



## PULSE DIAGNOSIS (FCM)

### PULSE POSITIONS

LOCATION NAME	POSITION	ORGAN ASSOCIATION		BURNER ASSOCIATION	ENERGY TYPE	ENERGY LEVEL
		LEFT	RIGHT			
Cun (inch)	Superficial	SI/HT	LU/LI	Upper	Qi	Exterior
Guan (gate)	Middle	GB/LV	SP/ST	Middle	Blood	SP/ST
Chi (foot)	Deep	UB/KD KD Yin	PC/SJ KD Yang	Lower	Yin	Interior

SEASONAL PULSES	
Spring	Wiry; Yang within Yin; Wiry
Summer	Overflows like a hook; Yang within Yang; Superficial
Autumn	Empty, floating, soft and fine (like a hair); Yin within Yang; Full
Winter	Deep and strong (like a stone); Yin within Yin; Deep

### PULSE TAKING METHODS

#### METHOD

Time: best in the morning  
 Arm level: no higher than the heart  
 Place fingers on the radial artery  
 Adjust fingers (spread) to patient's arm size  
 Regulate the fingers to allow for different finger length  
 Use fingers to allow for different sensitivity  
**Lifting:** lift up to feel the superficial level  
**Pressing:** press down to feel deep level  
**Searching:** still fingers to count the rate  
**Pushing:** move fingers laterally-medially  
**Rolling:** move fingers proximally-distally  
 Move fingers  
 Equalize the breath by being calm and concentrating on one's own breath  
 Make sure the patient's legs are not crossed

#### PROCEDURE

Feel the pulse as a whole  
 Feel whether the pulse has spirit, Stomach Qi and root  
 Feel the three levels and the three positions  
 Feel the strength of the pulse  
 Feel the overall quality of the pulse (if there is one)  
 Feel the quality of individual pulse position

#### PULSE SPEED

**Slow:** <4bpb or <60bpm  
**Moderate:** 4bpb or 6-70 bpm  
**Normal:** 4-5 bpb or 72 bpm  
**Rapid:** 5-6 bpb or 90-120 bpm  
**Racing:** 7-8 bpb or >140 bpm

### KEY:

Pulse Name (Pin Yin) Yin/Yang Classification	Pulse Image	Pulse Definition
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## **ABNORMAL DEPTH**

### • **SUPERFICIAL PULSES**

<b>1. Floating</b> <i>(Fu Mai)</i> Yang	Felt with light pressure	Exterior pathogens; <b>Floating and Tight</b> = Wind Cold; <b>Floating and Rapid</b> = Wind Heat; <b>Floating and Empty</b> = Yin Deficiency; <b>Floating</b> (Interior conditions such as cancer or anemia) = Severe Qi Deficiency
<b>2. Soggy</b> <i>(Ru Mai)</i> Yin	Slightly Floating, very soft, disappears with pressure, similar to Floating, Empty but then softer and not so floating	Yin and Essence Deficiencies, presence of Damp if it presents with a very Empty Condition
<b>3. Hollow</b> <i>(Kou Mai)</i> Yin	Floating, no middle with slightly harder pressure, felt again at deep level	Recent case of hemorrhaging; <b>Rapid and slightly Hollow</b> = forthcoming blood loss
<b>4. Drum-skin</b> <i>(Ge Mai)</i> Yin	Floating, Hard, Large, Tight like a drum skin and disappears at the deep level	Severe KD Yin or Essence Deficiency
<b>5. Scattered</b> <i>(San Mai)</i> Yin	Floating, very small, broken in dots	Severe Qi and Blood deficiency, particularly Kidney Qi, always a serious condition

### • **DEEP PULSES**

<b>6. Deep</b> <i>(Chen Mai)</i> Yin	Felt only with heavy pressure	Problem with Yin organs, Interior Conditions; <b>Deep and Weak</b> = Qi and Yang Deficiencies; <b>Deep and Full</b> = Qi or Blood Stasis or Interior Heat or Cold
<b>7. Weak</b> <i>(Ruo Mai)</i> Yin	Felt only at the deep level and the pulse is soft	Deficiency of Yang or sometimes deficiency of Blood
<b>8. Firm</b> <i>(Lao Mai)</i> Yang within Yin	Deep, Hard, Wiry	Blood Stasis or pain; <b>Firm and Slow</b> = Interior Cold
<b>9. Hidden</b> <i>(Fu Mai)</i> Yin	Extremely Deep, difficult to feel	Extreme Yang Deficiency

