



# KATIE BRINDLE

## Heart Guide

Understanding and taking care of your Heart



# What is the function of the Heart?

The Heart is our most important organ. As part of the cardiovascular system, it is a muscle, about the size of a fist, that pumps blood around the body to keep us alive. Our Heart beats around 100,000 times every day, delivering fresh oxygen and nutrients through the blood vessels of the circulatory system to every part of our body and enabling waste products and carbon dioxide to be eliminated, ensuring our organs and muscles are well nourished and able to function efficiently. Our cardiovascular system also regulates body temperature and protects the body by circulating white blood cells and antibodies which help defend against microbes and toxins.

If our Heart and circulatory system aren't working efficiently we be at higher risk of experiencing health problems such as:

- Coronary heart diseases such as heart attack and angina
- Stroke, diabetes or vascular dementia
- High blood pressure and high cholesterol
- Weight issues, including obesity
- Shortness of breath on exertion, sweating or chest pain
- Pale complexion, poor memory, tongue pain or burning urine
- Tiredness and/or insomnia

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# Chinese Wisdom

From a Chinese medicine perspective Heart health is so much more than just physical health. It is also about happiness, love and peacefulness, leading to a deep sense of contentment in life. Stress, lack of self-expression or feeling anxious can directly impact the Heart qi. The partner organ of the Heart is the Small Intestine and for the purposes of this guide can be viewed as a single organ.

## The importance of qi

In addition to physical symptoms of Heart imbalance, in Chinese medicine we also consider what is happening with the body at an energetic, or invisible, level. Qi is the energetic and vital life force that continually flows through us underpinning our physical, emotional, and spiritual health and wellbeing – it is the basis for our very existence. Like feelings and emotions qi can't be seen, yet it penetrates every part of our body at every moment. Even when we sit completely still, there will be some movement happening inside us. Our heart beats, fluids move, and every cell is constantly in motion. All these different types of energy, combined with our breath, is what makes up our qi. Qi isn't the same as circulation, but it is linked. When we stimulate our blood flow or move our lymphatic fluid, our qi is also stimulated, with everything flowing together through our meridians, the energetic pathways that run throughout the body.

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# The Role of Emotions

It is the quality and movement of qi that determines our health. Smooth flowing qi and blood around the body will ensure that there are no blockages of energy, negativity or toxicity, leading to stagnation. If stagnation is left untended, whether it be physical, emotional or spiritual, low-level niggles will be able to gain a foothold in the body, eventually manifesting as disease.

In Chinese medicine, we recognise that our emotions are connected to specific organs. We can't see emotions, but we feel and then physically express them. The emotions connected with the Heart are joy and love. All over the world the Heart is associated with love, and Chinese medicine understands that the Heart feels and responds to love.

Our Heart energy is a source of joy, happiness and emotional protection, providing intimacy and generosity; balanced and nourished Heart energy maintains our contentment and emotional equilibrium. Our Heart also houses our Shen (spirit) and mind – it is the 'Supreme Governor', responsible for our spiritual and mental activities and in control of all the other organs in the body.

Imbalances in our Heart energy does not mean heart disease, but it is a subtle indication that our body is not in harmony and needs to be nourished to avoid our emotional health negatively impacting our physical health. Signs that we have Heart qi imbalances can include:

- Lack of joy
- Feelings of anxiety
- Being easily startled
- Feeling withdrawn or not wanting to socialise
- Palpitations or dizziness

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# Yang Sheng techniques and what you can do to help yourself

There are many things that you can do to support, nurture and nourish your Heart energy:

- Practice the Rescue Breath. This simple breathing technique will counterbalance extremes of emotion and help to achieve 'quiet joy'. It will work to reduce inflammation and stress, both of which are known to be detrimental to our Heart health. If you have more time, enjoy regular guided meditations to really restore and balance Heart qi. As you do this, consider lighting a scented candle and enjoy the fragrance as this will also nurture your qi.
- Gua sha the upper chest to alleviate feelings of anxiety and calm the mind. The Heart meridian passes through the elbow, so tap or gua sha the inside of the elbow to support the Heart.
- Practice the healing sound for the Heart whilst visualising the colour red. Place your hands over your Heart area and feel it beating, the energy strong and balanced. Feel love towards your Heart as you make the sound Haaaa.
- Regular qigong practice, especially the Dragon sequence of moves from Animal Play or 'Goose Beats its Wings' from 12 Rivers, will nourish your Heart energy, keeping it strong and balanced.
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- Rose quartz connects with, and supports, our Heart energy to promote both self-love and universal love. Using a rose quartz gua sha tool, particularly in the morning, will be ideal. Also, consider wearing jewellery in shades of red, such as ruby, garnet or rose quartz.
- The element associated with the Heart is fire, which is felt most intensely during the summer months. So, take advantage of the exuberance of this time and be consciously optimistic, cheerful and joyous. Appreciate the long days and enjoy some sunbathing
- Watching comedy, listening to uplifting music, and activities such as cooking, and dancing will also nurture your Heart qi.
- Prioritise social contact and surround yourself as much as possible with family, friends and people you admire. Remember to hug them, as that is definitely beneficial for your Heart.
- Smile. Smiling can stimulate and nurture your Heart qi, bringing you a feeling of inner peace.
- Simplify your daily routine and plans and try to slow down. Let go of nonessential things and try and put negative events and memories into perspective. Try not to blame yourself and work towards forgiveness.
- Transcend emotions as much as you can by recognising that you feel a negative emotion and replacing it with a positive one. Harmful emotions for the Heart are anxiety, overexcitement, jealousy and disrespect, so try and replace them with the healing emotions are unconditional love, reverence and joy.

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# Want to eat to help your Heart?

As well as the suggestions above, there are certain foods that are beneficial for Heart health. These include bitter foods as they slightly cool the body:

- Parsley, mustard greens, kale, dandelion greens, collard greens, burdock root, coffee, buckwheat, capers, cauliflower, celeriac, chocolate, citrus peel, endive, ginseng, grapefruit, green tea, lettuce, lemon balm, spring onions, turmeric, watercress, white pepper.
- Have warm drinks
- Drink black tea.
- Include plenty of red vegetables and fruits.

There is a wealth of information in my book, "[Yang Sheng – The Art of Chinese Self-Healing](#)".

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# How to Use the Organ Guide

Practising the Hayo'u Method is a basic daily level of health maintenance, like brushing your teeth. You are responsible for it, you do it every day and it maintains your basic dental health.

Niggling issues such as poor sleep or digestion are the equivalent of bleeding gums. At this point, you might see the hygienist for a little help. This is when you employ the quick fixes in our guides.

[View the How to Use the Organ Guide](#)

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# 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](#).

[KBL Cellulite and Stubborn Fat Masterclass](#)

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.

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