

Case Report

Comparison of effectiveness of Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi's acupressure 14 points exercise with TCM acupressure therapy in the treatment of depression, thyroid problems and heart ailments

C. Vijayalakshmi^{1*}, M. Jothilakshmi², V. Devarajan³

¹Department of Yoga for Human Excellence, Bharathiyar University, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India

²Department of Tamil, Bishop Heber College, Trichy, Tamil Nadu, India

³Department of Yoga, Temple of Consciousness, Bhavani, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India

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*Correspondence:

Dr. C. Vijayalakshmi,

E-mail: vwbtraders@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

In this research article, the research scholar has made a maiden attempt in presenting three original case reports pertaining to the treatment of depression, thyroid problems and heart ailments faced by three different patients and a gradual recovery from these problems through a regular and unintermittent practice of Acupressure 14 points exercise designed by Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi (1911-2006) a South Indian born Saint and Savant. According to him a continuous practice of this acupressure 14 points exercise ensures free flow of bio-magnetic energy or vital life force energy throughout the body without any short-circuit by removing air bubbles in the nerves and helps in the free flow of blood circulation and restores the body to the normal condition free from pain and diseases. In a similar manner, the concept of Traditional Chinese Medicine acupressure therapy involves Qi energy or vital life force energy which circulates through natural pathway in the body called meridians such as Yin-Yang channels. Blockage or an imbalance or disharmony in the flow of Qi energy or vital life force energy in Yin and Yang channels can cause illness and pain. Thus, concept of TCM acupressure therapy as well as Swamij Vethathiri Maharishi's Acupressure 14 points exercise help the patients to correct the functional imbalance and restore the free flow of bio-magnetic energy or Qi energy and thereby returning the body to a more natural state of well-being. Thus, Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi's acupressure 14 point's exercises and TCM acupressure therapy can be regarded as a priceless treasure to the society in general and to the patients suffering from various illnesses in particular. Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi's Acupressure 14 points exercises as well as TCM acupressure therapy using fingertips is a non-pharmacological and self-care treatment, very safe, involves no side-effect and an inexpensive method which doesn't require any equipment.

Keywords: Acupressure, Bio-magnetic energy, Meridian, Qi energy, Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi, TCM

INTRODUCTION

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is a full medical system that has been practiced in Asia for over 3000 years. TCM includes several modalities including acupressure, acupuncture, herbal medicine, tai chi, qi gong, and tuina.¹ The research scholar refers to most

commonly known and practiced modality as acupressure from TCM technique to compare with the application of effect of Acupressure 14 points exercise designed by Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi, to treat various types of illness. TCM acupressure theory comes to the rescue of understanding the mechanism of Acupressure 14 points exercise through the Governing and Conception Vessels.²

Governing vessel and conception vessel

The governing vessel is the confluence of all six yang channels, over which it is said to “govern”. It controls all six yang channels, it is called the “sea of yang” meridians. This is apparent from its Path-way because it flows up the midline of the back, a yang area and in the centre of all yang channels (except the stomach channel which flows in the front). The conception Vessel has a major role in Qi circulation, monitoring and directing all of the yin channels. It is important to understand the energetic potential of these two currents flowing in both ascending and descending direction on the posterior and anterior vertical midline in the body. The energetic movements of these two currents stimulate the emotional regulation of the acquired mind, spiritual intuition and activate the perceptions of mental activities. This two Governing and Conception Vessels are the main rivers of the body's yin and yang energies.³

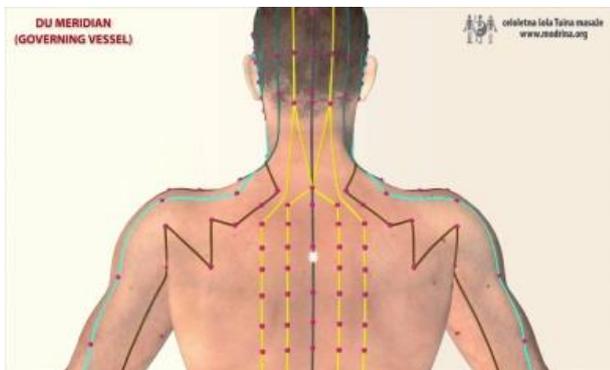


Figure 1: Governing vessels.

