

# The Yin & Yang of puppy love



by Amy Snow and Nancy Zidonis

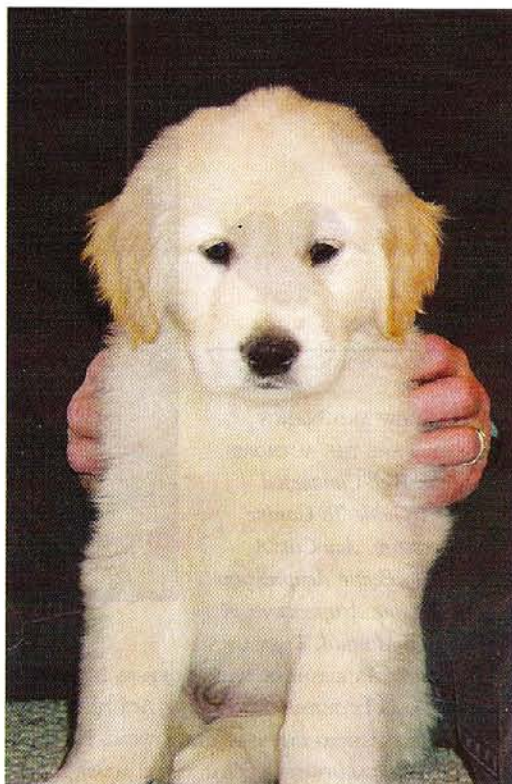
Puppies are amazing creatures. When they play, they play with every ounce of their little beings. When they sleep they are “down-for-the-count.” They can chew their way through your favorite shoes and your daughter’s best teddy bear – but we love them anyway. We look at our beloved puppy’s antics and say to ourselves, “He’s a puppy.”

Young animals are supposed to be full of life, tearing through the house and dashing around the back yard. Their bones, muscles, and neurological connections are growing by the minute. They also need lots of sleep as well as nourishing, real food. In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), the high energy and impetus behind the exponential growth of a puppy are considered *Yang*. The rest, nutrients and essence used to make that growth possible is considered *Yin*.

The essential concept underlying TCM is that health is based on a dynamic balance between Yin and Yang. You might ask how a puppy could be healthy if he’s bounding from one extreme to the other? The reason is that puppies are supposed to be out 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. Their small growing bodies have their own form of balance and that’s the way it needs to be.

You can do an acupuncture session called “Puppy Pinches” that will support and enhance whatever is going on in your puppy’s body at the time. Give it a try during an evening when your pup has given his all and is ready to be calm. Acupuncture has a way of creating a very special bond between you and your puppy. It could be called “puppy love.”



## Puppy pinches

1. Pick a time when your puppy is relatively calm and find a location with 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.
2. Sit on the floor behind your puppy, facing his back. Starting just behind or below his shoulder blades on each side of the spine, use your thumb and index fingers on both hands to very gently pinch

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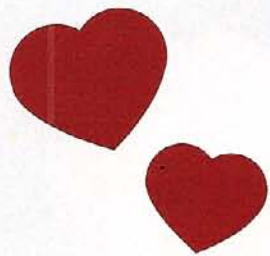
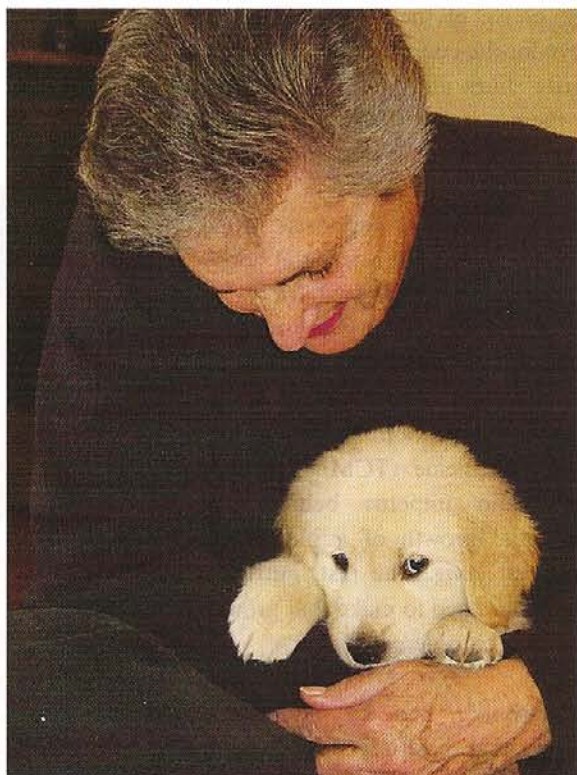
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his skin. Then move your hand approximately one inch (about half an inch for very small dogs) in the direction of his tail and repeat the gentle pinching. Continue to move your hands down one inch at a time, softly pinching the skin as you go, until you reach the base of his tail.

3. Start again, just below the puppy's scapula, and repeat the puppy pinches on each side of his spine and down to his tail two more times.

4. When you have completed three cycles of gentle pinches, go back to below his scapula, with your fingers together and flat, and sweep down the puppy'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.

5. Now snuggle with your puppy and tell him how much you love him.



AMY SNOW AND NANCY ZIDONIS ARE THE AUTHORS OF *The Well-Connected Dog: A Guide To Canine Acupressure*, *Acu-Cat: A Guide to Feline Acupressure* AND *Equine Acupressure: A Working Manual*. THEY OWN

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