

# Self-Care

## Self-Help with Jin Shin Jyutsu

**All You Need  
Are Your  
Own Two Hands**

**J**in Shin Jyutsu® Physio-Philosophy is an ancient, profound healing art that requires years of study to understand fully. However, it is so simple to use, you don't have to wait to enjoy its benefits. All you need is your own two hands.

Imagine you're on a crowded plane, or in a tense business meeting, or stuck in heavy traffic. You look "normal" as you simply hold a certain finger or touch your elbow or knee with your fingertips, but inside you feel like Linus with his blanket.

Or it's Sunday morning after a late party and you feel awful: low energy, draggy, slight headache. Doing self-help Jin Shin Jyutsu helps your head clear and your energy return.

Jin Shin Jyutsu is so easy to use, even children can do it to help themselves fall asleep at night or ease a tummyache. Their moms and dads can use Jin Shin Jyutsu to increase their daily energy level, take care of ordinary aches and pains, lower stress, and improve their overall well-being.

Betsie Haar

# The Heart of the New Medicine

Best of all, you can do Jin Shin Jyutsu anywhere: couch, car, bed, at the movies—even while jogging. No special equipment, clothing, or environment is needed.

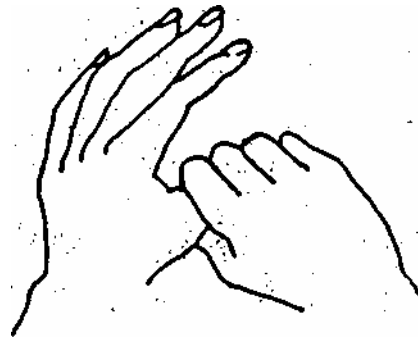
Jin Shin Jyutsu is a way of accessing the body's own capacity to heal itself by harmonizing and balancing itself. It was brought, from Japan to this country in the 1950s by Mary Burmeister, a Japanese-American who had been studying there with the originator Jiro Murai.

There are two ways to receive a Jin Shin Jyutsu treatment: you can go to a trained practitioner or you can apply it to yourself. Because application is so simple, it's a modality that belongs to all the human family. It's not a highly technical procedure; in fact, it's not a technique at all. Mary Burmeister says that Jin Shin Jyutsu is "the art of knowing myself."

## Some Finger Holds

Traditional Chinese and Japanese medicine is based on a different geography of the body than Western medicine. An invisible circulatory system made up of pathways called meridians carries life energy (chi or lei) to every part of the body. When these pathways are disrupted or blocked, the circulation of life energy is compromised and health problems and/or pain occur.

Your fingers may seem distant and peripheral to a symptom, say, in your chest, but they're not. Many energy pathways run through the fingers. In Jin Shin Jyutsu, we use the fingers for self-help because they afford access to so many pathways. Your hands are like jumper cables, recharging what they touch. When we harmonize the fingers, we can begin to harmonize the entire circulation of life energy in our bodies.



Simply hold your thumb for a few minutes to help:

- Digestion
- Stress, "nerves"
- Tension in head, shoulders, lung
- Worry, preoccupation, depression
- Talking too much

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### **Hold your index finger to help:**

- Jaw, teeth, gums (including dental work, a baby's teething, etc.)
- Constipation, digestion
- Bursitis, tennis elbow
- Self-criticism, shyness, fear
- Backaches -

### Hold your middle finger to help:

- General fatigue
- Eyes, vision
- Nursing mothers
- Headache in front of head
- Indecision, irritability, anger

### Hold your ring finger to help:

- Respiratory functions, including asthma
- Skin conditions
- Ringing in the ear
- Excessive mucus
- Negative attitude, sadness, grief

### Hold your little finger to help:

- Heart conditions
- Bloating
- Anxiety
- Trying too hard
- Judgmental attitude

These are very simple harmonizing aids. The more often you hold a finger, the more effective it will be. There are countless applications for finger holds. Following are just a few that Jin Shin Jyutsu students find particularly useful.

For lag, hold each of your fingers, one at a time, during the flight. For headache in the back of the head, hold the base of the thumb on the palm side of either and/or both hands. Barbara Blackwill, a California Jin Shin Jyutsu practitioner since 1973, related this story: "I went to visit my daughter who was teaching English on the island of Java. The day I was to fly home, I had a bad headache and was dreading the long flight. By holding the base of each of my thumbs for 20 minutes, I cleared the headache. I then held my fingers, one by one, for about 5 minutes each. I repeated the whole sequence often and arrived home with very little jet lag, feeling much better than the day before when I had boarded the plane. Now I always hold all my fingers whenever I fly."

For those who are nervous about flying, holding the index finger can help. Daphne Hawkes, an Episcopalian priest in Princeton who travels to visit her grown children, holds her index finger during severe turbulence and says it feels very calming. Another woman was unable to fly at all .because of fear and found that holding her index fingers took the edge off her fear so that she could fly *again*. Holding the index finger also helps with stage fright. It is great for any situation in which you feel fearful. Some swear by it for root canals, panic attacks, and medical procedures.

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# The Heart of the New Medicine

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To enhance your breathing while exercising or jogging, make a circle by placing the thumb over the ring fingernail. (You may recognize this as a mudra, a finger pose from Asian religious art.) Do it with both hands simultaneously, and continue until your breathing feels better. Try this hold also if you have ringing in the ears. It also will help you stay alert while driving long distances.

Both adults and children can hold their thumbs to fall asleep. Susan Brooks, a Jin Shin Jyutsu instructor, writes: "When my mind is filled with layers of thoughts and I'm unable to sleep, holding the base of my thumb with the other thumb lets the accumulated tensions swirling in my head melt away. I feel my body relaxing as I imagine Dorothy might have in the poppy field in Wizard of Oz as she was overcome by a deep, peaceful sleep."

