat, Lung *Qi* Deficiency, and Lung *Yin* Deficiency.<sup>13,14</sup> Step 1 is to identify the Meridians involved. These diseases are located below the eye and on the front of the face (ST, LI, GV, CV). Lung is used to balance LI but due to its path to the exterior is considered as well to satisfy TCVM criteria. Step 2 involves Global Balance since these conditions involve internal disease. The selection of the pattern *Taiyin/Yangming* is recommended (*Taiyin/Yangming* are LU, SP, LI, ST).<sup>9</sup> Step 3 is to identify the acupoints to be used (System III & VI, which places needles at *Yaos* 3 and 6 of the hexagrams of each Channel). Acupoints selected are therefore LI-3, LI-11; LU-9, LU-5; SP-3, SP-9 and ST-43, ST-36.



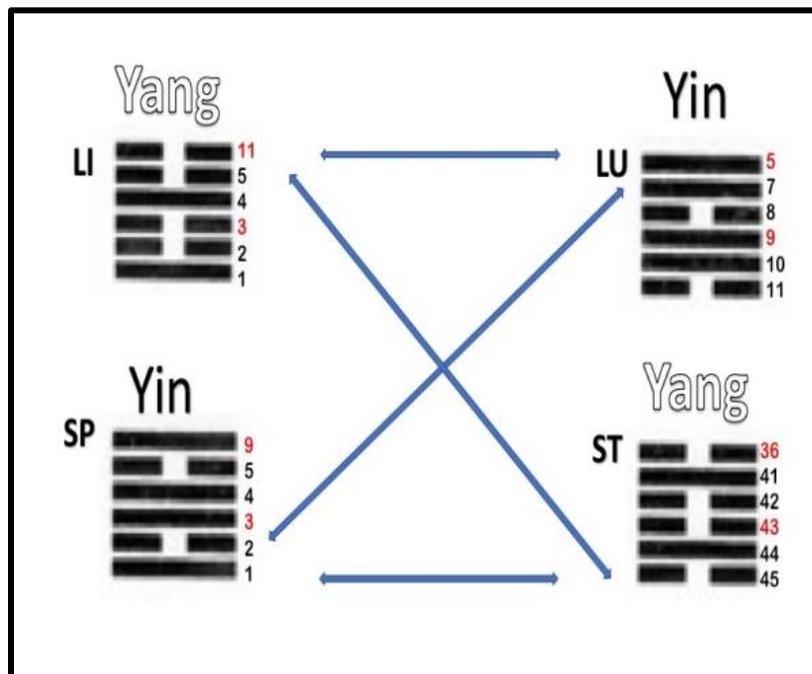
**Figure 4:** Acupuncture points are taken from the hexagram of the Channel that has been selected to treat Channel pathology. In this figure, an example of a *Yang* (Bladder) and *Yin* (Kidney) Meridian is demonstrated. Each hexagram is composed of 6 bars (*Yaos*) with the Kidney Meridian containing 6 solid bars and the Bladder Meridian with 6 broken bars. A *Shu*-transportation point is located at each *Yao* (bar).

**Clinical Case Example (Global Balance for Internal Medicine Disorder)**

A five-month old, intact male, French Bulldog with a 2-month clinical history of mucoid diarrhea was presented for evaluation. The dog had been fed a variety of commercial dry dog foods (including grain free) and treated with omeprazole, prednisolone and metronidazole without successful disease resolution. A fecal exam and complete blood count (CBC) were performed. The fecal yielded typical commensal parasites (*Petatrichomona sp* or *Tritrichomona foetus*) on the first exam and *Giardia sp* on a second exam 1 month later. A leukocytosis [20.9 x10<sup>9</sup>/L (normal 6-17)] with neutrophilia [16.1x 10<sup>9</sup>/L (normal: 3-11)] was diagnosed from the CBC results. The presumptive diagnosis given was inflammatory bowel disease (IBD).

