

Small Intestine Patterns

DSY class 8

- The main function of the Small Intestine is transforming by separating the “clean” and “dirty” (“pure and turbid”) parts of food and fluids.
- To perform the fluid-transforming function, the Small Intestine is in direct communication with the Bladder, helping the Bladder function of Qi transformation.
- The Small Intestine transforms food in coordination with the Spleen, whilst it transforms fluids in coordination with Kidney-Yang. In both cases, the Small Intestine's role is subordinate to that of the Spleen and Kidney-Yang. For this reason, most of the Small Intestine patterns are different manifestations of Spleen or Kidney-Yang patterns.

GENERAL ETIOLOGY

- DIET
- The Small Intestine is easily and readily affected by the type and "temperature" of food eaten. An excessive consumption of cold and raw foods can create Cold in the Small Intestine, whilst an excessive consumption of hot foods can create Heat.
- EMOTIONS
- The Small Intestine is affected by sadness which grips a person and destroys the mental clarity and capacity of sound judgement for which this organ is responsible.

Excess Patterns

FULL-HEAT IN THE SMALL INTESTINE

- Clinical manifestations
- Mental restlessness, insomnia, tongue/mouth ulcers, pain in the throat, deafness, uncomfortable feeling and heat sensation in the chest, abdominal pain, thirst for cold liquids, scanty and dark urine, burning painful urination, blood in urine.
- Tongue: Red with redder and swollen tip, yellow coating.
- Pulse: Rapid, Overflowing, especially in the Front position. Urinary symptoms, will be wiry in rear.
- Key symptoms: abdominal pain, tongue ulcers, scanty-dark-painful urination.

- Pathology
- This Interior Full-Heat pattern is closely associated with blazing of Heart-Fire.
- Fire in the Heart causes the mental restlessness, tongue ulcers, pain in the throat and thirst.
- Heart-Fire is transmitted to the Small Intestine with which the Heart is interiorly-exteriorly related, it interferes with the Small Intestine function of separating fluids in the Lower Burner and burns the fluids causing scanty and dark urine and pain on urination. In severe cases of Heat, this may cause the Blood to extravasate resulting in blood in the urine.

- Deafness is caused by obstruction of Fire in the Small Intestine channel (which enters the ear).
- The tongue reflects Full-Heat as it is Red with a coating; the tip may be redder and swollen reflecting Heart-Fire.
- The pulse is Rapid because of the Heat and Overflowing because of the Heart-Fire.

- Etiology
- This pattern is caused by emotional problems such as great anxiety over a long period of time, in particular related to the person's life pressures and direction of life.
- This type of pattern is also seen frequently in manic behavior, in people who are driven by an unstoppable desire to undertake several different projects and push themselves very hard in many different directions with great dissipation of energy. If this energy can be harnessed with the help of acupuncture treatment, these persons can be very creative, productive, imaginative and usually artistic.

Treatment

- Principle: drain Heart and Small Intestine Fire.
- Formula: Dao Chi San (Guide Out the Red Powder)
- Points: S.I.-2, S.I.-5, HE-5, HE-8, ST-39.
- Method: reducing, no moxa.
- Explanation
- S.I.-2, S.I.-5 clear Small Intestine Heat.
- ST-39 Lower Sea point, stops abdominal pain.
- HE-5, HE-8 clear Heart-Fire.

INFESTATION OF WORMS IN THE SMALL INTESTINE

- Clinical manifestations
- Abdominal pain and distension, bad taste in mouth, sallow complexion.
- Roundworms (ascarid): abdominal pain, vomiting of round worms, cold limbs.
- Hookworms: desire to eat strange objects such as soil, wax, uncooked rice or tea leaves.
- Pinworms: itchy anus, worse in the evening.
- Tapeworms: constant hunger.

- Pathology
- This obviously consists in obstruction of the Small Intestine by worms, which causes abdominal pain, and in the malnourishment following from worm infestation. According to Chinese Medicine, infestation by worms is thought to be caused by a Cold condition of the Spleen and Intestines which allows the worms to thrive.
- Etiology
- A Cold condition of Spleen and Intestines deriving from excessive consumption of cold and raw foods.

