Pressure Points to Induce Labor  
Pressure Points That May Help You to Naturally Induce Your Labor.

Acupressure has been used for thousands of years to treat a variety of illnesses. There are pressure points that can stimulate contractions or induce labor.

More than 5,000 years ago, Chinese physicians discovered that soldiers with battle wounds unexpectedly found relief from chronic illnesses. After years of study, they mapped out various points that responded to either finger pressure (acupressure) or piercing with a needle (acupuncture.)

Think about how you instinctively press your temples when you have a migraine. Pressure points work in very similar ways.

If you have gone past your due date, you may have heard that some pressure points can help to induce labor. Here are some common points and how to find them:

**Hoku** - This point can be found on the top of your hand in the webbing between your thumb and index finger. Press on an angle underneath the bone that connects with the index finger. To stimulate contractions, rub the point. This point can be used for pain relief with steady pressure during contractions.

**Spleen 6** - On the inside of the ankle, trace up four of mother's finger widths above the ankle bone. Rub for about 1 minute.

**Bladder 32** - This point is halfway between the dimple in the buttocks and the spine. You can find it by tracing up one of the mother's finger widths above the top of the buttocks crease. You should feel a small depression where the point lies.

**Tips on Finding Pressure Points**

Pressure points are naturally sensitive and feel to the mother like you are touching a bruise. Try the spot several times with varying pressure to find it. If your labor partner or doula is using the points, the mother can provide feedback when they have reached the right place since it will be more sensitive. If it is especially painful, ease up a bit on the pressure.

**When to Use Pressure Points**

One of the most effective times to use pressure points is if you are already in labor and you need to strengthen your contractions or your water has broken and active labor has not started yet. These are both common reasons for labor inductions. You can also use these points if you are overdue and you want to try to stimulate contractions. In some cases, these points can reduce your chances of having your labor induced.

Remember that not all pressure points work for everyone. Be sure to check with your midwife or obstetrician prior to using acupressure points to stimulate contractions and do not use them before it is safe for you to give birth. If your primary care physician is not educated about the use of acupressure, be sure to get a second opinion.