

Chapter 4

Pattern diagnosis

Chinese medicine recognizes and defines individual diseases within a coherent and consistent system, but one that is different from that of conventional Western medicine. In the Chinese energy system, the presenting symptom such as cough, diarrhea or agitation is a manifestation of a change that has affected the qi and can only be analyzed by reference to an overall pattern or syndrome and to the workings of the pathological process producing it. The classical adage of Chinese medicine whereby the same treatment is used for different diseases, and different treatment for the same diseases also holds true for pediatric treatment (*yi bing tong zhi, tong bing yi zhi* 异病同治, 同病异治).

To make a diagnosis, the disease must be understood; in other words, it needs to be studied in each individual case exactly how the qi system has been modified. Without following this procedure, it is not possible to work out the treatment principles and elaborate a treatment strategy. In order to determine a framework for the disease and the patient, we must cultivate a keen clinical vision, based on carefully collecting data from the four examinations, correctly assessing the relative importance of the different symptoms and signs and finding out how to link everything together.

In Chinese medicine, diagnosis in a pediatric clinic is usually more straightforward than in an adult clinic, since there has not been enough time (with its succession of changes in qi and the ensuing aggregation of pathologies) for confusing patterns to be produced.

Consequently, the discussion in the following pages covers the basic pathological patterns that Chinese medicine practitioners in the West are most likely to encounter in children. These are conditions which can be treated effectively by acupuncture, tuina and various auxiliary treatment methods.¹ The core syndromes, as manifestations of a particular modification of qi (deficiency, heat, phlegm, and so on), are a general collection of symptoms and signs allowing causes, pathological processes and potential developments

¹ The elements of pattern identification and diagnosis presented here are based on contemporary Chinese texts, but also take account of ideas arising out of modern clinical practice, in particular those of Julian Scott, and have been formulated according to personal clinical experience. Please also see the first part of chapter 11 for a discussion of the diagnostic process and the meaning of terms used to describe different patterns.

to be recognized. They therefore offer us a tool to help in interpreting the presenting symptoms in a child and hence provide a starting point for our involvement.

These clinical patterns allow us to recognize the particular pathological processes involved and also (possibly) to determine where they originated and to postulate how they might progress. Each modification to qi is therefore considered dynamically, taking account of its evolution over time. Pathological conditions are processes, representing continual states of transformation, and it is important to understand their causes, connections and potential changes.

The main patterns discussed in this chapter offer a framework that can also support the assessment of more obscure or complicated clinical presentations, a structure that can be referred to when organizing more complex data and trying to find one's bearings in less frequently seen conditions.

It should be borne in mind that this discussion cannot provide a completely exhaustive description of syndromes and nor on the other hand do conditions seen in the clinic always correspond exactly to the symptoms and signs detailed. The symptoms described should therefore be seen as guides and should be considered in relation to the specific characteristics of the individual child. In particular, many manifestations vary depending on age.

Treatment strategies are related to pattern diagnosis via the definition of treatment principles, noted at the end of each pattern, and are discussed in chapter 8.

Notes

- The syndrome pattern has to be assessed in relation to the history of the child involved – the occurrence of a poor appetite has a different meaning in a child who normally has a ravenous appetite than in one who is fussy about food; an outburst of anger has a different origin in children with accumulation of phlegm-heat as opposed to those in whom qi tends to be insufficient.
- If we come up with a complicated diagnosis, it is worthwhile reconsidering our analysis of the symptoms and signs to see if we can find a simpler interpretation. We should bear in mind that secondary symptoms generally disappear gradually as the principal imbalance resolves.
- It is only natural to have doubts and hesitations, but we should not get disheartened. It is important always to be on the alert so that we can quickly implement any modifications to treatment and correct any errors.
- Since any particular symptom or disease (such as cough, susceptibility to infections of the respiratory tract, constipation, atopic eczema, disturbed sleep, or difficulty in sustaining attention) can be a manifestation of different patterns, each time a child attends for a consultation we need to understand the fundamentals:
 - Whether the patient presents with a deficiency pattern such as deficiency of Spleen qi or possibly Lung qi or Kidney qi, or with an excess pattern such as food accumulation (*shi ji* 食积), heat, external pathogens, or phlegm.