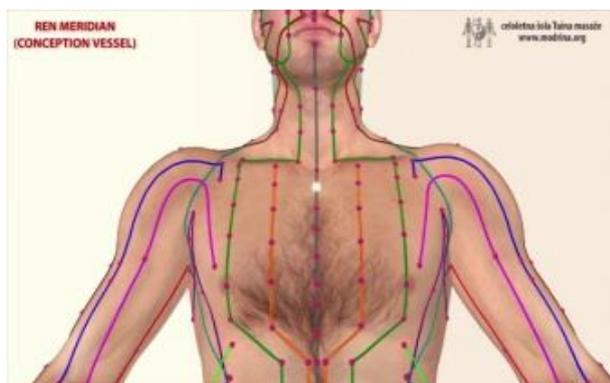


Figure 2: Conception vessels.

Mechanism of Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi's acupressure 14 points exercise

Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi's Acupressure 14 points exercise simply says that the practitioner should bend his or her left arm at the elbow point diagonally and the first three fingers namely index finger, middle finger and ring fingers of the left hand touch and press the top of the spine in the upper back and the practitioner should not

release the left hand and the fingers until he had completed the full exercise.

In this Acupressure 14 points exercise, Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi has preached the method of practicing the exercise and its benefits to his disciples' welfare as he learnt from his Gurus. The scientific evidence as to what happens when the practitioner holds three fingers of his left hand and press the top of the spine in the upper back in the point number one and why the practitioner shouldn't remove the three fingers until the completion of the 14 points is not clearly known. In order to find out the scientific evidence, the research scholar has made an extensive research study and could find out the solution to some extent from other acupressure methods and one such method is the Traditional Chinese Medicine Acupressure therapy.

At this juncture mention should be made that not only the research scholar herself being an Acupressure therapist for the last eight years but also practicing sincerely Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi's Acupressure 14 points exercise in addition to possessing a knowledge in Traditional Chinese Medicine acupressure therapy and hence the research scholar could believably see the similarity in both the processes in reaping marvelous results. In Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi's Acupressure 14 points exercise, the practitioner holds three fingers of the left hand and touch and press the top of the spine in the upper back and at this point, according to TCM therapy six types of yang meridians confluence and the practitioner taps the positive energy from this point of confluence and transmits this positive energy to the remaining 13 points.⁴ If we understand this principle, then one can easily understand Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi's Acupressure 14 points exercise and derive enormous amount of benefits.

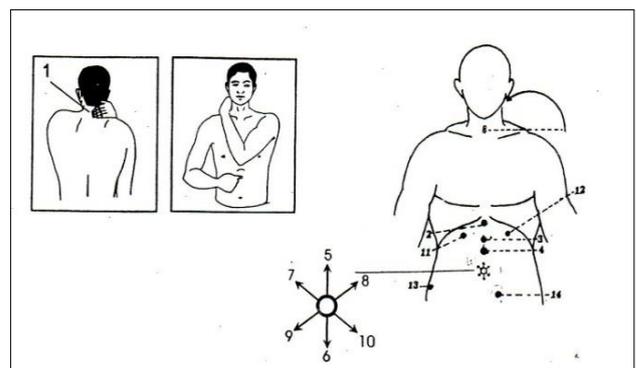


Figure 3: Simplified diagram of Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi's acupressure 14 points exercise.

