



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Acupressure for Pain and Headaches

This information explains how to use acupressure to reduce pain and headaches.

Acupressure is an ancient healing art that's based on the traditional Chinese medicine practice of acupuncture. With acupressure, you put pressure on specific places on your body. These places are called acupoints. Pressing these points can help release muscle tension and promote blood circulation. It can also relieve many common side effects of chemotherapy.

You can do acupressure at home by using your fingers to apply pressure to different acupoints. Watch this video or follow the steps below to learn how to do acupressure to reduce pain and headaches.



Please visit www.mskcc.org/pe/acupressure_headache to watch this video.

Pressure Point LI-4 (Hegu)

Pressure point LI-4, also called Hegu, is located between the base of your thumb and index finger. Doing acupressure on this point to relieve pain and headaches.

1. Using your right thumb and index finger, find the space on your left hand between the base of your left thumb and index finger (see Figure 1).
2. Press down on this point for 5 minutes. Move your thumb in a circle while applying pressure. Be firm, but don't press so hard that it hurts.
3. Repeat the process on your right hand.

You can do acupressure several times a day, or as often as needed for your symptoms to go away.

To learn about other therapies available at Memorial Sloan Kettering (MSK), call the Integrative Medicine Service at 646-888-0800 or visit our website:

www.mskcc.org/IntegrativeMedicine.



Figure 1. Finding the space between your

left thumb and index finger

If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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