

Chinese Pathology II

4-16-05

Spleen

Transforms food.

It has to do with digest.

It transforms fluids in the body.

Failures of the spleen lead to

- ✓ Loose Stools
- ✓ Undigested food in stool
- ✓ No appetite or too much appetite or craving, usually with the stomach, but it is related (interior/exterior) with the spleen, so the spleen can cause a problem. (Especially craving sweets)
- ✓ Spleen controls the muscles to nourish it. Especially the arms and legs. So if the person feels tired, not wanting to move, this is a good sign of a spleen deficiency. The muscles are too tired to move because they aren't being nourished.
- ✓ Spleen also controls the blood, if there are different bleeding problems, this could also indicate a spleen problem.
- ✓ Organ prolapse are related to deficient spleen qi. The spleen keeps the organs in place.
- ✓ The spleen hates dampness. It is very easily attacked by exterior damp (environmental, women easier to get dampness than men), This causes abdominal bloating and digestion, heaviness, the tongue gets a thicker coat. The pulse is slippery. Dampness can combine with heat or cold.

Things that hurt the spleen

- ✓ A lot of mental and emotional disturbances.
 - ✓ Too much thinking weakens the spleen
 - ✓ Worry
- ✓ Diet
 - ✓ Irregularities – not eating at regular times, skipping meals, too many different foods, eating too late at night, excess consumption, etc...
 - ✓ Chronic Gastritis, gall bladder disease, nutritional disturbances (food allergies (milk, etc.), bulimia, anorexia
 - ✓ Warm and dry foods are liked by the spleen. (meat, ginger, pepper, etc) not cold foods (salads, fruits, icy drinks, excess dairy, etc.)
 - ✓ Eating a lot of refined foods.
 - ✓ Not eating enough protein.
- ✓ Any chronic disease.
- ✓ Environment

Spleen Qi Deficiency

Poor digestion and poor assimilation.

General signs of Qi deficiency

- x Loose stools
- x Pale (lusterless not full of vim and vigor)
- x Exhaustion – they lack energy in the muscles. Lassitude of spirit
- x Shortness of breath
- x Weak voice
- x Spontaneous Sweat

Spleen qi deficiency implies blood deficiency as well:

- x Dull, weathered complexion
- x Dizziness – light-headed
- x Insomnia (shen doesn't have enough blood to nourish it)
- x numbness in arms and legs
- x Palpitations (not enough blood to anchor the heartbeat)
- x dry skin, hair, and brittle nails

Spleen Specific

- x Discomfort or dull pain in the abdomen (after eating)
- x Bloating
- x Distention
- x (exhaustion at the limbs/muscles)
- x (loose stools)
- x (dampness in the body if the spleen isn't transforming the fluids – dampness obstructs – you feel heavy). Spleen qi deficiency leads to dampness and signs of dampness.
- x Tongue – No heat or cold signs, it's a pale tongue (especially with the blood deficiency). It can also be normal. It can be swollen.
- x Pulse is deficient. It's weak and soggy – a soggy boggy pulse.
- x The stomach can be effected as well (Fu-Zang association) This leads to ingestion problems.
 - x Loss of appetite, or the person is always hungry (clamoring stomach)
 - x Burping
 - x It feels as if the food just sits in the stomach after eating.

This is the most common spleen pattern and is fairly common.

Nothing is being distributed or upheld. The person feels kind of weak.

If this goes on, dampness starts to accumulate. Dampness obstructs qi.

Once dampness finds home in the body, it's hard to get rid of.

This can be the beginning of a prolapse condition. The spleen gets so weak it fails to keep the organs in place. (spleen qi fall – is a very serious spleen qi deficiency.)

Ways you can hurt your spleen

Everything above.

Treatment principle

Tonify the spleen. (back shu points and st36, sp6, st25 – good for diarrhea, cv12)

Spleen Yang Deficiency (devitalization of spleen yang)

General Yang Deficiency (Deficiency Cold)

This can be just like spleen qi deficiency with added signs of cold.

