



Traditional Chinese Medicine and the treatment of allergic asthma



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Asthma and TCM

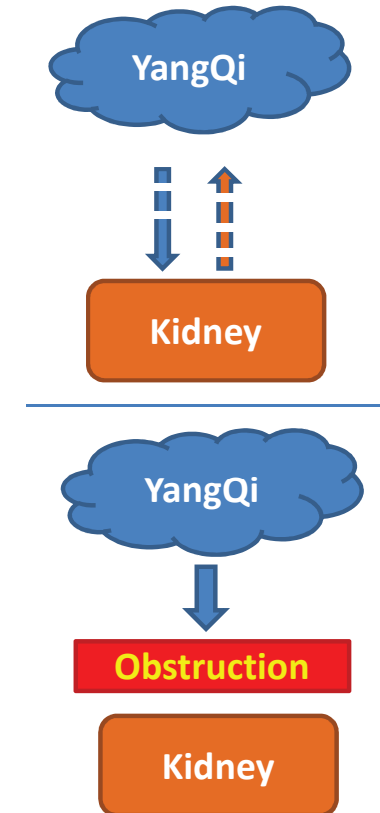
Chinese medicine positioned Asthma inside a larger box of illnesses named “chuan” and “xiao” which lead to dyspnoea and breath noises.

- ☞ **喘 Chuan:** It's a difficulty in breathing with shortness of breath, the mouth is often wide opened while shoulders move up and down and the accessory muscles of respiration are also used
- ☞ **哮 Xiao:** It's a noise breathing with hiss linked to dyspnoea
- ☞ The most common forms of asthma are those allergic in nature. Any substance is potentially an allergen factor but it will not harm because **the human body will keep it outside or will transform it in a convenient way.**
- ☞ **The defensive Qi [Weiqi] is the energy to maintain pathogenic factors outside body**

Asthma is caused by failed descent of the Lung Qi, this may happen in two ways:

- ☞ a) **deficiency pattern:** the lung qi is not strong enough to descend and cannot reach the kidney
- ☞ b) **excessive pattern:** the lung's qi cannot descend because it is blocked by an obstruction

In both cases the air Yangqi cannot reach the kidney; that is fundamental to produce Right Qi [zhengqi] and Weiqi. Thanks to these energies the Lung is able to keep external pathogenic factors.



Allergic asthma originates from deficiency of organs, while the allergic crisis from fullness, due to the presence of pathogenic factors

Main deficiency disorders

- ☞ **Lung-Kidney deficiency:** Lung Qi goes down, while the kidney qi goes up: their active meeting accomplishes the respiration. If kidney qi is weak it cannot drag downwards lung qi which flows back upwards blocking the thorax with dyspnoea and asthma.
- ☞ **Spleen-Lung deficiency:** depends on the lack of function of descent of the Lung and inadequate function of the Spleen to transform dampness and keeps the Lung “clean” from phlegm [Tan].
- ☞ **Lung Qi and Yin deficiency:** Lung has a lot of Yang properties. They have to be balanced with Yin features and for this reason Lung fluids are fundamental for the Lung physiology. There is a strong relationship between the Lung spreading capacity and its descending function.

The role of Lung, Spleen and Kidney

- ☛ The Lung and the Spleen are two basic organs appointed for producing and spreading nutritive Qi [Yingqi] . Kidney is connected to Original Qi [Yuanqi] and Kidney Yang contributes to the production of Weiqi.
- ☛ For this reason, allergies are first of all connected to the Lung that shields the outside and to the Spleen which transforms whatever gets inside the body. The Kidney is important in relation to familiar incidence and hereditary proneness.
- ☛ Their proper functioning governs the transformation of liquid into the Lungs, keeping "clean" and preventing the formation of damp and Tan.

The main excess disorders:

- ☞ **Wind-Cold invasion:** pathogenic factors are tolerated very little by the lung which is a “fragile” [jiaonen] and “sensitive” [jiaozang] organ. Cold is a Yin pathogenic factor, not very moving, which is inclined, as happens in nature (winter time), to contract, to block and to freeze.
- ☞ **Wind-Heat invasion:** are a Yang pathogenic factors which attack the upper part of the body and disperse Weiqi on the surface. This event allows penetration of heat which dries up and condenses fluids inducing a troubled descent of Lung qi with asthma and dyspnoea.
- ☞ **Presence of phlegm:** phlegm-damp [tanshi] and phlegm-heat [tanre]: When Qi does not succeed in cleaning and eliminating stagnant phlegm, phlegm will store up in the lung and obstruct the descent. Qi can't descent so it goes upstream [qini] causing an asthma symptom.
- ☞ **Liver qi stagnation:** In this case the Liver turns against the Lung and attacks the Lung and restricts its action. In this way it obstacles Lung qi descent and produces respiratory symptoms like dyspnoea.