- What the reasons are for any possible instability of the *shen* 神 – for example, if it is disturbed by heat or does not receive sufficient nutrition or is clouded or obstructed by phlegm.
- What is causing the imbalance – for example, if phlegm or catarrh is thick, why the Spleen’s transformation function is insufficient; or why there is food accumulation (*shi ji*), which in turn can result from a variety of dietary irregularities.
- When lingering, deep-lying pathogenic factors are present (such as hard phlegm or latent heat).

Insufficiency of Spleen qi

- The Spleen and Stomach are essential for the process of digestion. Located in the middle *jiao* 焦, they form the root of Later Heaven qi. The Stomach receives food and drink and starts off the process of fermentation, while the Spleen extracts the essence of food and produces food qi (*gu qi* 谷气). The qi extracted from food is utilized to generate qi and blood, goes to nourish every organ and tissue and is transported to the four limbs. If Spleen qi is not transformed sufficiently, generalized qi deficiency can occur (the child grows slowly, falls ill easily, is frequently tired and listless, and demands constant attention).
- Spleen qi deficiency is particularly damaging to the digestive system, causing diarrhea or loose stools or poor absorption, and promotes the accumulation of dampness, which readily transforms into phlegm, causing bronchial catarrh or mucus in the stools.
- If qi in the middle *jiao* is weak, the child is more likely to be susceptible to problems caused by dietary irregularities such as eating too much or too little, eating “toxic” foods or eating too many foods that produce cold, heat or dampness.
- Weakness of Spleen qi impairs the Spleen’s transformation and transportation function and makes it easier for food to accumulate.
- Since Earlier Heaven qi and Later Heaven qi are closely related, persistent deficiency in Spleen qi can easily lead to Kidney qi deficiency and therefore to *jing* 精 deficiency.
- Although blood deficiency is seen much less commonly, it is usually a differential diagnosis for a Spleen qi deficiency pattern.
- Julian Scott describes a pattern of Spleen qi deficiency with hyperactivity. This occurs in children who ostensibly are an excess (*shi* 实) type because they never stand still, do not sleep much and are always restless, but at the same time they do not eat much and are pale and thin; in other words, this is actually a deficiency (*xu* 虚) pattern. This pattern is also characterized by the fact that the parents are not able to exercise their authority over their child, who easily manipulates them; they are therefore unable to contain the child within proper limits.
- The dynamics of this pattern are similar to those that normally occur when a child is ill and there are problems with its qi, which therefore draws on the parents’ qi. However,

in this case the trend is pathological, because the child always shirks the work of producing its own qi in order to use the qi of its parents or other adults responsible for looking after it. Increasingly, the child tends to repeat this mechanism outside the family environment, leading to serious problems.

Main symptoms and signs

- Poor appetite, reluctance to eat, no curiosity about food, always wanting to eat the same things.
- Slim build with slender bones, skinny legs and a weak chest, or growing too slowly.
- Pale dull complexion, little tone in the skin and muscles.
- Gaze not really focused.
- Tendency to tire easily and fall ill frequently (with colds, cough, catarrh, earache).
- Emotional fragility, always requiring attention, almost entirely dependent or tendency to whine.
- Frequent diarrhea or loose stools.
- Usually pale tongue.

If the Spleen qi insufficiency results in accumulation of dampness:

- the skin is moister, the muscles weaker, the stools looser, and the tongue more swollen.

If the Intestines are damaged due to insufficiency of the transformation and transportation function, manifestations include:

- constipation and difficult evacuation.

If cold is present, manifestations include:

- nausea or vomiting alleviated by heat, abdominal pain, loose stools, and a white tongue coating.

In cases complicated by ascending counterflow (*ni*) of Stomach qi, manifestations include:

- regurgitation, vomiting and nausea.

Treatment principle

Supplement Spleen qi (and if necessary, transform dampness, supplement Intestinal qi, eliminate cold, or regulate qi).

Notes

If deficiency of *gu qi* does not allow Lung qi and defensive qi (*wei qi*) to form correctly, with manifestations such as

- cough, catarrh, asthma, or susceptibility to respiratory illnesses

see the sections on “Insufficiency of Lung qi” and “Invasion of external pathogens” for more information.

