

# Points of Interest

Volume 2, Issue 1

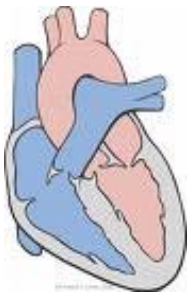
Presented by:

Becca Seitz, MAcOM, LAc

To The Point Acupuncture & Herbal Clinic

3133 NE Prescott St., Portland, OR 97211

## Celebrate the Heart!



Since Valentine's Day is coming up, it seems appropriate to discuss the heart and its roles in Chinese medicine and our health.

Just like in biomedicine, the heart "dominates the blood and vessels." Blood flows through blood vessels because of the pumping of the heart, and through this flow nourishes the entire body.

In Chinese medical theory the heart also "houses the mind." If your heart Qi is not balanced, then your mood, thinking, memory, consciousness and sleep may all be affected.

Chinese Medicine links each of the organs to a sense organ. In this case, the heart "opens into the tongue." What this means is that any disorders of the tongue will be linked back to a problem with the heart. Paralysis of the tongue, changes in taste or the ability to speak are all attributed to an imbalance in the heart.

Next month we'll discuss another organ and its functions in the body according to Chinese Medicine.

## Herb of the Month: Mint

Is everyone around you falling victim to the plague? Are you in denial about that sniffing and sneezing? Come on, you can say it, we won't think any less of you - you have a cold. So you've said it, now - what to DO about it? Of course, seeing your acupuncturist should be on your list, but if you just can't make it in right away, feel free to sip on some mint tea!

While mint may not completely get rid of or prevent your cold, it can certainly make it more bearable.

Mint is an aromatic herb, meaning it has that "spicy" smell to it. That aromatic quality is what helps mint open up your sinuses! Mint is also a "cooling" herb, which means that it can help that burning, sore throat that's been bothering you all day. Most importantly, mint is in the family of herbs that is really good for helping to kick out the common cold.

So, the next time you start getting those first signs of a cold, make sure to have that mint tea brewing while you're giving your acupuncturist a call to schedule an appointment!

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## Tongue Diagnosis

Why does your acupuncturist always want to look at your tongue? It's not because we want to see remnants of what you had for lunch, it's because the health of your body is reflected in your tongue! A red tip of your tongue indicates that you have extra heat in your body. Often it's a good sign that someone is having sleeping difficulties. A puffy tongue, or one that looks swollen, shows that you probably have weak digestion and don't metabolize fluids correctly in your body. A thin, skinny tip of the tongue means that you don't have enough Yin. It's possible that you're thirsty all the time. The next time you're near a mirror, check it out. And try looking at other people's tongues as well.

It's fun to see how different tongues can be!

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