Michael Ann Walsted, a Jin Shin Jyutsu student, suggested this sequence to a friend with severe insomnia: place the right hand over the left breastbone/chest area, then hold the right thumb with the left hand. He was utterly confounded, not knowing anything about Jin. Shin Jyutsu, because it worked.

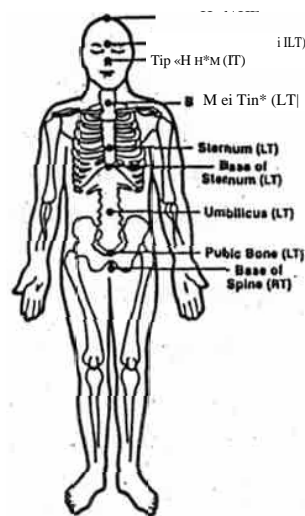
Many people think it amusing that the middle finger relates to anger. Over and over again, we see the deep connections between instinctual or cultural behavior and the Asian model of the body (you can learn a lot about a baby by noticing which finger/thumb he or she sucks). A young mother I know holds her middle finger tightly when she's trying to make dinner and her small children are fussy. Try holding your middle finger instead of

"giving it" next time; do it while counting to 10.

The little finger can help with heart discomforts. Older parents of many Jin Shin Jyutsu students have learned to hold their little fingers on a daily basis to revitalize energy pathways which nourish the heart. Others use this finger to help end heart palpitations when they occur.

## Jin Shin Jyutsu\*

The Artless Art of Getting to Know (Help) Myself\*



Main Central Vertical Flow

## The Main Central Flow

In Japanese, Jin Shin Jyutsu means "the art of the Creator through the person of compassion." Doing Jin Shin Jyutsu self-help allows us to be compassionate toward ourselves. The most important application in Jin Shin Jyutsu; for ourselves as

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well as for others, harmonizes the main energy pathway in the body called the Main Central, which is the source of our life energy. This pathway runs down the center of the front of the body and up the spine.

Here is the way to harmonize this pathway:

**Step 1** Place the fingers of the right hand on top of the head (where they will remain until step 8). Place the fingers of the left hand between eyebrows.

Hold for 2 to 5 minutes or until the pulses you feel in your fingertips synchronize with each other.

Do this for each of the following steps.

**Step 2** Now move left fingers to tip of nose.

**Step 3** Left fingers in the “V” of the throat at the front of the neck.

**Step 4** Left fingers on sternum between breasts.

**Step 5** Left fingers at base of sternum.

**Step 6** Left fingers just above navel.

**Step 7** Left fingers on top of pubic bone.

**Step 8** Left fingers remain on pubic bone while right hand holds base of spine (coccyx).

Harmonizing the Main Central regularly helps you feel centered and ensures that you will have plenty of energy. Some people find it calming and

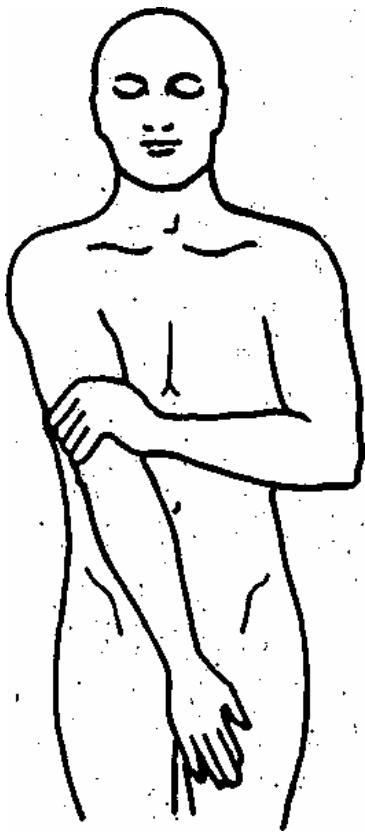
use it to fall asleep, while others like to use it to clear away the cobwebs upon awakening. For optimum results, do daily.

## Knees and Elbows

There are several locations on the knee, thigh, and elbow which are cherished self-help aids in Jin Shin Jyutsu. The inside of the knees help discomforts in the head and chest, and are especially powerful for abdominal complaints. Simply cross your arms and place your hands on the inside of the knees. Hold for up to 20 minutes for stomach aches. Children also love this one!



If you bring your hands up 3 or 4 inches above the knee, on the inner thigh, you will access energy pathways which help with nausea, including morning sickness and menstrual cramps.



Pamela Feig, a Jin Shin Jyutsu practitioner, says, "I've had wonderful results holding several inches above the knee for digestive upsets and cramps. It takes only 2 minutes now-it's better and faster than Advil."

Holding your elbows can also help with respiratory and abdominal discomforts. Place your fingers near the top of the inner crease of your elbow on the thumb side. For sinus discomforts, cross your arms and place your fingers on this crease (if you find that it's sore or tender, you're on the right spot!). For allergies, hold the

upper arm above the elbow crease and with your free hand, hold the spot several inches above the opposite knee. This hold, is so unobtrusive, you can easily do it in public. Many women also use this hold 3 times a day for 20 minutes each for 2 weeks for breast concerns.

Jin Shin Jyutsu, although very easy to use, is a complex and sophisticated healing art. It is useful for chronic and acute conditions. For example, I applied a 30-minute sequence while in the throes of a particularly painful episode of chronic cystitis, a condition I'd had for about 16 years. Not only did the cystitis clear up completely (verified by urinalysis), but it has never returned. One of the senior instructors cleared his own appendicitis. Many such anecdotal stories of "miraculous" healing abound in Jin Shin Jyutsu, but it is the self-help stories in particular that point to our capacity to heal ourselves.

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