If the transformation function of Spleen qi is insufficient and allows dampness and phlegm to accumulate, with manifestations such as

- nausea, digestive problems, abdominal distention, mucus in the stools, or bronchial catarrh

see the section on “Congealing of phlegm” for more information.

If the qi deficiency threatens to involve Kidney qi, with manifestations such as

- nocturnal enuresis, urinary tract infections or delayed growth

see the section on “Insufficiency of Kidney qi or *jing*” for more information.

If Later Heaven qi is insufficient and the *shen* is not consolidated, with manifestations such as

- disturbed sleep, emotional instability, difficulty in sustaining attention, or restlessness

see the section on “Instability and clouding of the *shen*” for more information.

Insufficiency of Lung qi

- The Lung has the function of diffusing and descending qi. If this function is inhibited, qi may be constrained (*yu* 郁) or counterflow (*ni* 逆) upward, with manifestations such as chest oppression, breathing difficulties, cough, or asthma.
- If insufficient defensive qi (*wei qi* 卫气) is produced, it is easier for external pathogenic factors to penetrate into the interior, for example causing infections of the respiratory tract. If right qi (*zhen qi* 正气) cannot manage to eliminate these pathogens, they will remain in the Lung to obstruct its functions of diffusing and descending qi and body fluids. This allows phlegm to form that in turn obstructs the movement of qi, weakens the Lung further and binds into hard hidden lingering phlegm, leading for example to recurrent respiratory diseases.
- Shortage of Lung qi can also disturb regulation of the water passages, leading to edema or urinary system disorders.
- Impairment of the Lung’s function of extracting qi from the air may manifest with problems in making use of this qi such as allergies, intolerances and hypersensitivity.
- Latent internal heat arising from diseases that have not been completely resolved can consume yin and cause the Lung to become dry, manifesting for example as a dry irritating cough.
- True qi (*zhen qi* 真气) also originates in the Lung and is diffused through the channels and organs and throughout the body. If *zhen qi* is insufficient, the functions of all the *zangfu* 脏腑 organs will be impaired, resulting in various deficiency pathologies.

Main symptoms and signs

- Cough, catarrh or asthma.
- Frequent occurrence of respiratory tract disorders (recurrent colds, sore throat, cough, or earache).

- When running or on exertion, a tendency to tire or sweat easily or to become breathless.
- Pallor, likelihood of sweating on the head at night.
- Usually pale tongue (but red if heat and insufficiency of *yin qi* 阴气 predominate).

Treatment principle

Supplement Lung qi.

Notes

If the diffusing function of Lung qi is insufficient and allows phlegm to congeal, with manifestations such as

- the presence of varying quantities of phlegm, enlarged lymph nodes and granular areas on the skin

see the section on “Congealing of phlegm” for more information.

If deficiency of *wei qi* has allowed an acute pattern of wind-cold or wind-heat to establish itself, with manifestations such as

- colds, fever, sore throat, or earache

see the section on “Invasion of external pathogens” for more information.

If insufficiency of Lung qi is accompanied by insufficiency of middle *jiao* qi, with manifestations such as

- lack of appetite, tiring easily and emotional fragility

see the section on “Insufficiency of Spleen qi” for more information.

If the root of the Lung qi deficiency is to be found in insufficiency of Kidney qi and *jing*, with manifestations such as

- physical and mental frailty, nocturnal enuresis, delayed growth, and chronic pathologies or pathologies associated with a family history

see the section on “Insufficiency of Kidney qi or *jing*” for more information.

Insufficiency of Kidney qi or *jing*

- The Kidney is the root of yin and yang, stores the *jing* and provides the foundation for nourishment of all the body’s functions and transformation processes. If Kidney qi and *jing* are insufficient, the child will lack strength and vitality, as for example in congenital, chronic and degenerative diseases.
- The Kidney stores Earlier Heaven *jing*, the inherited essence which originates before birth, and Later Heaven *jing*, which is derived from the continual transformation of air and food. If original *jing* is weak, it is also important to reinforce the middle *jiao* and

to make sure that qi is not expended unnecessarily, being particularly careful to ensure that the child has enough rest and follows a proper diet.

- In young children, Kidney qi deficiency is likely to affect the functions of opening and closing the lower orifices, leading to nocturnal enuresis.

