

Gall Bladder Patterns

DSY class 9

Gall-Bladder Patterns

- The main Gall-Bladder function is that of storing bile and its patterns are nearly always very closely related to those of the Liver. The Gall-Bladder's job of storing and emptying the bile is dependent on the Liver ensuring the smooth flow of Qi.
- The Gall-Bladder is easily affected by Dampness deriving from an impairment of the Spleen function of transformation and transportation.

GENERAL ETIOLOGY

- DIET
- An excessive consumption of greasy and fatty foods leads to the formation of Dampness which can lodge in the Gall-Bladder.
- CLIMATE
- Exterior Dampness and Heat, as it is found in tropical or sub tropical regions, can cause Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder.

- EMOTIONS
- The Gall-Bladder, like the Liver, is affected by anger. Anger, frustration and resentment can cause stagnation of Liver-Qi which, in turn, can produce Heat which affects the Gall-Bladder. Pent-up anger over a long period of time implodes to give rise to Fire in Liver and Gall-Bladder with symptoms of irritability, bitter taste, thirst, headaches, etc.
- From an emotional point of view, the Gall-Bladder also affects courage and spirit of initiative. A weak Gall-Bladder energy may result in timidity and lack of courage. This is also expressed in certain Chinese language expressions such as "big gall-bladder" for "courage" and "small gall-bladder" for "cowardice or timidity".

Excess Patterns

DAMP-HEAT IN THE GALL-BLADDER

- Clinical manifestations
- Hypochondriac pain, fullness and distension, nausea, vomiting, inability to digest fats, yellow complexion, scanty and dark yellow urine, fever, thirst without desire to drink, bitter taste, dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, feeling of heaviness, numb limbs, foot swelling, loose stools or constipation, feeling of heat or alternating heat and cold, yellow sclera.
- Tongue: thick-sticky yellow coating, bilateral or unilateral.
- Pulse: Slippery, Wiry, Rapid.
- Key symptoms: hypochondriac fullness, bitter taste and thick-sticky yellow coating on the right side.

- Pathology
- Underlying this pattern there is always a deficiency of Spleen-Qi leading to the formation of Dampness which obstructs the Gall-Bladder. Hence the sticky tongue coating and Slippery pulse.
- Dampness in the Gall-Bladder interferes with the smooth flow of Liver-Qi which stagnates and causes hypochondriac pain and a feeling of distension.
- Nausea and vomiting are caused both by stagnant Liver-Qi invading the Stomach, and by Dampness preventing Stomach-Qi from descending.

- Bitter taste, fever, dark urine, thirst, are all signs of Heat. There is thirst because of the Heat, but no desire to drink (or desire to drink in small sips) because of the presence of Dampness.
- From a Western point of view, this pattern is often seen in cholelithiasis (stones in Gall-Bladder). From a Chinese perspective, stones are an extreme form of Dampness in its most substantial state. They are formed over a long period of time from Dampness under the "steaming and brewing" action of Heat. Thus stones are always considered a manifestation of Damp-Heat or Phlegm-Fire.

- Etiology
- This pattern is often caused by feelings of anger over a long period of time causing stagnation of Liver-Qi and implosion of stagnant Qi into Fire.
- The excessive consumption of greasy and fatty foods leads to the formation of Dampness which combines with the Heat.
- In tropical or sub-tropical regions, it can be caused by climatic Damp-Heat.

Treatment

- Principle: drain Damp, clear Heat in Gallbladder, move Liver-Qi.
- Formula: Yin Chen Hao Tang (Artemisia Yinchenhao Decoction)
- Points: G.B.-24, LIV-14, Ren-12, G.B.-34, Dannangxue extra point, Du-9, BL-19, BL-18, BL-20, L.I.-11, T.B.-6.
- Method: reducing (except on Ren-12 and BL-20).
- Explanation
- G.B.-24, BL-19, Du-9, LIV-14, BL-18 clear Heat in GB & Liver.
- Ren-12, BL-20 resolve Dampness.
- T.B.-6, G.B.-34 move Liver-Qi and clears Heat.
- Dannangxue is only used if it is tender on pressure.
- L.I.-11 clears Heat.