CASE REPORT

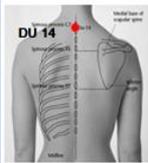
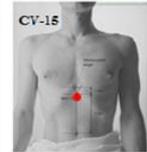
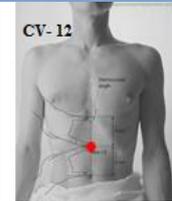
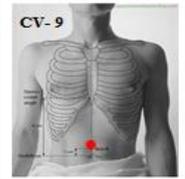
Case report 1

The main purpose of this research study is to explore an alternate pathway for depression disorders found on a 54-

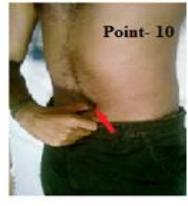
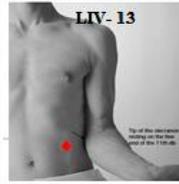
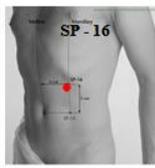
year-old male by the application of Acupressure 14 point's exercise.⁷ The exercise enhances bio-magnetic energy flowing in the body and thereby develops immunity to

fight against the entry of diseases. This concept was designed by Swami Vethathiri Maharishi.

Table 1: Comparison between Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi's acupressure 14 points exercise and TCM acupressure points.

Point	*SVM Acupressure Points	TCM Acupressure Points (Du – 14)
1.	 <p>Lie down on the back and close your eyes. Bent your left arm at the elbow point diagonally and let the first three fingers of the left hand touch and press the top of the spine in the upper back. This position can be taken as positive point (point 1) as referred by Swamiji audio speech.²</p>	 <p>On the midline at the base of the neck, in the depression below the spinous process of the seventh cervical vertebra (C7). Hypertension, insomnia, vomiting blood, Epilepsy, nosebleed that does not stop, etc., could be cleared.⁵</p>
2.	 <p>With the tip of right index finger press the point 2 which is one inch directly below the chest cavity. Other fingers should not touch the body. While pressing, meditate on this point 2 for 30 seconds.²</p>	 <p>On the midline of the abdomen, 7 cun above the umbilicus and 1 cun below the sternocostal angle. Oppressive sensation in the heart, chest pain, excessive sighing, pain radiating from the heart to the back. Fright palpitations. Fullness of the chest, etc., could be cleared.⁵</p>
3.	 <p>Shift the tip of the right index finger further downwards by one inch and this point is taken as point number 3. As before, meditate on this point for 30 seconds.²</p>	 <p>On the midline of the abdomen, 4 cun above the umbilicus and midway between the umbilicus and the sternocostal angle. Heart pain, loss of consciousness, mania-depression, epilepsy, tongue thrusting, etc., could be cleared.⁵</p>
4.	 <p>Shift the tip of the right index finger further downwards by one inch and this point is taken as point number 3. As before, meditate on this point for 30 seconds.²</p>	 <p>On the midline of the abdomen, 1 cun above the umbilicus and 7 cun below the sternocostal angle. Deficiency and distension of the intestine and Stomach, , no pleasure in eating, acid regurgitation, vomiting after eating, abdomen swollen and hard like a drum, periumbilical pain rushing up to the chest and Heart causing difficulty breathing, etc., could be cleared.⁵</p>
Point	*SVM Acupressure Points (Point- 5)	TCM Acupressure Points (CV- 8)