On presentation for TCVM evaluation, the patient (Earth constitution) had a tense abdomen, deep red tongue, surging rapid pulses and reactive alarm points (ST *Mu*, CV-12 and ST-25). A TCVM Pattern diagnosis of Damp-Heat on the Large Intestine Channel was made. Treatment goals were to drain Dampness, eliminate Heat, stop the diarrhea and to promote *Qi* flow on the Large Intestine Channel. A homemade food therapy diet was recommended but refused by owner.

The treatment protocol used for this patient centered around the selection of distal acupuncture points using the Global Balance Method. Step 1 was to first identify which Meridians were affected. The TCVM Pattern diagnosis was Large Intestine Damp Heat, therefore, the affected Meridians would be located along the abdomen. The main Channels running vertically through the abdomen were identified as the ST and KID. In Step 2, the Channels that could balance the affected Channels were identified according to the Six Systems of Balance (Tables 1 and 4). When referring to Table 4, it is noted that PC balances KID in System 5, and ST in System 2, and that LI balances ST in Systems 1 and 5. In System 3, ST balances Spleen (satisfies TCVM criteria) such that both *Yin* and *Yang* Dynamics and Static Format are satisfied (PC, LI, KID, ST). Step 3 (choosing the acupoints) is addressed by referring to the hexagrams of the 4 Meridians to be used (Four Exceptional Meridian Pattern) and to place them in a *Yin-Yang* Dynamic Balance (Figure 6). Treatment technique consisted of dry needle stimulation for 30 minutes at LI-1, LI-4 (left front leg), PC-9, PC-6 (right front leg), KID-1, KID-4 (left hind leg), ST-42, ST-45 (right hind leg) with 36-gauge x 15mm length sterile acupuncture needles<sup>a</sup>. Treatment was repeated every 8 days for 4 weeks, then once every 2 weeks and finally once every month for maintenance.



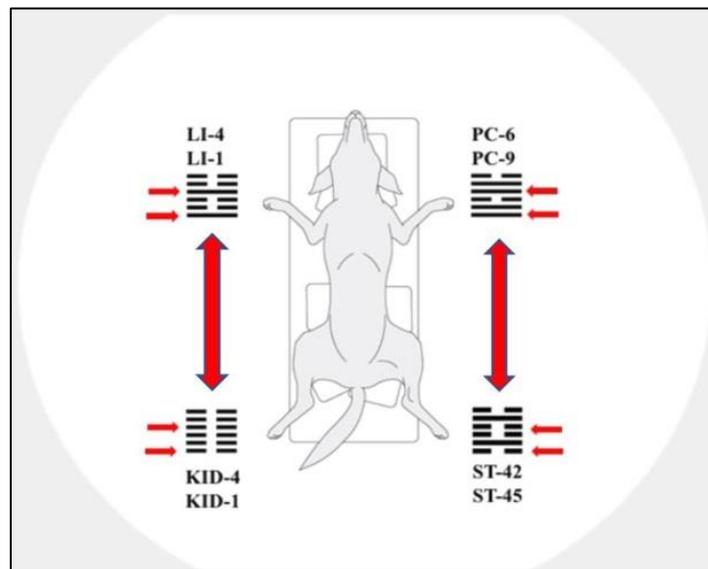
**Figure 5:** Global balance is made up of both a *Yin-Yang* Dynamic Balance (alternating *Yin* and *Yang* for each limb) and Static Balance format (selection of a balance Channel to correct the Channel with pathology; System 1 in this example) forming a “Truss” as in a building for strong support. The numbers in red represent the chosen lines (*yaos*) from the hexagram of the balancing Channel. They identify *Shu*-transportation Points (System III, VI) to use for treatment.

In the Four Exceptional Meridian Pattern the acupoints are selected from lines (*Yao*) 1 and 4 of the balancing Meridian hexagrams (System I and IV Meridian conversion). These are *Jing*-well acupoints and *Yuan*-Source (*Yang* Channels)/*Luo* Connecting (*Yin* Channels) acupoints. This forms a very strong effective architectural structure or “Truss” (Static Balance) as denoted by large red arrows in Figure 6. These arrows are placed between

the ST and PC Meridians since they balance each other in Systems 2 and 4 as do KID and LI in a vertical direction, ipsilateral, in System 4. LI balances ST in Systems 1 and 5 and KID balances PC in System 5 in a diagonal direction (Table 4). All organs or structures on the pathway of these Channels in the abdomen are covered plus anything along the course of the involved Meridians.

