

THE YIN AND YANG OF FOALS

In Traditional Chinese Medicine, a balance of energy is required for healthy, productive growth. Your foal needs both Yin and Yang energy to stay in relative balance and develop into the adult horse he is meant to be.



Photo by
Taryn Sujkowski

of balance at different times because they are in such a high growth period. There are times they just have to be very yang, and then they balance it by being very yin.

The heat and circulation of blood and other vital substances that nourish the foal's body are considered Yang in nature. Growth requires internal and external vigor. The Yang aspect of Chi is the impetus behind the exponential growth of the foal.

Growth of the body's essence (tissues, bones, neurological connections, organ systems, and brain) is considered Yin in nature. Additionally, the process of transforming milk into absorbable nutrients is considered a Yin function. For the Yin aspects of the body to develop, the foal must sleep, rest, drink milk, and nibble on grasses so that his body builds substance. And, it is the foal's yin substance that requires the heat, circulation, and movement of yang. It is a dynamic, balanced cycle of yin and yang that supports the foal's health and growth.

"SOFT, ROLLING PINCHES" ACUPRESSURE

Though we do not want to interfere in the foal's growth process, we can offer an acupressure session called "Soft, Rolling Pinches" that will support and enhance whatever is going on in your foal's body at the time. Acupressure has a way of creating a very special bond between you and the foal which, in turn, can prepare him for healthy human contact as well as healthy development.

Pick a time when the foal is relatively calm and find a location where the mare can be

near and there are few distractions. Take three long breaths in and out, then focus for a minute or two on your adoration of this young animal and how you want to contribute to his healthy growth.

Stand to one side of the foal. Starting just behind his shoulder blades approximately two to three inches away from the spine, use your thumb and index fingers on both hands (one on each side of the spine) to slightly lift and softly roll his skin between your fingers. Then move your hand approximately two inches in the direction of his tail and repeat the gentle rolling. Continue to move your hands two inches at a time, softly lifting and rolling the skin as you go, until you reach the base of his tail.

After you have completed three cycles of gentle pinches, return to the point behind his shoulder blades and, with the heel of your hands, sweep down the foal's back with one hand on each side of his spine, similar to how you would brush out the wrinkles on your bed cover to make it tidy and smooth. Repeat this sweeping motion three times.

Now hug your foal and tell him how lovely he is and how much you love him.

Amy Snow and Nancy Zidonis are the authors of Equine Acupressure: A Working Manual and owners of Tallgrass Publishers, offering Acupressure Books, DVDs, and Meridian Charts for horses, dogs, and cats. Tallgrass Animal Acupressure Institute provides hands-on and online training courses worldwide including a Practitioner Certification Program. Contact: 888-841-7211, www.animalacupressure.com, info@animalacupressure.com



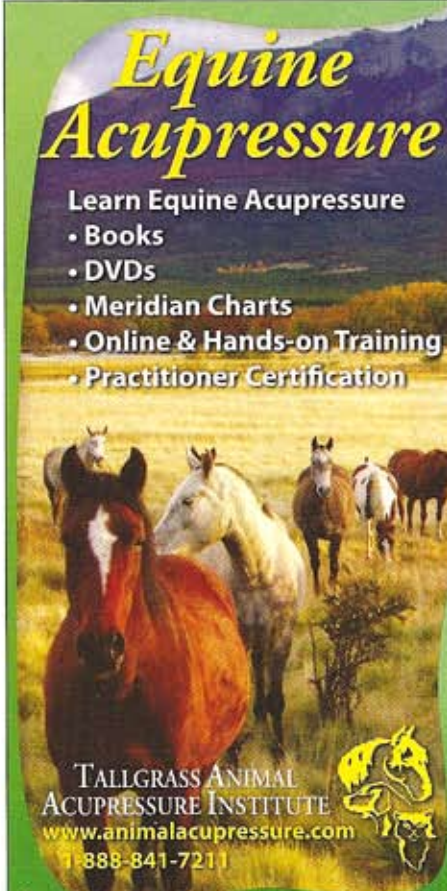
Yin and Yang are the two major aspects of the life-promoting energy, Chi (also seen as Qi or Ki and pronounced "Chee"). When Chi is flowing harmoniously throughout the animal's body, it means that Yang and Yin are in dynamic balance and the entire body is able to function and develop properly. Chi is the basis of energy that nourishes the foal's body systems.

The nature of young animals is not very balanced for good reason. We see a foal bounding from one extreme to the other. One minute he is racing as fast as he can and the next he is quietly nursing. How could it be healthy to be extremely yang one minute and extremely yin the next? The answer is foals are supposed to be out

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