



# KATIE BRINDLE

## Acne Guide

Treatment techniques based in Chinese medicine



# What is Acne?

According to the NIH, “Acne is a disorder that affects the skin’s oil glands and hair follicles. The small holes in your skin (pores) connect to oil glands under the skin. These glands make an oily substance called sebum. The pores connect to the glands by a canal called a follicle. Inside the follicles, oil carries dead skin cells to the surface of the skin. A thin hair also grows through the follicle and out to the skin. Sometimes, the hair, sebum, and skin cells clump together into a plug. The bacteria in the plug cause swelling. Then when the plug starts to break down, a pimple grows.”

Acne can be found on the face, neck, back, chest, and shoulders. While it is usually not a serious health threat, it can cause scars and the resulting appearance can lead to anxiety, reduced self-esteem, even depression or thoughts of suicide.

In Western medicine, genetics seems to be a primary cause of acne in 80% of cases. Hormones can also create acne by increasing the production of sebum. An increase in growth of bacteria on the skin can also cause acne.

@katie\_brindle

[katiebrindle.com](http://katiebrindle.com)

[info@katiebrindle.com](mailto:info@katiebrindle.com)



# The Yang Sheng perspective

‘Yang Sheng’ means ‘nurture life’. It is the ‘self-care’ part of Chinese medicine: the part you can do for yourself, as a complement to any other treatment you may be undertaking.

In addition to physical (visible) symptoms, in Chinese medicine we also consider what is happening with the body at an energetic (invisible) level. ‘Qi’ (pronounced ‘tchee’) is the energy that runs through all of us. Even when you sit completely still, there will be some movement happening inside you: your heart is beating, your fluids moving – every cell is constantly in motion. All of these different types of energy, combined with your breath, is what makes up your ‘qi’.

Qi isn’t the same as circulation, but they are linked. When you stimulate your blood flow or move your lymphatic fluid, your qi is also stimulated. Everything flows together. The channels in which qi flows are called meridians. According to Chinese medicine, the quality and movement of qi through the body determines your health.

The ideal state is one of smooth flow with no imbalances or blockages, which are called ‘stagnation’ or stagnant qi. If you have stagnation, whether physical, emotional or spiritual, this will eventually manifest as disease.

Chinese wisdom holds that stress and lifestyle can both contribute to heat in the body, causing redness, itchy, dry and scaly skin and obstructing blood flow to the skin. The Chinese philosophy has always been that skin problems stem from digestive issues. I’m fascinated that Western science now seems to be aligning itself to this ancient thinking of the Chinese, with more and more scientists publishing evidence that skin conditions can be caused and exacerbated by a leaky gut – often caused by stress. Other causes can be too much heat in the system (specifically in the stomach and/or lungs), and stagnation in the system. Endocrine imbalance can also be a cause.

@katie\_brindle

[katiebrindle.com](http://katiebrindle.com)

[info@katiebrindle.com](mailto:info@katiebrindle.com)



# Steps you can take to help

## General advice

Chinese breathing and bodywork techniques have both been scientifically proven to be effective in reducing stress and supporting the body. They:

- Engage the parasympathetic nervous system
- Regulate blood flow
- Reduce heat in the body
- Calm the nervous system
- Strengthen the organs

@katie\_brindle

[katiebrindle.com](http://katiebrindle.com)

[info@katiebrindle.com](mailto:info@katiebrindle.com)



# Breath & Acne

The single most effective way to reduce your stress levels is to take conscious, deep, abdominal breaths. By moving your awareness out of your head and into your breath, your heart rate slows, your mind is calmed, and your blood oxygenated.

[View the Breath Guide](#)

# Qigong & Acne

Qigong is a fundamental pillar of Chinese medicine. It is classed as a form of internal exercise. Internal exercise is any combination of slow, considered movements with breath and mental engagement, it's often referred to as 'Chinese yoga'. Qigong is, quite simply, the ultimate selfhealing technique. Whatever your issue, qigong will help to rebalance the body. By learning to manipulate qi around the body, you rejuvenate and energise, lower the heart rate and blood pressure and support the immune system.

[View the Qigong Guide](#)

@katie\_brindle

[katiebrindle.com](http://katiebrindle.com)

[info@katiebrindle.com](mailto:info@katiebrindle.com)



# Tapping & Acne

Tapping with bamboo is an ancient Chinese therapy that works wonders for your general wellbeing. It's a simple, pleasurable, yet hugely effective way to support and maintain your health, no matter what your age or physical state.

Tapping the skin on a daily basis enables the free flow of this all-important circulation. In as little as one minute a day, an all over body tap can clear areas of stagnation, support lymphatic drainage and encourage a smooth flow of blood and qi around the body. Think of it as a natural battery charger for the body.