Deficiency Pattern

GALL-BLADDER DEFICIENT

- Clinical manifestations
- Dizziness, blurred vision, floaters, nervousness, timidity, propensity to being easily startled, lack of courage and initiative, sighing, waking up early in the morning, restless dreams.
- Tongue: Pale or normal.
- Pulse: Weak.
- Key symptoms: timidity, sighing, lack of initiative, indecision.

- Pathology
- The Gall-Bladder is the Yang aspect of the Liver, and it is said in Chinese Medicine that Liver- Yang can only be in excess, never deficient. However, in this case, this pattern describes a state of deficiency of the Gall-Bladder.
- More than a "pattern", this is really the description of a certain character or personality. The key feature of this "pattern" is the character of the person, i.e. the lack of courage, timidity and lack of initiative.
- As was discussed before, the Liver houses the Ethereal Soul and its weakness can be manifested with timidity and fear.

- Etiology
- There is no "Etiology" as such as the pattern depends on the character of the person. Of course, the timidity and lack of courage could also be the result of certain interrelationships within the family during childhood, such as a younger child always "bullied" by the older brothers or a child who is never encouraged and only reproached.
- From a Chinese physiological perspective, severe deficiency of Blood may result in fear and lack of courage (whilst Heat in the Blood may result in anger). As mentioned before, Blood and Yin are the root of the Ethereal Soul. If Blood is deficient, the Ethereal Soul suffers and this manifests with fear (especially on going to bed at night).

Treatment

- Principle: tonify and warm the Gall-Bladder.
- Formula: Settle the Emotions Pill (ding zhi wan)
- Points: G.B.-40.
- Method: reinforcing, moxa is applicable.
- Explanation
- G.B.-40 is the Source point to tonify the Gall-Bladder, and it has a good effect on this particular mental aspect of the Gall-Bladder.

Combination Pattern

DAMP-HEAT IN GALLBLADDER AND LIVER

- Clinical manifestations
- Hypochondriac pain-fullness-distension, nausea, vomiting, inability to digest fats, yellow complexion, scanty dark yellow urine, fever, thirst without desire to drink, bitter taste, dizziness, yellow sclera, tinnitus, irritability, feeling of heaviness, numb limbs, foot swelling, burning or difficult urination, yellow vaginal discharge, loose stools or constipation, feeling of heat or alternating heat and cold, genital skin rashes & itching, swelling and heat of scrotum.
- Tongue: thick-sticky yellow coating, bilateral or unilateral.
- Pulse: Slippery-Wiry-Rapid.
- Key symptoms: hypochondrium fullness, bitter taste, nausea, sticky yellow coating on right side, genital skin rashes itching.

- Pathology
- This pattern is a combination of the patterns of Damp-Heat in the Liver and Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder, and the pathological manifestations arise as they do in those two patterns.
- Etiology
- Same as the patterns of Damp-Heat in the Liver and Damp-Heat in the Gall-Bladder.

Treatment

- Principle of treatment: resolve Dampness, disperse the Liver and Gall-Bladder, clear Heat, promote smooth flow of Liver-Qi.
- Formula: Long Dan Xie Gan Tang (Gentiana Longdanco Decoction to Drain the Liver)
- Points: LIV-14, GB-24, GB-34, BL-18, BL-19, BL-20Du-9, Ren-12, L.I.-11, LIV-3, LIV-5, Dannangxue special point, T.B.-6.
- Method: reducing, BL-20 should be tonified.

Bladder Patterns

- The main Bladder function is that of "Qi transformation", i.e. transforming and excreting fluids by the power of Qi.
- The Bladder receives the Qi for this function from the Kidneys: in disease, therefore Bladder deficiency often results from Kidney-Yang deficiency. However, the Kidney does not have a pattern of Excess, so all Excess patterns pertaining to the urinary system fall under the category of Bladder patterns. From this point of view, the Bladder patterns are very important, as they fill a gap within the urinary disease patterns.
- Accumulation of Dampness is the most common pathological factor in Bladder patterns.

GENERAL ETIOLOGY

- CLIMATE
- Climate has an important influence on Bladder conditions. Excessive exposure to cold and damp weather, sitting on damp surfaces, or living in damp places, can lead to the accumulation of Dampness in the Bladder. This can be manifested as Damp-Cold or Damp-Heat (even if it derives from exterior Cold).
- Excessive exposure to Damp-Heat in tropical countries also leads to the accumulation of Damp-Heat in the Bladder.

