



# ACUPRESSURE AT-A-GLANCE

By Amy Snow and Nancy Zidonis

## Balancing your horse's digestion with acupressure

You can lead a horse to high quality grass hay – but you can't assume he'll be able to metabolize it. It's not exactly the old saying about leading a horse to water, but it's just as true. Offering your horse top quality feed is wonderful. However, his body must be able to create absorbable nutrients and circulate them effectively to nourish his muscles, tendons, ligaments, bones and organs. This is where acupressure can help.

### THE BALANCED HORSE

From a Traditional Chinese Medicine perspective, the horse's body needs to function optimally within his environment in order to be well nourished. What this means is that the quality of the feed is as important as a balanced, healthy lifestyle. For a horse to break down forage into absorbable nutrients, he needs enough exercise to support the motility of his digestive system. Rest is just as necessary as activity to build the strength needed for the entire digestion process to function properly.

Other factors contributing to a horse's sense of well-being and balanced health are social interaction and mental challenges. And every horse benefits from attention to hoof and dental care as well as integrative healthcare.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF OPTIMAL DIGESTION

When a horse's basic needs are not being met, his life-promoting energy (chi) and other vital substances such as body fluids and blood can be impeded. If the circulation of these vital substances is compromised, the horse's body will not receive the nourishment it needs to support health.

We can offer the best feed in the world, but if a horse is stressed by being confined or socially isolated, for example, his digestive system may not be able to do its job. As horse-people know, any stress factor can throw off a horse's gastrointestinal system.

### ACUPRESSURE FOR BALANCED DIGESTION

To help your horse maintain balance and enhance his digestion, you can offer a brief acupressure session along with supporting his other lifestyle needs. The intent of this session is to provide both comfort and a harmonious flow of chi and other vital substances.

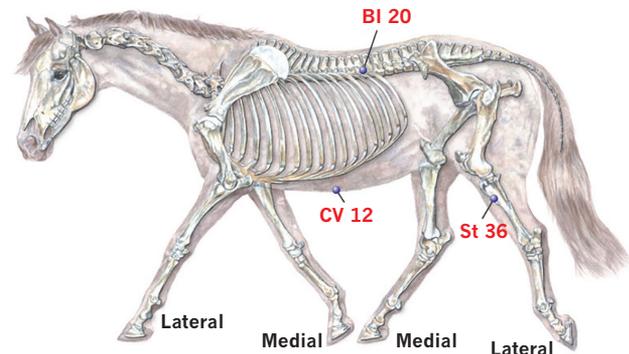
**Stomach 36 (St 36)** is considered the Master point for the gastrointestinal tract. It is commonly used to support all the processes needed to digest forage and promote the harmonious flow of Stomach chi.

**Conception Vessel 12 (CV 12)** is often stimulated to strengthen and harmonize chi related to the organ systems most engaged in the process of digestion – the Stomach and Spleen, according to Chinese medicine. Additionally, CV 12 can have a calming effect, which is essential for healthy digestion.

**Bladder 20 (Bl 20)** is directly connected to the Spleen. In Chinese medicine, the Spleen is responsible for creating the nutrients in the blood, which nourishes all the body tissues and organs.

Stimulating these three acupressure points helps you enhance your horse's digestion while strengthening the connection between you. 

### ACUPRESSURE FOR BALANCED DIGESTION



Point	Location
BI 20	Found 3 cun lateral to the dorsal midline in the last (17th) intercostal space.
CV 12	Located on the outside of the hind leg, below the patella.
St 36	Located on the ventral midline halfway between the diploid process and the umbilicus.

Amy Snow and Nancy Zidonis are the authors of *Acu-Horse: A Guide to Equine Acupressure*, *Acu-Dog: A Guide to Canine Acupressure* and *Acu-Cat: A Guide to Feline Acupressure*. They founded Tallgrass, offering books, manuals, DVDs, apps, and meridian charts. Tallgrass also provides a 300-hour hands-on and online training program worldwide. It is an approved school for the Department of Higher Education Vocational Schools through the State of Colorado, and an approved provider of NCBTMB and NCCAOM Continuing Education courses. Contact 303-681-3030, [animalacupressure.com](http://animalacupressure.com) or [tallgrass@animalacupressure.com](mailto:tallgrass@animalacupressure.com).