

# Chinese Pathology

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## **Heart**

The heart governs the blood.

The lungs, spleen, and liver also have major roles in blood movement.

You need a strong heart qi, sufficient blood, and healthy vessels for the blood to follow for a person to be healthy and strong. After you are born, it is your heart that is in charge of keeping you healthy. It maintains the constitution of your body after you are born.

A long crack in the middle of the tongue extending all the way to the tip (where the heart is)

Pulse: left hand, just under the thumb. If this is weak it will show a heart problem.

The heart governs the blood vessels. If all is well the pulse is full and regular. If the HT qi is weak, the pulse will be irregular.

This will all show up in the complexion (five phase association). They will be healthy and rosy. If the heart is weak, they may have a bluish tinge (qi deficiency) or red (too much heat in the heart).

The heart also governs the mind. The residence of the shen.

The heart is also related to joy. When there is too much joy (excitement) it can cause disease and injure the heart. This makes the qi deficient. Sadness can also cause damage to the heart (although it's related to the lung, 5-phase says that the lung takes energy away from the heart, damaging the heart qi. You can palpate this and both upper jiao pulses will be weak HT & LU) Anger/Resentment/Frustration can also affect the heart. These emotions can cause liver fire (liver yang ascends) and can go into the heart and cause heart fire (liver is mother of the heart). (Angina comes from the Latin for anger.) You see this in the tongue. The sides of the tongue are red, maybe even built up and purplish as well. (Stagnant energy will turn the tongue purple.)

Heart Patterns include:

- Heart Qi Deficiency
- Heart Yang Deficiency
- Heart Blood Deficiency
- Heart Yin Deficiency
- Heart Fire

All heart patterns have changes in heart rate as a symptom. A person can be regularly or irregularly irregular. Those who are regularly irregular are worse. Palpitations (tachycardia – fast heart beat) (bradycardia – slow heart beat) are also indicative of heart problems.

## ***Heart Qi Deficiency***

### **Symptoms**

**Palpitations** – person will feel like their heart races. It may beat regularly and feels as if it “knots up”. It may feel like it's “pounding”.

General qi deficiency signs:

- shortness of breath
- Lack strength with exertion
- Spontaneous sweat

unhealthy complexion (pale)

Tiredness/listlessness

pain in the area of the heart

Tongue – pale, it could be normal looking tongue depending on how chronic.

Pulse – weak , deficient, empty pulse. It could be an interrupted pulse Either regular or irregular. Or, it could be very slow. (not just an athlete in good condition.)

## Causes

Blood loss (accident, excessive menstruation, chronic problem, strict diet w/o enough protein or whatever)

Emotional problems (especially sadness, or over stimulation

## Treatment

Tonify the heart qi.

HT7 is an all purpose point for excess or deficiency problems with the heart.

PC6 this is also good – research also shows that this can adjust the heart rate. It's a good heart regulator. You can simply massage this. It tonifies and regulates the heart. Especially if the cause is sadness.

## *Heart Yang Deficiency*

This is a severe problem. It is everything with Qi Deficiency but added cold. About 70% of all heart attacks are associated with this condition. This is saying that the heart is getting cold and stuck. The blood is getting frozen as well. Not only is the emperor sick, but the heart yang is the deepest yang of the body. The Shao yin is the deep energy of the body. It is a very serious problem.

## Symptoms

The signs are the same as heart qi deficiency

palpitations – more during the day.

shortness of breath (with exertion)

tired/listless

spontaneous sweat

stuffy in the chest/pain especially on the left side of body.

They have an “impending sense of doom” Men and women experience HT attacks differently. For women, it's not just pain on the left. They can have more diffuse symptoms (a neck ache for example). (Don't minimize other people's pain!)

They feel cold, they look cold.

Bright pale face. There's no red/heat at all. It can also be bluish or blue-green.

Cold limbs – especially with the hands. (Inversion frigidity of the limbs – withdraw of the qi to the inside of the body. It's like qi shock.)