- EMOTIONS

- From an emotional point of view, the Bladder, like the Kidneys, is affected by fear. In particular in children, fear or anxieties or insecurity leads to the sinking of Qi in the Bladder resulting in nocturnal enuresis.

- In adults, Bladder disharmonies are often manifested with feelings of suspicion and jealousy over a long period of time.

- EXCESS SEX

- Excessive sexual activity depletes Kidney-Yang and therefore indirectly also the Bladder, as this derives its energy from Kidney-Yang. This can result in frequent and abundant urination, nocturia or incontinence.

Excess patterns

DAMP-HEAT IN THE BLADDER

- Clinical manifestations
- Frequent and urgent urination, burning on urination, difficult urination (stopping in the middle of flow), dark-yellow and/or turbid urine, blood in the urine, sand in the urine, fever, thirst with no desire to drink, hypogastric fullness and pain, feeling of heat.
- Tongue: Red, thick-sticky yellow coating on the root with red spots.
- Pulse: Rapid, Slippery, slightly Wiry on left Rear position.
- Key symptoms: burning on urination, dark urine, difficult urination.

- Pathology
- This is Interior Full-Heat from the 8-Principle point of view. It is characterized by the presence of Dampness and Heat in the Bladder.
- Dampness obstructs the smooth flow of fluids in the Lower Burner, giving rise to difficult urination, urgent urination, turbid urine and a sticky tongue coating. In extreme cases, Dampness can materialize into urinary sand or stones.
- Heat in the Bladder causes burning on urination, a dark urine, a Red tongue with yellow coating and red spots and a Rapid pulse.
- Fever and thirst are manifestations of generalized Heat.

- Etiology
- This pattern can be caused by excessive exposure to exterior Damp-Heat or Dampness and Cold. Dampness and Cold penetrate the Bladder from below and, in time, can turn into Damp-Heat. Thus it is important to realize that exterior Cold Dampness can cause a pattern of Damp- Heat in the Bladder. In fact, the pattern of Damp-Heat in the Bladder is very common in most countries, including very cold ones.
- From an emotional point of view, this pattern can be caused by feelings of suspicion or jealousy bottled-up over a long period of time.

Treatment

- Principle: resolve Dampness, clear Heat, open the Water passages of the Lower Burner.
- Formula: Ba Zheng San (Eight-Herb Powder for Rectification)
- Points: SP-9, SP-6, BL-22, BL-28, Ren-3, BL-63, BL-66.
- Method: reducing, no moxa.
- Explanation
- SP-9, SP-6 resolve Dampness from the Lower Burner.
- BL-22 opens the Water passages.
- Ren-3, BL-28, BL-66 clears Heat from the Bladder.
- BL-63 stops pain on urination, particularly in acute cases.

Deficiency Patterns

BLADDER DEFICIENT AND COLD

- Clinical manifestations
- Frequent-pale-abundant urination, incontinence, enuresis, lower backache, dizziness, nocturia, white urethral discharge, feeling of cold.
- Tongue: Pale, wet.
- Pulse: Weak, Deep.
- Key symptoms: frequent-pale-abundant urination.

- Pathology
- This pattern is basically the same as Kidney-Yang deficiency or Kidney-Qi not Firm. The Bladder derives its Qi from Kidney-Yang and if this is deficient, the Bladder cannot control fluids which leak out.
- Etiology
- This pattern can be caused by excessive sexual activity that weakens Kidney-Yang.
- It can also be caused by excessive exposure to cold or living in cold and damp places. Women are particularly vulnerable to invasion of cold to the Lower Burner, particularly during menstruation.

Treatment

- Principle: tonify and warm Bladder and Kidney-Yang.
- Formula: Jin Gui Shen Qi Wan (Kidney Qi Pill from the Golden Cabinet)
- Points: BL-23, Du-4, BL-28, Ren-4.
- Method: reinforcing, moxa is applicable.
- Explanation
- BL-23, Du-4 with moxa tonify Kidney-Yang and Bladder.
- BL-28 tonifies the Bladder.
- Ren-4 with moxa strengthens Lower Burner Qi and Yang