- x weakness, tiredness,
- x **exhaustion @ limbs (a deeper problem)**
- x **Signs of cold**
 - x arms and legs are cold
 - x edema
- x **bloating**, (feels better w/ warmth and pressure)
- x **lack of appetite**
- x **loose stools (undigested food** in them – a cold diarrhea)
- x problems with ingestion
- x pulse – deep and weak as well as slow (because of the “cold”)
- x Tongue – pale and wet/swollen

Causes

- x As spleen qi deficiency
- x This is more of a chronic type of problem
- x If you have been exposed to a cold and damp environment.
- x The spleen is damaged to the point where it loses its heating power.

Treatment Principle

- x Tonify the spleen and warm the spleen. Use the same points, but with moxa.

Spleen Qi Sinking (falling or collapse)

Not only is the qi deficient, it's falling out. This is a step worse than the spleen qi deficiency. It's not strong enough to hold the organs and place.

Symptoms:

- x Same as spleen qi deficiency
- x The patient feels a down bearing feeling in the abdomen. (Especially after they eat)
- x Enduring diarrhea
- x prolapse of the anus (external hemorrhoids), uterus, stomach (gastroptosis), urination can leak out (urgency and frequency), varicose veins
- x Tongue is pale and perhaps enlarged
- x Pulse is deficient and weak (soggy/empty)
- x Key symptoms are the bearing down sensation and the weak pulse.

Causes:

- x As per spleen qi deficiency

Treatment principle

- x Tonify the spleen qi, raise the qi (du 20)
- x Use the same points and add moxa

Spleen not Controlling Blood (Blood management failure)

One of the functions of the spleen is to keep the blood in the vessels. When the qi is deficient, bleeding occurs where it shouldn't be. This might manifest as bruising (a tendency to bruise) or blood in the stools or urine. In women this could mean excessive menstrual bleeding (5-7 days and spotting between periods).

Remember that this is a deficiency problem. (It's not like blood heat.)

The blood could be pale and watery blood. (no clots, blood isn't right red)

- x Pulse will be weak
- x pale tongue

- x There's a general qi and blood deficiency
- x They will look pale (not hot)
- x All the signs of spleen qi deficiency (bloating, loose stools, weak, fatigued, poor appetite, dizzy, palpitations, sallow complexion, shortness of breath, etc) Look for deficiency rather than heat problems.
- x This is almost a prolapse of the blood.
- x Bruising or easy to bruise.
- x Nose bleeds
- x blood in the urine or stools

Causes:

- x As per spleen qi deficiency

Treatment Principle

- x Tonify the spleen (sp1 will help menstrual bleeding – needle or moxa ;-P, other points as well)

Diet:

Warming foods or at least neutral

- x complex carbohydrates
 - x well cooked rice (congee)
 - x sweet rice
 - x spelt (doesn't need organic/fertilizer/pesticides)
 - x oats
- x some animal products
 - x added to congee or soups
 - x beef or beef liver
 - x chicken
 - x lamb
 - x turkey
 - x butter – only dairy product that should be eaten for spleen problems
 - x tuna, mackerel, halibut, anchovies
- x pungent

- x ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, fennel, garlic
- x high carb vegetables
 - x squash
 - x parsnips
 - x black beans
 - x potatoes/sweet potatoes
- x neutral foods
 - x carrots
 - x garbanzo beans
 - x turnips
 - x pumpkin
 - x yams
 - x rutabaga
- x all foods should be well cooked and chewed well.
- x In frequent small amounts, not a lot of rich foods
- x small amounts of nuts & seeds
- x If spleen yang deficiency
 - x perhaps not sweet rice.
 - x Add more warming herbs and spices
 - x dried ginger

Foods to avoid

- x raw vegetables
- x fruit (especially citrus)
- x sprouts (cereal grasses)
- x tomatoes, spinach, chard,
- x millet
- x seaweeds
- x salt
- x excessive eating of really sweet foods
- x liquids
- x vinegar
- x dairy products