## **ABNORMAL SPEED**

### • **FAST**

<b>10. Rapid</b> <i>(Shu Mai)</i> Yang	More than 5 beats / respiration breath	Heat; <b>Empty and Rapid</b> = Yin Deficiency/Empty Heat; <b>Full and Rapid</b> = Full Heat
<b>11. Slippery</b> <i>(Hua Mai)</i> Yang within Yin	Slides under the fingers, smooth, oily, rounded	Phlegm, Damp, pregnancy, Retention of Food
<b>12. Moving</b> <i>(Dong Mai)</i> Yang	Round like a bean, no head or tail, rising up in the center, shaking and slippery, trembles under the fingers, short	Shock, anxiety, fear or pain
<b>13. Hurried</b> <i>(Ji Mai)</i>	Very large and agitated	Excess of Yang with Fire in the body exhausting the Yin

### • **SLOW**

<b>14. Slow</b> <i>(Chi Mai)</i> Yin	3 beats/ respiration cycle	Cold; <b>Slow and Empty ("Weak")</b> = Yang Deficiency/Empty Cold; <b>Slow and Full</b> = Full Cold
<b>15. Moderate</b> <i>(Huan Mai)</i> Neither Yin or Yang Balanced	4 beats/ respiration cycle	Healthy pulse, no clinical significance



**16. Choppy**  
(*Se Mai*)  
Yin

Rough and Uneven

Blood or Qi Stagnation; **Hesitant and Forceful** = Qi and Blood Stagnation; **Hesitant and Weak** = Impaired Essence or Blood Deficiencies

**ABNORMAL ARRIVAL FORCE**

• **EXCESS FORCE**

**17. Excessive**  
(*Shi Ma*)  
Yang

Full, Hard and Long

Full pattern; **Full and Rapid** = Full Heat; **Full and Slow** = Full Cold

**18. Tight**  
(*Jin Mai*)  
Yang within Yin

Twisted like a thick rope

Interior or Exterior Cold, Pain; **Tight and Floating** = Exterior Cold; **Tight and Deep** = Interior Cold

**19. Full**  
(*Hong Mai*)  
Yin within Yang

Floating, Big, extends beyond the pulse, overflows the pulse channel

Extreme Heat, fevers, chronic disease with Interior Heat; **Overflowing and Empty** = Yin Deficiency with Empty Heat

**20. Forceful**  
(*You Li*)

Excess syndrome

• **DEFICIENT FORCE**

**21. Thready**  
(*Xi Mai*)  
Yin

Thinner than normal

Blood Deficiency, Internal Damp with severe Qi Deficiency

**22. Feeble**  
(*Wei Mai*)  
Yin

Extremely thin, small, difficult to find

Severe Qi and Blood Deficiencies

**23. Deficient**  
(*Xu Mai*)  
Yin

Rather big, feels Empty on stronger pressure and is Soft

Qi deficiency

**24. Forceless**  
(*Wu Li*)

Deficiency syndromes, Yang rising due to Yin deficiency

**ABNORMAL RHYTHM**

**25. Skipping**  
(*Cu Mai*)  
Yang

Rapid and Irregularly Intermittent - Fast

Extreme Heat, HT Qi deficiency, HT Fire

**26. Knotted**  
(*Jie Mai*)  
Yang

Slow and Irregularly Intermittent - Slow

HT Yang or Qi Deficiency, Cold

**27. Intermittent**  
(*Dai Mai*)  
Yin

Stops at regular intervals

Serious Yin organ problems, serious heart problems, very serious if stops every 4 beats or less

**ABNORMAL FORM**

• **FLUID PATHOLOGY**

**28. Large**  
(*Da Mai*)  
Yang

Large and full, location is broad

Outward floating of Yang vacuity (without force), pathogens entering the body (with force)