Tongue is cold – it's pale and wet. Swollen is possible to. It's a drippy wet tongue.

Pulse – weak and deep. It's can be described as a knotted pulse. Like a piece of string with knots in it passing under your finger. It's frozen and cold, the pulse clumps up.

## Causes

Same as heart qi deficiency.

Constitutional weakness

Blood loss

Poor diet (like Karen Carpenter or Terry Schiavo.)

Emotional problems (especially sadness)

Turbid phlegm obstructing the heart.

Blood stasis

Chronic deficiency of the kidney yang. (See five phase) Kidney yang is the pilot light for the whole body. (There can be an accumulation of water here too – the body is overflowing with water). You see problems with edema. Congestive heart failure. (More pronounced is the kidney – yang deficiency.)

## Treatment

### *Heart Blood Deficiency*

### Symptoms

General blood deficiency symptoms. Plus if the blood is deficient, the heart suffers. The mind is deprived of it's residence.

Pale dull complexion

dizziness

pale tongue – kind of thin. Could have dry coating. The tongue is the “sprout of the heart”

Pulse – choppy. There's not enough blood to make it full and smooth. It's like running out of gas in your car. Also described as fine or thin.

Palpitations – blood is the mother of qi, without enough heart blood, it can't be a good mother to the heart qi. Occur more in the evening – even when they. Or only when they are resting. Also, the person feels a little anxious.

Insomnia – trouble falling asleep, but once they are asleep, they can stay asleep.

dream disturbed sleep (vivid and busy dreams)

poor memory

anxiety

person tends to startle easily.

Pale lips

some emotional disturbance (shen is being nourished properly.)

## **Causes**

Anxiety of a long period of time.

Poor diet of an extending period of time.

Any blood loss (surgery, women post-natal depression, excessive menstruation, accidents, etc...)

## **Treatment**

Tonify the blood and heart, pacify the mind.

Pacify the mind (PC 6, HT 7), and building blood (diet and acupuncture – SP6 (this is also calming as well))

## ***Heart Yin Deficiency***

### **Symptoms**

Similar to blood deficiency but with heat signs.

Insomnia – generally trouble both falling asleep and staying asleep. They wake up a lot during the night. (Normal is once and getting up to “pee”) They can't get back to sleep.

Dream disturbed sleep

startle easily

poor memory

anxiety

Night sweats

**Palpitations**

lack of yin signs as well (deficiency heat)

running hot as well.

**Mental restlessness** – the fidgets – it's a deficient heat. “The heart feels vexed”. They have a feeling that something is wrong.

**The mallor flush**

Feelings of heat in the afternoon and evening.

Night sweats

dry mouth/dry throat

five-heart heat/five-palm heat (Wo Xin Re)

**Red tongue with thin or no coat – mirror tongue.** Maybe just the tip of the tongue's coat is peeled away.

Pulse – thin/thready pulse. It's heat so it is rapid. There's nothing filling up the vessel. You'll often feel a deficient kidney pulse.

## **Causes**

Kidney yin deficiency. (Ko cycle) – this is a deep down problem in the body. The water is so deficient, it can control the heart's fire.

Long standing anxiety (worry is associated with the spleen and stomach. The Heat is the mother of the spleen.

Too busy of a life. Never taking the time to stop of smell the roses.

Emotional or mental anguish. The mind gets disturbed. (Vicious cycle here)

## **Treatment**

Nourish the heart and kidney yin.

HT7, PC6, KD3 – nourish the yin for the whole body, KD 2 the ying spring point is also strong for taking heat out.)

This doesn't respond real fast. Add diet and herbs to the treatment plan.

## ***Heart Fire (Upflaming of heart fire)***

### **Symptoms**

#### ***Breakdown of cardio-renal interaction***

The heart needs the kidney water, and the kidney pilot light needs the heart heat.

A yin deficiency gone bad.