5.	 <p>Place the tip of the right index finger in the Centre of the navel and this point is taken as point number 5 and pull upwards. Imagine the navel as a clock, this point number 5 is at 12 o'clock. As before, meditate on this point for 30 seconds.²</p>	 <p>CV 8 point – Pulls up at the umbilicus. Tonifies the original qi, strengthens the spleen, Kidney qi energy raised upwards to pancreas, stomach, heart, throat and up to head (brain), etc., could be cleared.⁶</p>
Point	*SVM Acupressure Points (Point- 6)	TCM Acupressure Points (CV- 8)
6.	 <p>Place the tip of the right thumb in the Centre of the navel and press pull downwards. This point is taken as point number 6. This point corresponds to 6 o'clock. As before, meditate on this point for 30 seconds.²</p>	 <p>CV 8 point – Pull downwards at the umbilicus. Strengthen the original qi energy, and also the bladder. The small intestines are the paired organs of the heart, so digestive problems can cause the heart to overheat. The elimination of waste products can be done and gives energy to heart.⁶</p>
Point	*SVM Acupressure Points (Point- 7)	TCM Acupressure Points (CV- 8)
7.	 <p>Place the tip of the right index finger in the Centre of the navel and this point number is 7 and pull upwards towards the right shoulder which corresponds to 10.30 in the navel clock. As before, meditate on this point for 30 seconds.²</p>	 <p>CV 8 Point – Pull upwards to the right shoulder at the umbilicus. Tonifies the original qi energy, Strengthens the liver. When pulling upwards, the qi energy of kidney is raised upwards to liver, gallbladder, heart, right lungs and all the organs in the right side.⁶</p>
Point	*SVM Acupressure Points (Point- 8)	TCM Acupressure Points (CV- 8)
8.	 <p>Place the tip of the right index finger in the Centre of the navel and this point number is 8 and pull upwards towards the left shoulder which corresponds to 1.30 on the navel clock. As before, meditate on this point for 30 seconds.²</p>	 <p>CV 8 Point – Pull upwards to the left Shoulder at the umbilicus. Tonifies the original qi energy, strengthens the spleen. When pulling upwards the qi energy of kidney raised upwards to the spleen, gallbladder, heart and the left lungs and all the organs in the left side.⁶</p>
Point	*SVM Acupressure Points (Point- 9)	TCM Acupressure Points (CV- 8)
9.	 <p>Place the tip of the right index finger in the Centre</p>	 <p>CV 8 Point – Pull downwards towards the right thigh at the</p>

	of the navel and this point number is 9 and pull downwards towards the right thigh which corresponds to 7.30 on the navel clock. As before, meditate on this point for 30 seconds. ²	umbilicus. Tonifies the original qi energy, strengthens the genital organs. When pulling downwards towards the right side thigh, the genital organs (ovary benefited), appendicitis eliminated, relief from right ovarian cyst. ⁶
Point	*SVM Acupressure Points (Point- 10)	TCM Acupressure Points (CV- 8)
10.	 <p>Place the tip of the right thumb in the Centre of the navel and this point number is 10 and pull downwards towards the left thigh which corresponds to 4.30 on the navel clock. As before, meditate on this point for 30 seconds.²</p>	 <p>CV 8 Point – Pull downwards towards to the left thigh. Tonifies the original qi energy, strengthens the left ovary. When pulling the downwards towards left side thigh, it gives energy to flaccid type of apoplexy, prolapse of rectum, and useful in ovarian cysts.⁶</p>
Point	*SVM Acupressure Points (Point- 11)	TCM Acupressure Points (Liver- 13)
11.	 <p>Place the tip of the right index finger one inch below the centre of the lowest rib on the right chest and this point number is 11. As before, meditate on this point for 30 seconds.²</p>	 <p>Directly anterior and inferior to the free end of the eleventh rib. This point is just above the level of the umbilicus and on or near the mid-axillary line. Fullness of the chest and lateral costal region, sudden difficulty in breathing, inability to catch the breath, dyspnea, cough, stone oedema, etc., could be cleared.⁵</p>
Point	*SVM Acupressure Points (Point- 12)	TCM Acupressure Points (Spleen 16)
12.	 <p>Place the tip of the right index finger one inch below the centre of the lowest rib on the left chest and this point number is 12. As before, meditate on this point for 30 seconds.²</p>	 <p>On the abdomen at the depression at the lateral border of the rectus abdominal muscle, 4 cun from the midline, 3 cun superior to Sp-15, level with CV-11 and, St-22. Regulates the intestines, Periumbilical pain, cold of the abdomen, undigested food in the stool, dysenteric disorder, and stool containing pus and blood, constipation, etc., could be cleared.⁵</p>
Point	*SVM Acupressure Points (Point- 13)	TCM Acupressure Points (GB26)
13.	 <p>Place the tip of the right thumb one inch below the extreme right side of the lowest rib (Where gall bladder is accommodated) and this point number is 13. As before, meditate on this point for 30 seconds.²</p>	 <p>Directly below Liv-13 (anterior and inferior to the 11th rib), level with the umbilicus. Lower abdominal pain, Cold disorder, and irregular menstruation. Abdominal pain due to retraction of the testicles, constipation, pain of the back, lumbar region and ilium, etc., could be cleared.⁵</p>
Point	*SVM Acupressure Points (Point- 14)	TCM Acupressure Points (Stomach 27)



14.

