This handout explains what acupressure is, guidelines for using it, and how to use acupressure to relieve anxiety.

What is acupressure?

- Acupressure is a practice of Traditional East Asian Medicine that stimulates the same system of acupoints used with acupuncture, but you use your hands instead of needles. Acupressure has been used for thousands of years.
- Acupoints are found on the body along pathways. These pathways, called channels or meridians, form a network that connects all areas of the body, creating a unified system that can be stimulated at specific locations to effect changes within the body.
- You can do acupressure on yourself at any time, especially when you’re experiencing certain side effects, such as nausea, vomiting, anxiety, stress, fatigue, and pain.

General guidelines for acupressure

- Do not use acupressure on areas with open cuts, bruises, wounds, rashes, medical devices, or on areas with tumors or metastases
- Use your fingertips to apply gentle, firm pressure to each point
- Use firm pressure, but do not press so hard that it hurts
- Press and hold or make circular motions on the acupoint for 3 minutes at least twice per day
- You can apply acupressure as frequently as you like; multiple times a day, multiple times an hour or as often as needed for symptom relief
- Acupoints are located on both left and right sides of the body

What does it feel like when I press on an acupressure point? How will I know if I’m in the right spot?

You might feel soreness, achiness, warmth, or tingling when you press on the acupressure points. The amount of pressure to apply to the acupoint depends on the individual. You should not feel pain with acupressure, if you feel sharp pain decrease the amount of pressure you apply.
Acupressure points for anxiety

Yin Tang - also called Hall of Impression or Extra 1

- Location: Centered between the eyebrows.
- Use any finger gently press or make circle directly between your eyebrows.
- Watch a video to help you locate Yin Tang by:
  - Visiting bit.ly/yin-tang, or
  - Using the QR code:

Pericardium 6 - also called Nei Guan or Inner Gate

- Location: On each arm, three fingers below the wrist crease in the center of the arm between two large tendons.
- Place your three fingers, not including your little finger, on the palm side of your opposite wrists. Use your thumb of your opposite hand to find the point and make circles or a back-and-forth motion in the groove made by the two large tendons on your wrist.
- Watch a video to help you locate Pericardium 6 by:
  - Visiting bit.ly/pericardium-6, or
  - Using the QR code:
Heart 7 - also called Shen Men or Spirit Gate

- Location: At the wrist crease on the pinky side of wrist
- Draw a line straight down your palm starting between your ring finger and little finger and moving down to your wrist. The point is at the intersection of this line and the largest wrist crease closest to the palm.
- Watch a video to help you locate Heart 7 by:
  - Visiting bit.ly/heart-7, or
  - Using the QR code:

References