Treatment

- Formula: Fat Baby Pill (fei er wan)
- Acupuncture is not applicable in this case and herbal treatment is the treatment of choice.

SMALL INTESTINE DEFICIENT AND COLD

- Clinical manifestations
- Dull abdominal pain relieved by pressure, desire for hot drinks, borborygmi, diarrhea, pale and abundant urination, cold limbs.
- Tongue: Pale, white coating.
- Pulse: Deep, Slow, Weak.
- Key symptoms: abdominal pain, borborygmi, diarrhea.

- Pathology
- This Interior Deficiency Cold pattern is usually associated with Deficiency of Spleen-Yang, and it is often hard to distinguish these two patterns. The main symptom of Small Intestine involvement is borborygmi.
- All the other symptoms are basically due to an impairment of the Spleen function of transformation and transportation and the Small Intestine function of receiving and transforming resulting in diarrhea.

- The deficiency of Yang of the Spleen results in interior Cold, hence the desire for hot drinks, pale urine, Pale tongue, white coating and Deep and Slow pulse.
- The abdominal pain is also caused by the obstruction of Cold in the Intestines.
- Etiology
- This pattern is caused by excessive consumption of cold and raw foods.

Treatment

- Principle: warm and tonify Small Intestine and Spleen, expel Interior Cold.
- Formula: Li Zhong Wan (Regulate the Middle Pill)
- Points: Ren-6, ST-25, ST-39, ST-36, BL-20, BL-27.
- Method: reinforcing, moxa should be used.
- Explanation
- Ren-6 with moxa tonifies Yang and stops diarrhea.
- ST-25 stops diarrhea and abdominal pain.
- ST-39 stops abdominal pain.
- ST-36, BL-20 tonify Spleen-Yang (with moxa).
- BL-27 tonifies the Small Intestine.

Large Intestine Patterns

- The main function of the Large Intestine is to receive food from the Small Intestine, absorb fluids and excrete stools.
- It is therefore obvious that all the Large Intestine patterns have to do with disturbances of bowel movements.

GENERAL ETIOLOGY

- EXTERIOR PATHOGENIC FACTORS
- The Large Intestine can be invaded by exterior Cold directly. This results from exposure to excessive cold over a prolonged period of time, or to normal seasonal cold but without adequate clothing. Cold dampness penetrates from ground level and works its way up to the Lower Burner where it can enter the Large Intestine and cause abdominal pain and diarrhea.
- Many cases of lower abdominal pain are due to interior Cold resulting from the invasion of exterior Cold.

- EMOTIONS

- The Large Intestine is exteriorly-interiorly related to the Lungs and is equally affected by sadness and worry. Worry depletes Lung-Qi which fails to descend and to help the Large Intestine in its functions. This results in stagnation of Qi in the Large Intestine, with the ensuing symptoms of spastic abdominal pain and constipation with bitty stools alternating with diarrhea.

- DIET
- Diet obviously affects the Large Intestine directly. Excessive consumption of cold and raw food can give rise to interior Cold and ensuing diarrhea.
- On the other hand, excessive consumption of greasy and hot foods can give rise to Damp-Heat in the Large Intestine.

Excess Patterns

DAMP-HEAT IN THE LARGE INTESTINE

- Clinical manifestations
- Abdominal pain unrelieved by defecation, abdominal fullness, diarrhea, mucus and blood in stools, offensive odor of stools, burning in anus, scanty-dark urine, fever, sweating (which does not decrease the fever), thirst without desire to drink, feeling of heaviness of the body and limbs.
- Tongue: Red, sticky-yellow coating.
- Pulse: Slippery, Rapid.
- Key symptoms: abdominal pain, diarrhea with mucus and blood in the stools.

- Pathology
- The retention of Dampness in the Large Intestine interferes with its function of absorbing fluids and excreting stools, hence fluids are not absorbed and diarrhea results. The mucus in the stools is indicative of Dampness. The blood in the stools is due to Heat in the Large Intestine making the blood come out of the vessels.
- Stools with fetid odor, burning anus, thirst, dark urine, fever, Red tongue and Rapid pulse are all indicative of Heat.
- The feeling of heaviness, sticky tongue coating, and Slippery pulse, are all indicative of Dampness.