In this same way, place the right index finger and press point exactly midway between the navel and the left groin (that is thigh point) and this point number is 14 (Where spleen is accommodated). Press and meditate on this point for 30 seconds.²



On the abdomen, 2 cun lateral to the midline and 2 cun inferior to the umbilicus, level with CV-5. Premature ejaculation, seminal emission, irregular menstruation, difficult urination, retention of urine. Fright palpitations and insomnia, prostate prolapse, agitation with thirst hemiplegia, etc., could be cleared.⁵

*Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi

The present study is focused on one Mr. Mukesh aged 54, who was under the clutches of depression disorders due to sudden disappointment that erupted within the weeks' time of his marital life. He did not anticipate this sudden development and so he could not digest this problem. This resulted in him to feel persistently sad and anxious and had feelings of guiltiness, worthlessness, restlessness and loss of interest or pleasure in his daily activities.⁸ He could not sleep properly and felt decreased energy and had a reckless behavior and had the problems of concentration on his work.⁹ He often got irritated and expressed his anguish against his parents, relatives, and friends. This resulted in the loss of appetite and weight. Under these circumstances, his beloved parents were worried much and so they took him to a psychiatrist to have a consultation. The doctor prescribed heavy doses of anti-depressants for some time. These medications did not make any difference in his troubled and depressed status. Under this prevailing situation, the patient poured his pitiable condition to his close confident friend and sought for a permanent remedy to get relieved from this perennial problem.

His confidant friend suggested to him about the functioning of the Manavalakalai Mandram. On hearing this timely suggestion made by his friend, the patient contacted the center and prayed for help. The research scholar suggested to him to practice Acupressure 14 point's exercises to get a gradual relief from his current problems and at the same time, he could continue his Allopathic treatment while practicing these exercises. While practicing the Acupressure 14 points exercises, he was instructed to concentrate on this exercise for four times a day and for every point to apply pressure for one minute. The patient followed the instruction systematically with much determination and with a fervent hope of gradual relief from this depression disorders. After, one year of practicing this exercise he went for a review with psychiatric doctor who on examining the patient found that he did not exhibit symptoms of depression and so advised him to continue the Acupressure 14 points exercise and at the same time he discontinued the intake of anti-depressants.¹⁰

Table 2: Tapering of anti-depressants which shows a significant recovery from depression due to Acupressure 14 points exercises.

Date	Medicine name	Morning	Lunch	Night
30.06.2014	Daxid 50mg	0	0	1
	Stalopam 5mg	1	0	1
	Mirsol 7.5mg	0	0	1
08.07.2014	Daxid 100mg	0	0	1
15.07.2014	Daxid 100mg	0	0	1.5
29.07.2014	Daxid 100mg	0	0	1.5
	Dothip 25mg	1	0	1
11.09.2014	Daxid 100mg	0	0	1.5
	Dothip 25mg	0	0	1
12.12.2014	Daxid 100mg	0	0	1.5
06.03.2015	Daxid 100mg	0	0	1
24.06.2015	Daxid 100mg	0	0	1
14.11.2015	Daxid 100mg	0	0	1
01.02.2016	Daxid 25mg	0	0	1
20.02.2016	Stopped			

Case report 2

Miss Parvathi, a 25 year old spinster from Namakkal District, Tamil Nadu, noted a swelling around her neck all of a sudden. Frequently she was complaining of palpitations, shivering of hands and legs, irregular

menstrual cycle and often she was in a highly emotional state. Hence, her parents took her to a nearby health care center for general checkup. On hearing her complaints, the physician advised her to get a blood test report on T3, T4 and TSH levels. The patient obliged to the physician's advice and took a blood test and reported to the physician. On reviewing the blood test results, the physician diagnosed her that she was suffering from abnormal thyroid functions.¹¹ Therefore the physician prescribed suitable medicines to be taken regularly to correct the thyroid problems.¹² With nervousness, she made up her mind and started consuming the pills prescribed by the physician carefully without any break for more than a year. Even after taking the pills, for more than a year the problems of swelling around her neck, palpitations, and shivering of legs and hands continue to haunt her.¹³

