



# Tuina

Manipulations Demonstrated

*Chief Editor* Li Jiangshan



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# Tuina Manipulations Demonstrated

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## Summary

This book is divided into two sections: the first introduces the definitions, classifications, and requirements of each Tuina manipulation, as well as common Tuina media; the second uses images and text to describe the main points, cautions, and clinical application of the most common adult manipulations. The combination of illustrations and text makes this book appropriate for the majority of Tuina professionals and amateurs. The author of this book has also recorded and produced the demonstration video 'Tuina Manipulations' to be used for study.

## Preface

Tuina, guided by the theories of traditional Chinese medicine, uses specific manipulations or massage tools to operate on certain areas or acupoints on the surface of the body. Tuina treatment can regulate the body's physiological and pathological condition to treat and prevent disease, improve health, and strengthen the body. As manipulations are the primary method of carrying out treatment, they are a core component of the study of Tuina, and are also the most difficult skills to master.

In order to meet the requirements of Tuina education and to simplify communication with international medical massage professionals, this book lays stress on the analysis of the structure of traditional manipulations as well as the training of clinical skills. Video, text, and audio are combined to demonstrate the manipulations, and provide a complete education method while at the same time resolving the issue of how to study without the direct guidance of teachers.

This book is divided into two sections: the first introduces the definitions, classifications, and requirements of each Tuina manipulation, as well as common Tuina media; the second describes the main points, cautions, and clinical application of the most common adult manipulations.

During the editing of this book emphasis was placed on the clinical applicability of the manipulation skills, and great care was taken to make the content accurate, the main points and different levels clear, and the writing refined. In spite of this, oversights and shortcomings are unavoidable, and it is hoped that colleagues and readers will offer their valuable criticism and corrections.

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# Chapter 1

## Concept of Chinese Tuina Manipulations

Chinese Tuina is an external therapeutic method that is guided both by traditional Chinese medical theories and those of modern medicine. It expounds upon and researches the use of manipulation therapy and self-cultivation training to prevent and cure illness. In ancient days, *tui na* (literally meaning push-grasp) was also called *an mo* (press-rub), *an qiao* (press-step), *qiao mo* (step-rub), *jiao yin* (raise-stretch) and *an wu* (press-thrust).

A core component of Chinese Tuina is manipulation therapy. Manipulation therapy is a treatment method in which standardized actions are performed by the practitioner on the surface of the recipient's body using either the hands, other parts of the body or specialized tools. The goal is to prevent and cure disease, and the practitioner's level of familiarity with the operation and application of each manipulation directly influences the efficacy of the treatment.

# 1 Manipulation Classification

There are many ways to classify Chinese Tuina manipulations: according to the morphological characteristics, area of treatment, direction of force, target patient, etc. Presently, most scholars classify manipulations according to the morphological characteristics of the movement. Following the principles of this classification method allows us to divide all of the basic manipulations into the following six categories.

- **Swinging Manipulations**

Manipulations in which action initiated by the forearm causes the wrist joint to perform side to side swinging movements are classified as swinging manipulations. Some examples are one-finger pushing meditation, rocking, kneading, etc.

- **Rubbing Manipulations**

Rubbing manipulations include those that involve friction between the practitioner's hand and the surface of the recipient's body. For example, rubbing, scrubbing, pushing and twisting.

- **Vibrating Manipulations**

In this category of manipulations specific muscular activity on the part of the practitioner creates an obvious sensation of vibration in the subcutaneous tissue of the recipient. Examples include vibration, shaking, etc.

- **Compression Manipulations**

In this category pressure is applied vertically onto or from both sides of a certain area. It includes pressing, digital pressing, squeezing, grasping, finger-twisting, plucking, etc.

- **Striking Manipulations**

Striking manipulations are those that involve rhythmic striking of the surface of the recipient's body. Patting, striking, tapping, etc are included in this category.

- **Joint Manipulation Techniques**

In this class of manipulations the practitioner uses certain techniques to passively manipulate the recipient's joints within their normal physiological range. It includes swinging, thrusting, counter-traction, etc.

## 2 Requirements of Tuina

In order to achieve the desired penetrating effect, Tuina manipulations must be performed in accordance with basic requirements regarding duration, strength, uniformity and gentleness.

- **Duration**

Each manipulation must be performed for a specified period of time without loss of quality in order to preserve the continuity of the movement.

- **Strength**

The manipulations must possess a certain degree of power,

effect and dexterity.

- **Uniformity**

The manipulations must be rhythmic, and should not alternate between fast and slow. In addition, in most situations the manipulations should be performed with a steady level of force, and should not suddenly get lighter or heavier.

- **Gentleness**

Gentleness means that the manipulation should be done with an appropriate level of strength and should morph into other manipulations naturally and smoothly.

- **Penetration**

The effect of the manipulation should penetrate to the area of pathology.

### 3 Tuina Media

During a Tuina treatment various liquids, pastes or powders can be applied to the skin to reduce friction or to obtain a certain medicinal effect. These materials are called Tuina media. The most frequently used media are as follows.

- **Talcum Powder**

Talcum powder has the effect of lubricating the skin. It is often used in the summer and can be used during the treatment of various disease patterns.

- **Baby Powder**

Baby powder has the effects of lubricating the skin and absorbing sweat and moisture. It can be used for various kinds of disease patterns.