Main symptoms and signs

- Frail appearance, pale complexion with a blackish hue beneath the eyes.
- Tendency to tire easily and need lots of rest.
- Weak and thin body, slow growth, or obvious delay in physical and mental development.
- Susceptibility to diseases associated with a family history or having a congenital or hereditary pathology.
- Nocturnal enuresis or frequent urination, clear urine, or urinary or fecal incontinence.
- Low resistance to physical or mental exertion, manifesting as shortness of breath, sweating, fatigue, and emotional fragility.
- Fearfulness, tendency to cry easily, always clinging to the mother.
- Waking up scared at night.
- Usually pale tongue (red in cases of Kidney yin deficiency).

Treatment principle

Supplement the Kidney and *jing*.

Notes

In order to support *jing*, it is essential that Later Heaven qi is also supplemented; see the section on “Insufficiency of Spleen qi” for more information.

If the *shen* is disturbed because its *jing* root is weak, with manifestations such as

- restlessness, difficulty in sustaining attention or disturbed sleep

see the section on “Instability and clouding of the *shen*” for more information.

Food accumulation (*shi ji* 食积)

- Accumulation (*ji*) results from a prolonged “excess of food”. This is not the classic acute indigestion, but rather the accumulation of food that exceeds the transforming and transporting capacity of middle *jiao* qi (the *fu* 腑 organs are known as “empty” organs because they should fill and then empty).
- This condition frequently occurs in children who are enthusiastic about life, who want everything in this world and who are therefore also greedy for food. As Julian Scott explains: “When babies with an excess-type (*shi*) constitution come into the world, they say: ‘It’s great, I want it all!’”

- Overeating or feeding disorders may sometimes no longer be present, but can be traced back to the first few months of life, particularly where the baby was fed too frequently.
- It is essential to correct feeding habits in order to protect the Spleen and to allow the Stomach (a *fu* organ) to empty; attention has to be paid to the frequency of feeding, to foods that are difficult to digest or to “toxic” foods taken as snacks.
- Obstruction of the movement of qi tends to facilitate the development of heat and the formation of phlegm, makes it easier for external pathogens to enter, increases the consumption of qi, and alters the stability of the *shen*.
- The basic pattern in itself is not particularly serious, but in our modern-day society it often lies at the core of the “hundred diseases” (cough, catarrh, earache, asthma; infantile colic, constipation, diarrhea; atopic eczema; problems in emotional and behavioral responses; epilepsy). Treatment is very effective and prevents the subsequent development of a succession of disorders and pathologies.
- Food accumulation (*shi ji*) in young children is similar in some respects to qi stagnation in adults, but the dynamics are opposite when the emotion of anger is involved. In children, food accumulation obstructs the movement of Liver qi, leading to anger (with sudden outbursts of fury, irritability or stubborn petulance), whereas it is the reverse in adults where rage and frustration damage the Liver and constrain (*yu*) qi, consequently leading to a pattern of Liver qi stagnation.

Main symptoms and signs

- Red cheeks or red spots on the face, sometimes with a greenish tinge around the lips.
- Ravenous appetite or inappropriate diet.
- Swollen and tense abdomen, with pain (infantile colic), belching, regurgitation, or vomiting.
- Thick yellowish or greenish nasal mucus and catarrh.
- Difficult evacuation or irregular bowel function with greenish, foul-smelling stools.
- Sour, acrid smell of breath, sweat, stools, and vomit.
- Cradle cap, eczema or other skin conditions.
- Night awakenings, restlessness during the day, fighting obstinately against everything, readily flying into a rage.
- Yellow tongue coating that may be thick or thin.

Treatment principle

Free food accumulation (*shi ji*).

Notes

If food accumulation (*shi ji*) transforms into heat, with manifestations such as

- constipation or hard stools, rashes, thirst, agitated behavior or disturbed sleep, and a red tongue or a red tongue tip

see the section on “Internal heat” for more information.

In cases with accumulation of phlegm, with manifestations such as

- bronchial catarrh, mucus in the stools, enlarged lymph nodes, and slow responses or blurring out responses too quickly

see the section on “Congealing of phlegm” for more information.

