

15 - Elephant Energizes Waist



The elephant is a Chinese symbol of strength and wisdom. It is also said that, before the Buddha Sakyamuni's birth, his mother dreamed of a six-tusked elephant entering her womb through her side. This is why the statue of the many-faced Samantabhadra atop Mt. Emei, which overlooks the sea of clouds, is seated upon the backs of four six-tusked

elephants. This motion's name can also be translated as "Elephant Limbers Up the Waist." Done correctly, it can be used to align and unblock the hips and the entire back.

Transitioning from movement 14

- a. Slowly lower your hands to the center of your lower back. (M 15.1)
- b. When your hands reach your back, shift your weight to the right foot and step out with the left foot into an even, shoulder-width stance.



M 15.1

Beginning

- a. With your weight equally spread between both feet, place your hands, palms facing out, against the small of your back. Your thumbs and index fingers should touch.

- b. Your thumbs should be at your mingmen (Du 4 - Gate of Destiny - below the second lumbar vertebra). Your index fingers should meet at the point yao yang guan (Du 3 - Lumbar Back Yang Gate - below the fourth lumbar vertebra).

The Movement

- a. Rotate your hips in a clockwise manner, shifting your weight from one foot to the other as you do. Begin by shifting your weight to your right foot, pressing against the ground with the toe of your left, in order to raise your left heel and shift your hips to the right.



M 15.2

- b. Next, rotate your hips back and to the left until your weight is on your left foot. (M 15.2) As you do this, allow your left heel to return to the ground.
- c. Continue rotating your hips back and to the left, pushing against the ground with the toe of your right foot, raising your right heel and shifting your hips to the right.
- d. Continue rotating your hips forward and to the right, allowing your right heel to return to the ground as your hips return to the center (pushed forward).
- e. Continue this clockwise rotation four times, or as many times as desired.

Continuing

- a. Reverse the circle and rotate your hips counter-clockwise, in the same manner.
- b. Perform this counter-clockwise hip rotation four times, or as many times as desired.

Additional information to enhance practice:

This posture uses the following qi guiding patterns:

1. Breathe into the middle dantian
2. Direct qi from the middle dantian to the sole of your feet (rooting your qi).



Qigong can be a pathway to greater self-care.
While we improve our lives, we also improve the
lives of those around us, and the world at large.
It is a way into a compassionate way of life.