

*Your hands-on guide to alleviating pain,  
staying healthy, and improving quality of life*

# Acupressure & Reflexology

FOR

# DUMMIES<sup>®</sup>

***A Reference  
for the  
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**Synthia Andrews**  
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of arthritis,  
stress, PMS,  
and more*



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**by Synthia Andrews  
and Bobbi Dempsey**



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# Dedication

Synthia would like to dedicate this book to her mother, Susan Ramsby, who “taught us the truly important things in life and who has facilitated and supported every part of my path.”

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# Introduction

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Face it: Life is stressful. Just going through your normal daily routine can often leave you frazzled and out of balance. And, if you're like most people, you also have to cope with your share of aches and pains, ranging from those mild-yet-irritating annoyances to the big-time, all-consuming pains.

Wouldn't it be great if you could wave a magic wand to restore balance and harmony to your life and to help alleviate some of those aches and pains?

Well, in a way, you can. Only instead of a magic wand, you use your own two hands (or someone else's). That's all it takes to unleash the healing power you have inside you — power that you can put to good use through the techniques of acupressure and reflexology.

## About This Book

Because acupressure and reflexology are rooted in ancient oriental healing arts, they can seem mysterious and intimidating to understand. That's where this book comes in. We tell you everything you need to know about these bodywork techniques, from start to finish. We begin by explaining exactly what acupressure and reflexology are, and how they came to be. After a short history lesson (very brief, we promise), we get into the

real “meat” of the book — showing you exactly how these techniques can improve your quality of life and alleviate some of your pain.

## Conventions Used in This Book

To help you navigate easily through this book, we set up a few conventions that we use consistently throughout the book:

- ✓ Anytime we want to highlight new words or terms that we define in the text, we *italicize* them.
- ✓ **Boldfaced** text is used to indicate the action part of numbered steps and the keywords of a bulleted list.
- ✓ We use monofont for Web sites and e-mail addresses.
- ✓ In the illustrations and healing routines, we use abbreviations for the acupoints for simplicity’s sake — we provide the full names of the points and their accompanying meridians (see Chapter 1 for a definition) in the accompanying tables.
- ✓ Every acupoint has many functions, and different routines use the same points for different reasons. We list only the functions that we’re focusing on in a specific routine, so you see different functions for the same point in different routines.

- ✓ Because acupressure was developed in Japan from Chinese acupuncture theories and practices, the terms used to describe these two very similar practices are often different, which can cause some confusion. In this book, we use the Japanese terms. We do, however, provide the Chinese names as well in cases where the Chinese terms are more common.
- ✓ Some meridians have multiple names. In this book, we use the meridian names we like best.
- ✓ Most acupoints have many different names. We used the most common names in this book, but you may see many variations in other literature.
- ✓ The meridian illustrations throughout this book are renditions and aren't meant to be taken as exact maps. For precise detail, refer to acupuncture textbooks.
- ✓ The bladder meridian (see Chapter 3) has two different numbering systems. In this book, we use the system that numbers the inside line and then the outside line before heading down the leg. (Traditional Chinese Medicine, from which acupuncture stems, typically uses the alternate numbering system.)

When this book was printed, some Web addresses may have needed to break across two lines of text. If you come across these instances, rest assured that we haven't put in any extra characters (such as a hyphen) to indicate the break. So, when typing one of these Web addresses in a Web browser, just type in exactly what you see in this book, pretending as if the line break doesn't exist.



# Foolish Assumptions

Although we normally don't like to make assumptions, we made an exception in this case in order to make this book most helpful to as many readers as possible. To that end, we assume that:

- ✓ You have little or no previous training in acupressure or reflexology.
- ✓ You have a positive attitude and will do your best to focus that positive energy on the healing process.
- ✓ You approach this process with an open mind, welcoming new ideas and techniques that may seem strange or foreign to you at first.
- ✓ You or someone you know has some aches, pains, or general uneasiness that you or they want to treat in a natural way.
- ✓ You want to discover how your body has the capability of healing itself (within reason — we'd *never* suggest that acupressure or reflexology can cure cancer or perform any other type of medical miracle).

## What You're Not to Read

Granted, we like to think every single word on these pages is important. However, the information in the gray sidebars is interesting and informative, but it isn't required reading in order for you to grasp the material

in each chapter. We like to think of them as a bonus — a tasty little dessert to enjoy after you digest the main course.

# How This Book Is Organized

*Acupressure and Reflexology For Dummies* is divided into five parts, each of which has its own special theme and focus. Here's an outline of the parts, and highlights of what you can find in each of them.

# Part I: Touching on the Basics of Acupressure and Reflexology

If you know little or nothing about these bodywork techniques, we recommend that you start by reading Part I. Here, we give you all the basics of these healing arts, including

- ✓ Definitions of important terms
- ✓ A quick overview of the history of ancient oriental healing arts
- ✓ Basic healing art principles such as qi, yin/yang, and energy forces
- ✓ Things you need to know to prepare to heal yourself or others
- ✓ Maps of the meridians and reflex zones, the foundations of these healing sessions, to serve as your guide throughout the rest of the book
- ✓ Full explanations of all the techniques used in both acupressure and reflexology, along with illustrations to show you how to perform them

This part also teaches some basic exercises that come in handy to get you warmed up, and gives you a preview of what the recipient and provider can both expect from a session. We also cover all the important issues you need to consider when enlisting professional help — from finding qualified candidates to evaluating their

credentials. In addition, we give you a sneak peek of what to expect from your first session.

## **Part II: Promoting Emotional and Physical Wellness**

An important concept when it comes to healing is the strong connection between emotional health and physical well-being. If your emotions are upset or out of balance, you will almost inevitably experience physical discomfort as a result. This is a major belief in the healing arts. Separating emotional and physical well-being is almost impossible. The two go hand-in-hand, and if you focus on one while neglecting the other, you won't reap the full benefits of your healing sessions.

To that end, in this part we focus on maintaining the best possible health, both physically and emotionally. We explain the correlation between energy and emotions, and we show you how negative and positive thinking can affect your physical well-being.

Of course, we know that realistically you can't totally avoid emotional stress, so we also show you how to do damage control and keep those unavoidable stressors from wreaking havoc on your body.

# **Part III: Where Does It Hurt? Treating Common Aches and Ailments**

Most likely, you're dealing with at least one or two aches or pains at this very moment. Perhaps that's why you picked up this book, hoping it would help you attain some relief from your discomfort.

Relax, we're here to help. In this part, we target specific body parts and identify common ailments that often afflict those areas. More importantly, we provide — in clear, easy-to-understand steps — routines you can do to address these particular ailments.

Here are a few of the problems we cover in this part: backaches, including sciatica and muscle strain; pain in the hips and legs; headaches and other problems in the facial region; problems in the arms, shoulders, and hands; digestive problems and other stomach concerns; and issues affecting the heart and chest.

# **Part IV: Addressing Specific Needs and Concerns**

In this part, we get a bit more specific, addressing issues that may be of particular interest to certain groups of people.

First, we touch on the various pains and problems that tend to be age related. This applies to people on all ends of the chronological spectrum, from babies to seniors and everyone in between.

Then we discuss those myriad problems that plague our female readers. Ladies, we feel your pain — and we come to your rescue in Chapter 16. (To our male readers: We're not neglecting you. It's just that women have several major gender-specific needs, whereas the majority of problems that may plague men are covered throughout other areas of this book.)

We also cover routines for handling common conditions like colds and the flu, and we talk about boosting the immune system for preventive measures.