If the *shen* is agitated by heat or clouded by phlegm that obstructs the movement of qi (heat and phlegm tend to be produced when there is food accumulation), with manifestations such as

- agitation, difficulty in sleeping, and violent and infuriated reactions

see the section on “Instability and clouding of the *shen*” for more information.

If food accumulation is due to impairment of the transformation and transportation function or if it persists and consumes Spleen qi, with manifestations such as

- easily getting tired physically and emotionally and changes to digestion or bowel function

see the section on “Insufficiency of Spleen qi” for more information.

Internal heat

- Heat tends to develop easily in young children, who are yang in nature.
- Internal heat may be present at birth due to fetal toxins (*tai du* 胎毒).
- In babies and infants, heat is frequently generated by food accumulation (*shi ji*), which needs to be resolved so that the heat can be eliminated.
- Excess heat may be due to an invasion of external pathogens, which rapidly enter the interior to reach nutritive qi (*ying qi* 营气) and blood, manifesting as skin rashes, high fever, delirium, and loss of consciousness.
- Excess fire readily transforms into internal wind, manifesting as febrile convulsions.
- Excess heat should be differentiated from deficiency heat, which is very rare in infants (it generally occurs in a chronic disease that has consumed qi and yin).
- In young children, heat frequently attacks the Intestines and dries up the stools, leading to constipation, hard stools and painful evacuation.
- Fire can attack Lung-Metal, which is particularly susceptible to damage by dryness (causing a dry, irritating cough).
- Fire stirs and agitates the Heart, leading to disturbed sleep, restlessness, and inability to keep quiet and concentrate.
- In young children, it is easy to drain fire through the stools; it is both straightforward and essential to regulate the Intestines in pediatric treatment.

Main symptoms and signs

- Restlessness, agitation, difficulty in sustaining attention.
- Speaking rapidly and in a very loud voice, rushing about madly and impulsively.

- Restless sleep and throwing off the bedclothes, night awakenings or little sleep.
- Constipation or dry stools or difficult evacuation.
- Rashes.
- Dark urine.
- Thirst, a desire for cold food or drinks.
- Red tongue or red or pointed tongue tip.

Treatment principle

Eliminate heat.

Notes

If, as frequently occurs, heat is the result of food accumulation (*shi ji*), with manifestations such as

- a ravenous appetite or dietary irregularities, greenish-yellow catarrh, a tense and painful abdomen, or greenish foul-smelling stools

see the section on “Food accumulation (*shi ji*)” for more information.

If heat is caused by the entry of external pathogens, with manifestations such as

- fever, sore throat, thick yellow catarrh, or damp-heat affecting the ears, eyes and nose

see the section on “Invasion of external pathogens” for more information.

If fire agitates the Heart to cause confusion, with manifestations such as

- disturbance of sleep, the emotions or behavior

see the section on “Instability and clouding of the *shen*” for more information.

Invasion of external pathogens

- External wind-cold can enter the body if *wei qi* is weak. This corresponds to a *taiyang* 太阳 pathology and manifests as a cold or an influenza-type syndrome.
- The Lung is most exposed to an attack by external pathogens, with the condition becoming chronic in patterns of damp-heat-phlegm (with cough and thick catarrh) or dryness-heat (with a dry, irritating cough).
- Wind-cold tends to transform into wind-heat in young children, who are yang in nature.
- Heat dries up body fluids and stools, agitates the *shen* and can rapidly enter deeply into the body and involve *ying qi* and blood, manifesting as rashes, high fever, delirium, and loss of consciousness.
- Damp-cold may result from external cold or from eating cold foods or foods that are cold in nature; it can accumulate in the interior in the middle *jiao*, manifesting as diarrhea and abdominal pain.
- Insufficiency of Spleen or Kidney qi makes it easier for cold to accumulate.

Main symptoms and signs

Wind-cold

- Nasal congestion with clear, watery mucus.
- Moderate fever, shivering, absence of sweating.
- Pale complexion, sensitivity to cold, little desire to move about.
- Tendency toward diarrhea with watery stools and abdominal pain.
- Profuse clear urine.
- White tongue coating.

Wind-heat

- Nasal congestion with thick, yellow mucus.
- High fever, thirst, profuse sweating.
- Sore red throat or earache.
- Tendency toward constipation, red eyes.
- Yellow tongue coating.

Treatment principle

Expel external pathogens.

