

# Qi Gong for Colds and Flu

These practices help prevent and treat colds and flu while supporting general health. Combine with Western medicine if needed. **If wheezing, short of breath, or have a persistent raspy cough, see a doctor.** In winter, avoid cold wind on the neck and throat – wear scarf or high collar.

## Qi Gong Massage

Stimulating acupoints linked to lung health can help dislodge toxins and improve circulation. Unlike acupuncture or shiatsu, **focus on the general area** rather than exact points. Massage each area for **at least 30 seconds**.

## Massage Techniques

- **Circle-twisting** – Drill in with fingers or knuckles to stimulate blood circulation.
- **Compression-release** – Apply rhythmic compression with palm to relieve congestion.
- **Thrust** – Push with thumb or heel of palm, in time with pulse rate, to release blockages.
- **Grasp, shake and vibrate** – Loosen muscles and balance yin/yang energy.
- **Tapping** – Light, rhythmic tapping with fingers, palms or fists disperses stagnation.

## Massage areas

**Preparation** – Warm up hands by waving them gently or practising *snapping the yin* with deep exhalation. Lightly tap along **arms, torso, back and legs**.

### Dredging toxins from the head

- **Sinuses** → Massage along cheekbones, then move outward under the eyes and eyebrows. Guide downward to elbow crease, to thumb/index crease, then shake hands to release stagnant qi.
- **Third eye** (between brows) → Massage, then tap down centerline of chest, down front of legs, to 2<sup>nd</sup> toe. Release into the Earth.
- **Base of skull and upper spine** → Massage base of neck and points along and next to the spine. Guide toxins down the back of legs, to pinky toe. Release into the Earth.
- **Shake hands again**, focusing on relaxing the elbow crease and thumb/index area.

### For cough or chest tightness

- Massage at the **Sternum (Sea of Tranquility)** and then the **Letting Go** and related points – a few inches below the clavicle, towards the shoulder on each side of the upper chest. Then up from there, directly below the clavicle.

### Additional Lung-Boosting Points

- **Base of skull (Gates of Consciousness)** -- 3 or 4 finger widths from the ear.
- **Thumb/index crease** – stimulates lung energy.
- **Outer arm, just above elbow** – clears lung pathways.
- **Just above elbow crease, on thumb side of biceps tendon** – supports lung health.
- **Just above wrist, top of arm** – one index-finger length from thumb/index crease.
- **Forearm, 4 finger-widths back from wrist, between the two bones** – improves circulation.
- **Lower leg (Three Mile Point)** – 3 finger-widths below the knee, slightly outside.
- **Calf (5 fingers below Three Mile Point, slightly toward the back)** – strengthens qi.

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## Qi Gong Exercises

The following exercises are recommended to help prevent or treat colds and flu. Adjust based on mobility needs. If experiencing back pain, substitute knee pulls for shoulder stands. Seated is recommended where indicated, but standing is OK too. Repeat each several times.

- Clasp **hands behind back, lift up while bending** forward. Seated or standing.
- **Backward neck tilt.** Seated or standing.
- **Lung energizer:** Horse stance. Hands forward, palms down. Exhale, separating arms to side, turning palms up. Breathe in then exhale again, drawing hands in and turning palms down. Repeat, with larger movements, above head if desired. Finish by **collecting at center.**
- **Toe squats.** Hands on hips. Inhale, squat down while lifting heels. Hold. Exhale, return.
- **Table pose → child pose → exhale into cobra pose.** Hold. Repeat.
- **Full body tension release.** Stand with feet together. Inhale, **raise heels, lift shoulders, tighten everything.** Exhale, drop quickly into a crouch, releasing all tension.
- **Diagonal arm extensions.** Exhale, raise arms diagonally, fingers extended. Inhale, make fists, draw arms down and back. Repeat **many times.** Seated or standing.
- **Head twist,** to left, to right. Seated or standing.
- **Shoulder stand or knee pull.** Lie on back, palms down. Raise legs over hips, then lift straight up, supporting back with hands. Hold. (*Alternative: Pull one knee at time to chest, hold.*)

## Mind Exercise: Protective Field

This meditation is aimed at strengthening the protective field of guardian qi surrounding you. It may be useful to fend off cold or flu, or if you are the caretaker for someone who is ill.

- Golden mist arises from the Earth, enveloping you. It merges with white light at your core.
- Qi flows out from your heart in a swirling wind, forming a red phoenix-spirit. It is your innate power.
- Focus on the kidneys. A portal opens and water-like qi flows out, becoming an enormous dark blue turtle, its shell protecting you like a mighty shield.
- Focus on the lungs. To your right, qi steam billows out, forming a white tiger, strong as steel, guarding and protecting you.
- Focus on the liver. A portal opens to your left and qi pours out like steam forming a green dragon, sinewy and resilient like bamboo, guarding you with a divine spirit.
- The four guardians rotate, shifting positions in a powerful wind, faster and faster...
- They merge into a glowing multi-hued energy sphere around you. Draw that energy back in through the top of your head, then return each power to its origin – heart, kidneys, lungs, liver.
- Qi steams from your pores. Above you, sparkling lights appear like stars.