An integrative approach to asthma

- ☛ (...) more than 50% of asthmatic patients, both adults and children, using the complementary medicine and, in most cases, due to dissatisfaction with the results obtained with the conventional medicine.
- ☛ (...) positive effects are confirmed, especially for complementary medicine that do not include intake of medications but are based on physical interventions, such as Breathing Exercises, Massage, Relaxation Techniques, Buteyko Method, Chiropractic, Qigong, Nutritional Support
- ☛ The editorial concludes by saying that the integrated medicine approach to asthma:
 - Reduces the need for conventional medications, side effects due to them and improves the quality of life
 - Is complementary and not an alternative to conventional medicine, especially in patients with severe asthma

Società italiana di allergologia e immunologia pediatrica: Hasted C. : An integrative approach to asthma. Aust Fam Physician 2005;34(7):573-6

Allergic asthma and TCM

Allergic asthma can be successfully treated with TCM techniques that can work not only on acute episodes but also on the causes underlying them.

Treatment with:

- ☛ pharmacology is useful at all stages of the treatment and is indicated in the silent and asymptomatic phase
- ☛ acupuncture can be used in all stages and is mainly suitable in the acute phase
- ☛ **tuina** and c.t. is more suitable during silent and asymptomatic phase
- ☛ **diet** is useful at all stages of the treatment and is indicated in the silent and asymptomatic phase

Combinations of acupuncture points

For brevity of exposition we will focus on Tuina and diet treatment of asymptomatic phase, as aimed to reinforce the deficit, the root of allergic asthma.

Combinations of acupuncture points choices are:

- ☛ **Spleen /Lung deficiency** : 14GV [dazhui] , 9LU [taiyuan], 36ST [zusanli], 6CV [qihai], 13BL [feishu], 20BL [pishu], 43BL [gaohuangshu]. All these acupoints could be reinforced with moxa too in case of empty cold.
- ☛ **Yin and Qi Lung deficiency:** 9LU [taiyuan], 5LU [chize], 6KI [zhaohai], 13BL [feishu], 43BL [gaohuangshu]. All these acupoints could be reinforced
- ☛ **Lung/Kidney deficiency:** 3KI [taixi], 4CV [guanyuan], 6CV [qihai], 9LU [taiyuan], 13BL [feishu], 23BL [shenshu], 43BL [gaohuangshu]. All these acupoints are reinforced with use of moxibustion too in order to activate Yang.

How to organize Tuina treatment

We will focus on Lung and Kidney Qi deficiency to explain how to set this treatment starting from acupoints

The principles we are going to be observed are:

- ☞ treatment in general and the individual techniques are performed in reinforcing method with a gentle stimulation;
- ☞ treatment is in the direction of the meridians yingqi.
- ☞ The treatment goes from Yang to Yin, from outside to inside, from the periphery to the center, from the back to the abdomen, reducing before reinforcing.
- ☞ The moxa may be inserted at the at the most suitable points and is performed in reinforcing method.
- ☞ *It is possible to adjust the chart below for other deficit disorders with few changes*

Tuina treatment sequence

Time minutes	Method of work	Where to perform the treatments	Recommended maneuvers
5	Musculature	Back and arms	Light reduction Tuifa, Yizhichantuifa, Gunfa, Roufa
10	Lines	BL-LU-KI Channels	Reinforcing Tuifa
15	Points	BL13/Feishu +LU9/taiyuan BL23/Shenshu+KI3/Taixi 43BL/Gaohuangshu	Reinforcing Roufa, Anroufa, MOXA
20			
25	Areas Lines	Chest - hypochondrium CV19-20-21 >LU1 LU2 - CV17 >CV15	Light reduction Tuifa, Fentuifa
30	Areas	Under rib line - Abdomen	Light reduct. Roufa, Anroufa, Fentuifa - Reinf. Mofa, Zhenfa
35	Points	CV4/Guanyuan, CV6/Qihai, CV8/Shenque	Reinforcing Anroufa, Mofa

Based on "Manuale di tuina Fondamenti e strategie di trattamento" see "sources" slide

Diet in Lung/Kidney deficit

- ☛ We must prefer cooked and warm in nature food, especially that with a tonic action on the kidney as quinoa, mutton and deer meat, pigeons and sparrows, animal kidneys, prawns, shrimps and lobsters, spices such as cinnamon and cloves, leeks, pistachios and, really recommended for asthma, walnuts and pine seeds.
- ☛ It is also suitable to reduce sweets, dairy products and fruit in order to prevent an accumulation of fluids in this condition of metabolism reduction.
- ☛ It is not advisable to consume cold food in temperature and nature for example sprouts, snails, horse meat, cucumber, chicory, borage, soy sauce, yoghurt and so on.

Sources

Asthma – Report presented in Rotenburgh TCM congress 2010, by doctor Muccioli Massimo Scuola Tao

“Manuale di tuina fondamenti e strategie di trattamento” By Crespi – Ercoli – Marino; edited by Paolo Ercoli.

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