**Table 4:** Summary treatment table for Six Systems approach to Balance Method; the affected Channel can be balanced by selecting a Channel from Systems 1-5; Systems 1, 3 and 5 use the contralateral side while 2 and 4 can use either side (contralateral, ipsilateral); System 6 uses acupoints on the affected Channel distal to the Channel pathology on the same leg

Channel Pathology	System 1	System 2	System 3	System 4	System 5
LU	SP	BL	LI	BL	LIV
LI	ST	LIV	LU	KID	ST
ST	LI	PC	SP	PC	LI
SP	LU	SI	ST	TH	HT
HT	KID	GB	SI	GB	SP
SI	BL	SP	HT	LIV	BL
BL	SI	LU	KID	LU	SI
KID	HT	TH	BL	LI	PC
PC	LIV	ST	TH	ST	KID
TH	GB	KID	PC	SP	GB
GB	TH	HT	LIV	HT	TH
LIV	PC	LI	GB	SI	LU



**Figure 6:** Clinical case of chronic mucoïd diarrhea in a young bulldog with a conventional diagnosis of Inflammatory Bowel Disease and a TCVM Pattern diagnosis of Large Intestine Damp Heat. Balance Method acupuncture was used to treat the dog by assigning hexagrams in an alternating pattern of *Yin* and *Yang* limb based on Meridians that would balance the affected Meridians. The acupoints selected use System I - IV (Exceptional 4 Meridian) which selects acupoints located on the first and fourth *yaos* (*Jing*-well and *Yuan* Source (*Yang* Channel)/*Luo* Connecting (*Yin* Channel)).



**Figure 7:** Stools before (left photograph) and after (right photograph) Balance Method treatment for IBD in a 5-month-old French Bulldog.

The diarrhea in this patient stopped after the first treatment, but a consistent strategy of treatment was maintained (Figure 7). The rapid resolution of this case is associated with the efficacy of *Jing*-well point treatment and its *Yin* Channel association with the Wood Element (LIV) which keeps *Qi* and Blood flowing freely which helps digestion. The use of *Yuan*-Source points in this approach also tonified the Large Intestine and Stomach along with the *Luo*-Connecting point controlling Excess combined with Deficiency which strengthened this strategy even further.<sup>2</sup>

## SUMMARY

The Balance Method system of acupuncture has a long history of use. The application of the *Ba Gua* or Eight Trigrams applies to every aspect of life as seen in the I-Ching. This process is the foundation theory for the Balance Method, which has many layers and applications. The *Guas* contains the *Yin Yang* dynamics that opposites are inverted images of polarity. Applying this inverted imaging of opposites theory to the human and animal body reveals that corresponding areas in the body are related and can influence or treat each other. This system relates similar anatomical correspondences between thoracic limb and pelvic limb referred to as Mirroring, or between the limbs and the torso of the body which is called Imaging.

Through an organized approach (3 steps) Channel pathology is identified; a Channel to balance the sick Channel is identified, and then distal acupoints (*Shu* Transportation/Command Points) are selected to treat the condition. Acupuncture point selection is based on one or several of the following: similar areas of the body treat each other; finding *Ah-shi* points in a balancing Channel to treat; or a hexagram of the balancing Channel from the *Ba Guas* (lines of hexagram represents *Shu*-Transportation Points). BM has the flexibility to be applied to appendicular Channel blockage or organized into a global balancing approach to treat multi-organ/systemic disease. With the clinical experience and observations from thousands of patients cured by Balance Method acupuncture, it is hoped that by presenting this

“Pearl of TCVM Practice” more veterinarians will incorporate the use of the “Balance Method Distal Acupoints” into their practice. By further reviewing and analyzing the current state of scientifically proven benefits of distal point needle stimulation, more information will be gathered to further research into these systems.

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## FOOTNOTES

<sup>a</sup> AcuZone acupuncture needles, K.S.Choi Corp., Los Angeles, CA, USA.

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