**29. Thin**  
(*Xi Mai*)  
Yin

Thinner than normal

Blood Deficiency, Internal Damp with severe Qi Deficiency

• **ABNORMAL LENGTH**

**30. Long**  
(*Chang*)  
Yang

Longer than normal pulse

Heat Pattern

**Short**  
(*Duan Mai*)  
Yin

Shorter than normal pulse, doesn't extend to the normal pulse position

Severe Qi Deficiency, Stomach Qi Deficiency



- **MISCELLANEOUS**

**31. Wiry**  
*(Xuan Mai)*  
Yang

Taut, Thin, Hard like a guitar string

Liver Disharmony, Pain, Phlegm



## DRUGS AND PULSES (FCM)

### PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

**Beta blockers:** slow and rather deep  
**Tranquillizers:** sluggish and reluctant

## EXTRAORDINARY VESSEL PULSES PATHOLOGIES (FCM)

CHANNEL	PULSE QUALITY
<b>Du (Governing)</b>	Pulse is Floating on all three positions and beating straight up and down. , it indicates pathology of Du.
<b>Ren (Directing)</b>	Both front position pulses feel like small pellets; pulse feels Tight, Fine, Full and Long up to the front position.
<b>Chong (Penetrating)</b>	Pulse is Hard and Full at the middle level of both middle positions.
<b>Dai (Girdle)</b>	Pulse is Wiry on both middle positions. Generally seen with backache and abdominal pain radiating to the leg.

How pulses are defined and how they appear in the Zang Fu patterns and Formulas are very different. Below is a quick guide to pulses and their definitions for case study analysis based on where they appear in Zang Fu Patterns from FCM and Bensky formulas. Not all the 28 pulses are included in this chart. The pulses not represented do not appear in board formulas or Zang Fu Patterns.

PULSE NAME	INDICATION IN PATTERNS AND FORMULAS
1 <b>Superficial</b>	<b>Excess:</b> Exterior pathogenic invasion, such as: Wind Cold, Wind Heat <b>Deficiency:</b> Yin Deficiency (FCM) (Floating + Deficient)
2 <b>Deep</b>	<b>Excess:</b> Excess Interior pathogen, such as: Heat Stagnation, Food Stagnation, Cold Stagnation <b>Deficiency:</b> Yang Deficiency
3 <b>Slow</b>	<b>Excess:</b> Excess Cold <b>Deficiency:</b> Yang Deficiency
4 <b>Rapid</b>	<b>Excess:</b> Excess Heat <b>Deficiency:</b> Yin Deficiency
5 <b>Deficient</b>	<b>Deficiency:</b> Qi, Blood, Yin (Floating + Empty) and Yang
6 <b>Excessive</b>	<b>Excess:</b> Excess Heat or Cold
7 <b>Full</b>	<b>Excess:</b> Heat consuming the Body Fluids; classic Yangming Level Heat pulse <b>Deficiency:</b> Qi Deficiency or severe Yin Deficiency (HT and KD Disharmony: only FCM)
8 <b>Thready</b>	<b>Deficiency:</b> Qi, Blood, Yin (Thready + Rapid), Yang (Thready + Deep)
9 <b>Slippery</b>	<b>Excess:</b> Phlegm/Damp, Food Stagnation, Heat <b>Normal:</b> Pregnancy
10 <b>Choppy</b>	<b>Excess:</b> Blood Stasis <b>Deficiency:</b> Blood Deficiency
11 <b>Wiry</b>	<b>Excess:</b> Excess Liver patterns, Phlegm, pain <b>Deficiency:</b> Deficient Liver patterns
12 <b>Tight</b>	<b>Excess:</b> Excess Cold <b>Deficiency:</b> Deficiency Cold
13 <b>Soggy</b>	<b>Excess/Deficiency:</b> Qi Deficiency with Damp
14 <b>Weak</b>	<b>Deficiency:</b> Qi Deficiency, Blood Deficiency
15 <b>Skipping</b>	<b>Excess:</b> HT Fire
16 <b>Knotted</b>	<b>Excess:</b> HT Blood Stasis <b>Deficiency:</b> HT Yang Deficiency, HT Yang Collapse
17 <b>Intermittent</b>	<b>Deficiency:</b> Insufficiency of Qi and Blood
18 <b>Feeble</b>	<b>Deficiency:</b> HT Yang Collapse
19 <b>Moderate</b>	<b>Excess/Deficiency:</b> Qi Deficiency with Interior/Exterior Damp, Qi and Blood Stagnation with Qi Deficiency
20 <b>Firm</b>	<b>Excess:</b> LV Blood Stasis
21 <b>Hidden</b>	<b>Deficiency:</b> HT Yang Collapse