[View the Tapping Guide](#)

# Gua sha & Acne

Gua sha is a therapeutic healing technique that has been widely practised in China for thousands of years. It involves using a round-edged tool, traditionally made from materials such as jade or metal, to pressstroke the skin until redness appears. You can even use a jam jar lid! Gua sha has been used to treat a whole range of conditions from fever to chronic cough and migraines. It has been shown in studies to increase micro-circulation by 400%, and clear inflammation. Note that gua sha should NOT be used directly on broken skin. However, it can be effective to lessen the marks left by an acne outbreak. There are lots of how-to gua sha videos on my Instagram feed; and you can also download the Gua Sha Guide.

[View the Gua sha Guide](#)

@katie\_brindle

[katiebrindle.com](http://katiebrindle.com)

[info@katiebrindle.com](mailto:info@katiebrindle.com)



# Meditation & Acne

Meditation is a fundamental pillar of Chinese medicine and studies have confirmed a host of health benefits. If you struggle with traditional forms of meditation, there are simple Chinese techniques that offer impressive results.

[View the Meditation Guide](#)

## Specific advice

Any symptoms of ill health will always relate to one of the five key organs we consider when we are treating in Chinese medicine. These are Heart, Lung, Liver, Stomach/Spleen and Kidney.

Depending on what your symptoms are, it will usually indicate an imbalance in a specific organ. For example, palpitations are concerned with the heart.

An energetic imbalance does not mean you have a dramatic health issue. This aspect of Chinese medicine is about prevention, not cure. That means reading the subtle signs and symptoms of the body daily. Imbalance starts at an energetic level and you rectify it at an energetic level.

The more serious the symptoms, the deeper the imbalance. If the symptom is mild – e.g. low-level anxiety before a meeting or mild rosacea after a glass of red wine, the imbalance will be easier to rectify.

@katie\_brindle

[katiebrindle.com](http://katiebrindle.com)

[info@katiebrindle.com](mailto:info@katiebrindle.com)



It is important to know that when I refer to organ imbalance, I mean energetic and not physical. So, for example, heart imbalance does not mean heart disease. It is a subtle signal that your body is not in balance and the strain of that is impacting your heart energy, which may eventually lead to an issue over time. In the first instance, it could be felt as low level anxiety, occasional palpitations or a lack of desire to socialise. We look for the low level signs to stop things getting a foothold in the body and causing a greater problem further down the line.

Use low levels symptoms as a barometer of your wellness. Address them to keep the body healthy and they are much less likely to become a deeper issue. This is the principle behind yang sheng and self-care.

A weak digestive system can lead to chronic acne. In Chinese medicine, spleen and stomach are directors of the digestion, absorption and transmission of nutrition and water, for the need of human life activities of the various organs. If they are not functioning well, what we eat cannot be absorbed by the body properly and it may become toxic waste such as phlegm. When the waste wants to get out of the body, the face can create 'volcanic vents'.

[View the Stomach & Spleen Guide](#)

@katie\_brindle

[katiebrindle.com](http://katiebrindle.com)

[info@katiebrindle.com](mailto:info@katiebrindle.com)





# Want to know more?

We will be delighted to support you as you continue along your Yang Sheng journey. The following will get you started:

'Yang Sheng: The Art of Chinese Self-Healing' available on Amazon, Waterstone and [www.hayoumethod.com](http://www.hayoumethod.com)

Buy Yang Sheng Book

Qigong Healing classes (3 x each week) for a more in-depth and healing practice – full details on [www.hayoufit.com](http://www.hayoufit.com)

Free Masterclass "[Master Your Health](#)" – understand the 3- step plan for preventative health. Find more Qigong Masterclasses [here](#).

Free self-care weekly content [@katiebrindle](#) on Instagram, Facebook and YouTube.

Free regular gua sha demonstrations on [@thehayoumethod](#) Instagram & the opportunity to purchase the accompanying tools from [www.hayoumethod.com](http://www.hayoumethod.com)

## DISCLAIMER:

Please note that any of these Yang Sheng techniques are designed to support your overall self-care and wellbeing and should not be used as a substitute for any Western medical advice or treatment that you may be receiving. You should not use the information in this Guide or on our website for diagnosing or treating a health problem or disease and must always consult your doctor if you have any health concerns. Additionally, please note that there are a few contraindications to Yang Sheng techniques, so please visit [www.hayoumethod.com](http://www.hayoumethod.com) to view our comprehensive FAQs.

[@katie\\_brindle](#)  
[katiebrindle.com](http://katiebrindle.com)  
[info@katiebrindle.com](mailto:info@katiebrindle.com)