- **Onion-Ginger Juice**

Onion-ginger juice can be extracted by mashing up onion stems and fresh ginger or by soaking sliced onion stems and fresh ginger in 75% alcohol. It can strengthen the effects of warming and dispersing cold; it is often used in winter and spring and when treating children with deficiency cold syndrome.

- **Rice Liquor**

This potable liquor has the effects of activating blood, expelling pathogenic wind, dissipating cold, eliminating dampness, unblocking the meridians and freeing the collaterals. It can be used to reduce fever and is indicated in the case of acute sprain.

- **Wintergreen Ointment**

This ointment is a combination of wintergreen oil, menthol, Vaseline and a small amount of musk. It has the therapeutic effects of warming the meridians to dissipate cold and lubricating the skin. It is indicated for children with deficiency cold diarrhea and soft tissue injuries.

- **Mint Juice**

Mint juice is made by mixing 5g of 5% menthol with 100ml

of 75% alcohol. It has the effects of warming meridians to dissipate cold, releasing the exterior by cooling, clearing and relieving the head and eyes and lubricating the skin. It is indicated for children with deficiency cold diarrhea and soft tissue injuries. It can be used in conjunction with scrubbing or press-kneading to strengthen the penetrating heat effect.

- **Water**

Cool and clean potable water has the effects of cooling the skin and reducing fever, and is indicated for externally contracted heat patterns.

- **Safflower Oil**

Safflower oil is made up of wintergreen oil, safflower, and menthol. It has the therapeutic effects of reducing swelling and relieving pain and is often used in the treatment of acute or chronic soft tissue injuries.

- **Sesame Oil**

This refers to edible sesame oil. When performing the scrubbing manipulation, daubing some sesame oil on the skin can assist with heat penetration to raise the efficacy of the treatment. It is often used when performing scraping (*gua sha*).

- **Egg White**

Remove the egg white by making a hole in the egg. It has the effects of clearing and cooling heat and removing food accumulation. It is used in the treatment of fever induced by external pathogens and poor digestion.

# Chapter 2

## Swinging Manipulations

Swinging manipulations involve coordinated and continuous swinging of the fingers, palms or wrist joint. This category of manipulations is primarily composed of one-finger pushing meditation, rolling and kneading.

### 1 One-Finger Pushing Meditation

In one-finger pushing meditation force is exerted through the tip or pad of the thumb. The thumb joint flexes and extends, driven by the back and forth swaying of the wrist joint, and force is transmitted through the thumb to act continuously upon the treatment area or acupoint. One-finger pushing meditation is the representative manipulation of the one-finger pushing meditation school. The movement is difficult and stresses the use of internal force.

## Movement Principles

- **Posture**

The word *relaxed* defines the movement from beginning to finish. The shoulders and arms are relaxed and sunken; do not shrug or lift the shoulders. The wrist is flexed naturally; do not stiffen the joint or use force. With the exception of the thumb, the fingers and palm are relaxed and do not use force. The tip or pad of the thumb adheres firmly to a certain point and does not leave the skin or rub back and forth along the surface. (Fig.1)

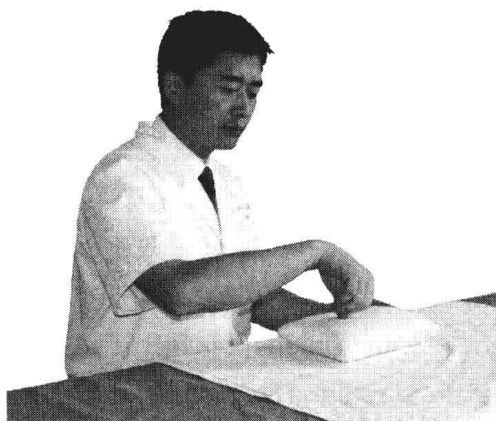


Fig. 1 Practicing posture of one-finger pushing meditation

- **Basic Movement**

With the elbow area acting as a pivot, swinging is initiated by forearm, which in turn drives the swinging of the wrist. If the range of movement of the practitioner's interphalangeal



thumb joints is relatively small or if mild stimulation is called for, the swinging of the wrist may in turn drive the flexion and extension of the interphalangeal joints of the thumb. (Fig. 2)

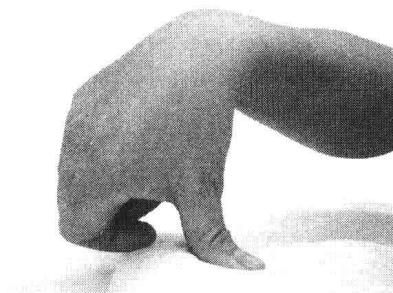


Fig. 2-A Wrist rotates outward and thumb extends

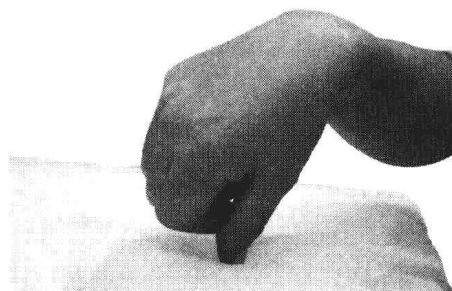


Fig. 2 B Wrist rotates inward and thumb contracts

Fig. 2 Basic movement of one-finger pushing meditation

- **Swing Quickly and Move Slowly**

The swinging motion is performed quickly (usually about 120-160 times per minute) while the movement along the surface of the body is slow.