She again consulted the physician and on seeing her pitiable condition, the physician suggested that the only option left to get away from this problem is but to undergo surgery to rectify this problem. On hearing the words of physician, she felt the world around her going topsy-turvy. She prayed to the physician to suggest alternate pathway to get rid of this problem. Then, the physician suggested that if she was not willing to undergo surgery, she could try Yogic exercises and at the same time continue taking tablets until next review after three months.¹⁴ Immediately the patient and her parents searched frantically around their locality and found the functioning of Manavalakalai Mandram centre at Namakkal which was nearby her birth place.

The research scholar in the centre realized the gravity of the situation and she taught the patient the simple basic concept of practicing Physical Exercises, Kaya Kalpa, Meditation techniques and acupressure 14 points exercise designed by Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi. The patient understood the finer points of all these exercises and started practicing them very sincerely along with consuming pills as directed by the physician. The patient started practicing acupressure 14 points exercises as instructed by the research scholar for three months and at the same time she did not forget to take tablets. After having performed the exercises for three months, she went for a review to the physician. Physician examined thoroughly and found marginal improvement in her health conditions and recommended continuing practicing the exercises for another three months and come for review after three months.

The patient continued practicing the exercises for another three months' time and again reported to the physician. The physician after examining her could see the swelling had reduced considerably and the symptoms of shivering in the legs and hands had stopped. The physician advised her to repeat the same exercises for another six months' time and report to him after six months. The consoling words of physician gave a boost in her mind and with much enthusiasm she repeated the exercises for another

six months' time and reported to the physician for a review. To the physician's surprise, the swelling had come down to the near normal level and she reported to the physician that she had no symptoms of shivering, and her irregular menstrual cycle had normalized. On hearing the emboldened statement of the patient, the physician advised her to stop taking the tablets but to continue the practice of exercises without fail. The patient was very happy to hear this news from the physician and stopped taking the tablets. The patient and her parents' Joy knew no bounds. The patient and her parents expressed their sincere gratitude to Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi for having given her a new lease of life.



Figure 4: Before the practice of acupressure 14 points exercise.

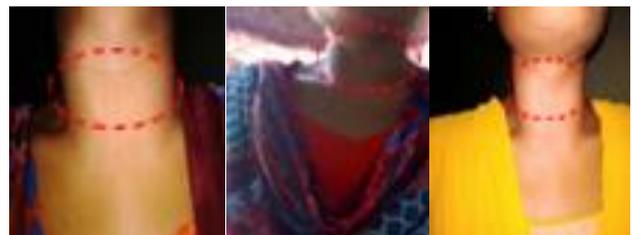


Figure 5: After the practice of acupressure 14 points exercise.

Case report 3

Ms. Ramani is a 38 year old married and a very distinguished sports person. She gave birth to a baby boy in the following year. One year after first delivery, she got conceived again for the second time. Three months after 2nd conception, she underwent Echo- cardiogram to find out the nature of foetus, which showed that the developing embryo had no heartbeat. Immediately, the cardiologist advised to undergo abortion for which she agreed to. One month after abortion, she had over bleeding (profusely), palpitation, shortness of breath and ultimately got fainted.¹⁵ On further examination by a gynaecologist, it was found that some residual foetal waste remained in the uterus. Hence, she underwent abortion for the second time to remove the same. Under these circumstances, the cardiologist further suggested take another echo cardiogram. To his dismay, the echo cardiogram showed that Mitral Valve had shrunk in size to 1.96 sq. cm and so she was advised to take tablets for some time to avoid further shrinkage. She followed the advice and continued taking tablets for eight months. There was no further improvement.

