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# AGING GRACEFULLY

It's simple, safe and effective. Acupressure can help your senior cat get more easily through her golden years

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**A**ging isn't for sissies. Just like us, our animal companions succumb to bodily changes as they get older: hearing loss, cloudy vision, teeth wearing out, creaky joints, lumps and bumps and aches and pains...a general slowing and winding down over time. But cats tend to age

well, especially with a little help from their human companions.

## Is he getting older?

Cats are often considered senior citizens by the age of ten, but many live into their 20s with ease. How soon a

cat begins to show his age is highly individual and depends on many factors such as general health, nutrition, activity level, and genetics. Some of the telltale signs include:

- difficulty grooming because of lack of flexibility

- avoidance of physical activity
- nails overgrowing
- tooth decay
- unable to curl into a tight ball to sleep
- difficulty walking due to hindquarter weakness
- obesity even when eating little, or the opposite...
- appearing more bony with his spine being easy to see and feel

As cats age, they can also fall prey to a number of illnesses. It's wise to visit a veterinarian when anything sudden or suspicious arises beyond their annual check-up.

## Acupressure and aging

Acupressure is an excellent way to contend with the common ills of senior life. Like acupuncture, it's based on Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and has been used as a healing tool for thousands of years. Acupuncturists use needles to stimulate certain points on the body, while acupressurists use the tips of their fingers to apply light pressure on the same points, thereby enhancing the flow of life-promoting energy called Chi (pronounced as "chee").

From a TCM perspective, the key to longevity and healthy organ function is based on the Original Chi of the body. The cat is born with all the Original Chi (also called Source Chi or *Yuan Chi*) he will ever have. This means we want his Source Chi to last as long as possible. If it was expended quickly, the cat would have a short life. We need to support the cat's Source Chi by the following:

1. A good quality diet of proteins; felines are protein obligates and need next to no carbohydrates.
2. Consistent and mentally engaging exercise.
3. A loving and healthy environment.
4. Bodywork, such as acupressure.

When Chi is flowing smoothly and harmoniously through the body, the animal is healthy and happy. When there is any kind of blockage or slowdown of Chi flow, the animal can become ill or uncomfortable. The natural process of aging

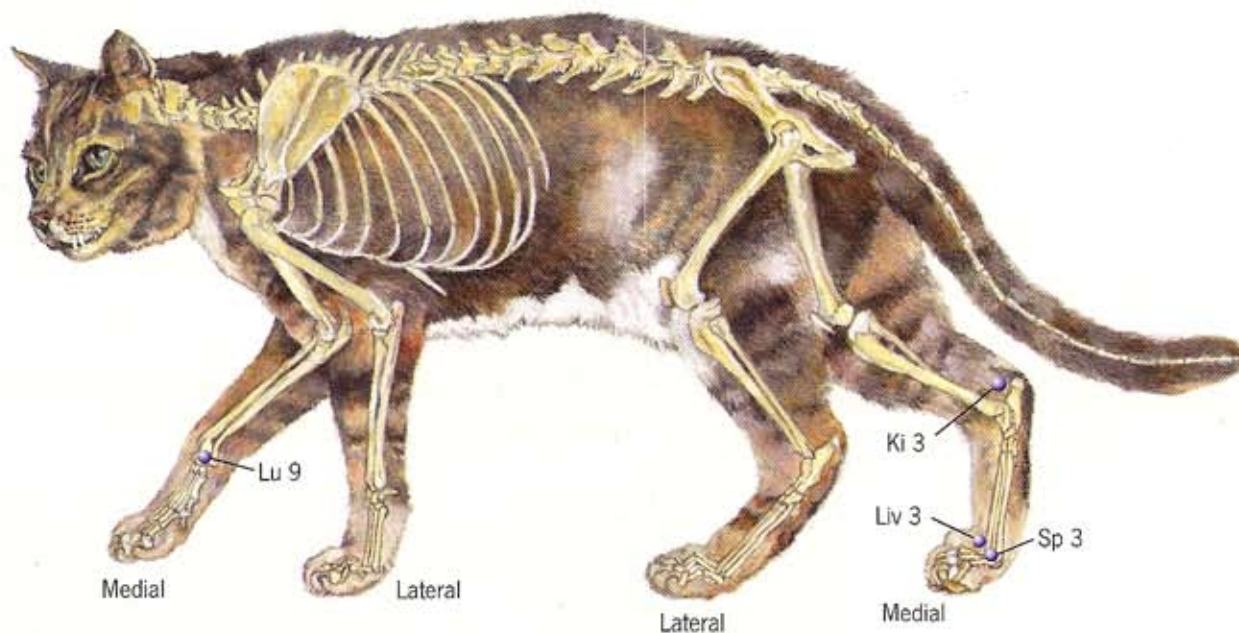
presents a decline in organ function that can lead to chronic discomfort and ultimately specific illness. The goal in offering acupressure to a senior cat is to support his organ systems by maintaining a healthy metabolic rate and enhancing the flow of Chi.

Acupressure is safe, noninvasive, and always available. With little knowledge of TCM, you can work on your own cat with good results (see below).

Time can't be defied, and the body

will eventually wind down. But acupressure can postpone the effects of aging and extend your cat's life for as long as possible. We all want to age gracefully – bet your cat does, too!

## Senior cat acupressure session



Every senior cat can benefit from an acupressure session that specifically enhances organ system function. The acupoints selected for this session direct Source Chi to four vital organs, thus providing a sort of “tune-up” for these systems.

To do the session, place your middle finger on top of your pointer finger. Apply light pressure using the soft tip of your pointer finger on each of the acupoints indicated on the chart.

### *Kidney 3 (Ki 3), Greater Stream*

The Kidney organ system houses Source Chi. This means we have

to take great care in supporting the Kidney since it is responsible for all the Original Chi the cat will ever have. Ki 3 also increases the flow of Source Chi and strengthens the Kidney organ system itself.

### *Liver 3 (Liv 3), Greater Thoroughfare*

The Liver is thought to be responsible for harmonious flow of Chi through the cat's body. Liv 3 benefits Liver function, helps relieve pain, and improves tendon and ligament flexibility.

### *Spleen 3 (Sp 3), Great Brightness*

The Spleen is involved with the

digestion of nutrients, the creation of blood, and the body's ability to metabolize nutrients. Sp 3 enhances Spleen's ability to perform its essential role in the body.

### *Lung 9 (Lu 9), Great Abyss*

Lung function affects the cat's respiration, the health of his skin and coat, and circulation of Chi as well as all other vital body functions – without breath, there is no life. Lu 9 provides Source Chi to the Lung organ system, thus supporting its function. 🌱