Palpitations

Mental restlessness

Insomnia

Poor memory

Dizziness (brain is dried out...)

Tinnitus (ringing in the ears, or deafness)

**sore low back pain (knee pain)**

plus yin deficiency heat signs

upbearng fire flush

afternoon/evening heat  
dry mouth. Throat  
mirror tongue more than just a thin coat.  
Rapid thin pulse

### ***Excess heat***

This is a true excess heat problem. Full heat in the heart.

Palpitations

insomnia – they wake up lots and lots. They can have nightmares. Real scary dreams.

mental restlessness (can be cause of problem as well – vicious cycle)

Feels agitated (manic behavior is too much fire w/ shen) or impulsive

Excess heat in the heart disturbs the mind.

They are hotter. They feel hot, they look hot.

Tongue looks hotter. It's red, especially in the tip. There can be cracks on the tongue. The cracks can be everywhere on the tongue. Like the mud puddle that's been baking in the sun. The tastebuds can stick out from the tongue and can be red (Chinese call them “thorns” or “prickles”). Like the seeds on a strawberry. It can cause cores or ulcers on the tongue or in the mouth. (it's a painful sore)

They are thirsty – they want to drink.

Bitter taste in the mouth

Red face – not just a deficiency red, it's the while face.

### ***Heart Fire and Small Intestine***

Bladder infection. Remember that both the small intestine and bladder are tai yang. The heart fire has gone into the tai yang. It's damp heat in the bladder. This can also be prostate problems in men as well.

Tongue is red and the tip is redder. Yellow coat.

Pulse is rapid and full. The heart pulse will feel stonger than the other pulses.

### ***Heart - Liver fire effulgence***

eyes are red

headaches (liver yang tends to shoot up to the top of the head)

palpitations

insomnia

mental restlessness – agitation

Impulsive behavior, irascibility

## **Causes**

### ***Breakdown of cardio-renal interaction***

Yin deficiency over time.

### ***Excess***

Heat is generated in the liver and can become stagnant over time.

Anger/frustration causes qi stagnation.

Emotional problems. Always depressed.

Sad/repressed emotions.

### ***Heart fire spreading to the small intestine***

Heart-liver fire effulgence

diet (too much meat, fried foods, alcohol)

## **Treatment**

Breakdown of cardio-renal interaction.

Nourish kidney and heart yin, clear the empty heat.

KD2&3, HT7

Excessive

Clear the heart heat and pacify the mind.

Heart Liver Fire

Sedate the liver, clear the heat, and pacify the mind

## ***Cardiac Bi***

Heart Bi or heart impediment. Bi = painful blockage. So Cardiac Bi is painful blockages of the heart. A heart attack. Angina pectoris, a myocardial infarction (MI)

## **Symptoms**

Palpitations

**pain the heart area – radiating into the left arm, shoulder, and jaw**

Blood stagnation can be a stabbing/prickly fixed pain.

Nauseated

This is the only one with “pain”

Angina can be brought on by wind, cold, exertion, etc...

Chest feels stuffy and pressure in the chest

Cold arms, hands and legs

Blueness/Purple in the complexion, lips and nails

Tongue is purple or bluish purple or reddish purple.

Pulse is fine/faint or even as if it is going to stop. Perhaps knotted. It's slow and may stop and regular basis.

### **Causes**

“Caused by stoppage in the vessels”.

Heart Yang deficiency. - It's so cold the blood stagnates in the chest.

Heart Blood deficiency – there's too little blood so it's not flowing properly. It becomes stagnate.

Heart Fire Blazing – The fire cooks down the blood making it thick and sticky.

Phlegm – this is more modern Chinese.

### **Treatment**

Dial – 911

Regulate the blood, warm the heart, remove the stasis, clear the heat, resolve phlegm, whatever.

PC 6 (massage the entire HT channel)

Moxa if it's heart yang. (non-paroxysmal perhaps) at CV 17 or down the HT/PC channel DU 4 or CV 4 as well.