Periodical visit to the cardiologist he helped her find out that the valve had further shrunk to a size of 0.98 sq.cm. Hence, she was advised to undergo open heart surgery to correct the size of the valve. After surgery, there was a remarkable increase in size from 0.98 sq. cm to 3.5 sq.cm. In order to maintain the size of the valve intact, she was instructed to take an injection at an interval of 21 days once. Even then there was no improvement in size, it gradually diminished as seen from the report of echocardiogram (Table 1). Under this prevailing situation, she poured her woes to her close friend, she suggested to her about the functioning of the Manavalakalai Mandram.

On hearing the suggestion, she approached Manavalakalai centre and narrated the entire episode and prayed for help. Then, she was advised to practice Acupressure 14 points exercise designed by Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi for the past one year unintermittingly, three times a day and that too, for every point, she was instructed to apply pressure at every point for one minute, to get fully recovered from this horrible sickness. She followed and practiced the exercise to till day.

Table 3: A gradual shrinkage of mitral valve.

Mitral valve size	Month	year	Status
In the beginning	August	2005	0.9 sq.cm
After the Surgery	August	2005	3.5 sq.cm
Again it shrunk to	October	2008	2.21 sq.cm
Again it size	December	2009	2.22 sq.cm
Again it shrunk to	December	2010	2.17 sq.cm
Again it shrunk to	January	2012	2.15 sq.cm
Again it shrunk to	September	2013	1.96 sq.cm
By practicing Acupressure 14 points exercise regularly, now the valve size showed	September	2014	2.17 sq.cm

After one year of continuous practice of this exercise, she went for a review and took Echo-cardiogram which showed that the size of the valve has attained a size of 2.17 sq.cm (2014). The cardiologist was surprised to see the result and recommended her continue the Acupressure 14 points exercise regularly to maintain the same level to avoid further shrinkage.¹⁶

DISCUSSION

Regular and continuous practice of Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi's Acupressure 14 points exercise ensures free flow of electrical energy (bio-magnetism) without any

short - circuit, by removing air bubbles in the nerves and helps in the free flow of blood circulation.^{17,18} According to the TCM theory, they also describe the same concept that acupressure is based on the premise that bodily functions are regulated by an energy called qi which flows through the body and any disruptions in the flow are believed to be responsible for diseases.

The research scholar gave regular practice for three different types of patients. In this connection, it is pointed out that even though Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi had instructed to apply a pressure of half a minute at every point with either thumb/index finger and to perform Acupressure 14 points exercise one time per day, now taking into consideration of the patient's health condition and for a speedy recovery from their problem, they were instructed to apply pressure at every point for a minute's duration and three times a day. This modified instructions helped them recover from their problem at an early date. At this juncture, it is submitted with much humbleness that, it is not our intention on any account to violate Swamiji's concept of half a minute duration and performance of this exercise one time per day and this modified version is adopted help them recover very easily from their problem. After one year of continuous practice of this exercise, they had overcome miraculously from their problem very easily.

CONCLUSION

It is crystal clear from the case study that regular practice of Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi's Acupressure 14 points exercise with full concentration of mind on all the 14 points by the 3 different types of patients resulted in the gradual recovery from the problems of depression, heart ailments and thyroid problems. The concept of Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi is based upon bio-magnetism and in TCM theory it is termed as Qi energy existing in every human being and depletion of bio-magnetism or Qi energy below a critical level will result in the development of various diseases.

The decreased bio-magnetism or Qi energy can be enhanced to above the critical level by a regular practice of Acupressure 14 points exercise similar to that of TCM Acupressure therapy and also by strictly regulating the quantity and quality of food, work, sleep, sexual gratification and thought force which is called as Five Factors Limit method as suggested by Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi. Enhancement of Bio-magnetism or Qi energy increases immunity in the case of the 3 patients which resulted in the gradual recovery from their problems. Moreover the patients were advised to preserve medical reports before the start of the exercise and after completing the exercise. Thus the Acupressure 14 points exercise is a legacy given to human-being by Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi. Daily practice of Swamiji Vethathiri Maharishi's Acupressure 14 points exercise, rectifies any short- circuit due to the presence of air bubbles in the nerves and ensures free flow of blood

circulation which leads to disease free, peaceful, happy and contented life.

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Ethical approval: Not required

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