- Etiology
- This pattern can be caused by excessive consumption of hot and greasy foods, with the additional component of emotional problems such as anxiety and worry over a long period of time, causing interior Heat.

Treatment

- Principle: clear Heat, resolve Damp, stop diarrhea.
- Formula: Coptis and Magnolia Decoction (Lian Po Yin)
- Points: SP-9, SP-6, Ren-3, BL-22, ST-25, BL-25, BL-17, Ren-12, L.I.-11, ST-37, BL-20.
- Method: reducing, no moxa.
- Explanation
- SP-9, SP-6, Ren-3, BL-22 resolve Dampness in Lower Jiao.
- ST-25, ST-37 stops diarrhea.
- BL-17 stops bleeding.
- L.I.-11, BL-25 clear Heat.
- Ren-12 BL-20 tonifies the Spleen to resolve Dampness.

HEAT IN THE LARGE INTESTINE

- Clinical manifestations
- Constipation with dry stools, burning sensation in the mouth, dry tongue, burning and swelling in anus, scanty-dark urine.
- Tongue: thick-yellow (or brown or black) dry coating.
- Pulse: Full, Rapid.
- Key symptoms: dry stools, burning sensation in anus, thick-yellow-dry coating.

- Pathology
- This is an Excess pattern with Full-Heat and dryness. The dryness derives from the burning action of Full-Heat on the body fluids.
- All the symptoms reflect Full-Heat in the Large Intestine: dry stools, burning and swelling of anus, thick-yellow-dry coating and a Rapid pulse.
- The Large Intestine is closely related to the Stomach (within the Bright Yang) and there is also Heat in the Stomach resulting in dry mouth and tongue.
- The Heat in the Lower Burner makes the urine more concentrated and scanty, hence its dark color.

- Etiology
- This pattern is caused by the excessive consumption of hot foods (such as lamb, beef and alcohol) and "dry" foods, such as broiled or baked meats.

Treatment

- Principle: clear Heat in the Large Intestine and Stomach, promote Body Fluids.
- Formula: Da Cheng Qi Tang (Major Order the Qi Decoction)
- Points: Ren-4, L.I.-11, ST-37, ST-44, L.I.-2, SP-6, KI-6, Ren-12.
- Method: reduce points to clear Heat, tonify points to promote fluids.
- Explanation
- Ren-4, SP-6, KI-6 and Ren-12 promote Body Fluids.
- L.I.-2, L.I.-11 clear Heat in the Large Intestine.
- ST-37 is Lower-Sea point for the Large Intestine.
- ST-44 clears Stomach Heat.

DEFICIENCY PATTERNS

LARGE INTESTINE DRY

- Clinical manifestations
- Dry stools which are difficult to discharge, dry mouth and throat, thin body, foul breath, dizziness.
- Tongue: dry, either Pale or Red without coating.
- Pulse: Fine.
- Key symptoms: dry stools which are difficult to discharge, thin body.

- Pathology
- This pattern is characterized by exhaustion of fluids in the Large Intestine. It usually accompanies other patterns, particularly Blood or Yin Deficiency. All the symptoms are simply due to a state of dryness in Large Intestine and Stomach.
- The tongue will be Pale if this condition is due to Blood deficiency, or Red and peeled if due to Yin deficiency (usually of the Kidneys).
- This condition is more common in old people and often in those with a thin body, which indicates Yin deficiency. It can also frequently be seen in women after childbirth with heavy loss of blood, as this induces an exhaustion of Body Fluids (of which Blood is part).

- Etiology
- This is due either to Blood or Yin deficiency. Therefore any of the causes of these two conditions can cause dryness in the Large Intestine. In some countries with very dry and warm weather, it could arise by itself.

Treatment

- Principle: promote fluids in the Large Intestine.
- Formula: Zeng Ye Tang (Increasing Fluids decoction)
- Points: ST-36, SP-6, KI-6, Ren-4.
- Method: reinforcing.
- Explanation
- ST-36 can promote fluids in Stomach and Large Intestine.
- SP-6 and Ren-4 tonify Yin and promote fluids.
- KI-6 tonifies Yin and promotes fluids and is particularly indicated to moisten the stools.