Notes

If pathogens have entered the interior, with manifestations such as

- fever, constipation and agitation

see the section on “Internal heat” for more information.

If pathogens enter the Lung easily and phlegm accumulates, with manifestations such as

- recurrent respiratory infections and cough, catarrh or asthma

see the sections on “Insufficiency of Lung qi” and “Congealing of phlegm” for more information.

If a deficiency of Spleen or Kidney qi is at the root of recurrent attacks, with manifestations such as

- weakness, poor appetite, pallor, and physical frailty or emotional fragility

see the sections on “Insufficiency of Spleen qi” or “Insufficiency of Kidney qi or *jing*” for more information.

Congealing of phlegm

- Phlegm (*tan* 痰) denotes a pathological accumulation associated with obstruction of the movement of qi and a disturbance of the fluid metabolism. Phlegm is turbid, sticky and heavy, moves sluggishly, and is difficult to eliminate. There is a saying in Chinese medicine that “Phlegm is found in the hundred locations and causes the hundred diseases.”

- Phlegm may be substantial “having a form” (*you xing* 有形), manifesting as catarrh, lumps or cysts, or non-substantial “without a form” (*wu xing* 无形), clouding the orifices of the Heart and misting the *shen*.
- Phlegm can be relatively soft and near to the surface or relatively hard and hidden; for example, it can manifest in the Lung as obvious catarrh or as bronchospasm.
- Catarrh is common in young children (just think of the expression “snotty-nosed”). Phlegm forms readily both because the transformation and diffusion functions of Spleen and Lung qi have not yet reached full maturity and because of the likelihood of food accumulation (*sbi ji*) that obstructs the movement of qi.
- Phlegm may be associated with heat, manifesting as red cheeks and eyes, yellow-green catarrh, tense abdomen, foul-smelling stools, disturbed sleep, thirst, outbursts of anger, agitation, and red tongue and lips, or with cold, manifesting as pallor, white catarrh, poor appetite, likelihood of diarrhea, soft abdomen, tiring easily, controlled repressed fury, emotional withdrawal, and pale tongue and lips with a bluish tinge.
- If phlegm is located near the surface, in the main part of the respiratory tract, it is relatively straightforward to eliminate it. However, it is more difficult to locate and transform it once it has become harder and more hidden. This occurs when phlegm congeals in the Lung and obstructs its functions of diffusing qi and sending it downward, with the result that qi becomes used up and is less able to transform this phlegm, which continues to linger deeper in the body.
- We can be alerted to the existence of clandestine phlegm that “hides behind the curtain” by the fact that a child suffers from asthma or recurrent respiratory infections or has a chronic condition of enlarged lymph nodes. This is the “hard phlegm” referred to by Julian Scott when discussing lingering pathogenic factors and which he considers to be of major importance in a whole range of chronic pathologies, notably those related to the respiratory system.
- The repeated use of antibiotics and anti-inflammatories aggravates the situation since they are cold in nature (in order to eliminate heat), thereby damaging the Spleen and its function of transforming dampness, which therefore tends to accumulate and transform into phlegm.

Main symptoms and signs

- Frequent catarrh.
- Palpable lateral cervical and axillary lymph nodes even in the absence of infection.
- Areas of tiny, millet seed-sized spots in some areas of the skin (notably on the posterior surface of the arm or on the abdomen).
- Dull gaze, as if slightly veiled; eye movement sometimes lethargic and appearing “disconnected”.
- Episodes of sudden lack of energy or somnolence for no apparent reason.
- Wildly fluctuating emotional reactions, with a tendency to stubbornness and a negative attitude to everything.

- Greasy or slippery tongue coating – white in cases of phlegm-cold, yellow in cases of phlegm-heat.

If phlegm mainly attacks the Lung, manifestations include:

- chest oppression, recurrent cough, asthma, and earache
- white catarrh (in patterns of phlegm-cold) or thick yellow catarrh (in patterns of phlegm-heat).

If phlegm mainly attacks the skin and interstices (*cou li* 腠理), manifestations include:

- eczema and rough granular skin.

If phlegm mainly attacks the Spleen and Stomach, manifestations include:

- nausea, digestive problems, abdominal distention, and mucus in the stools.

If phlegm mainly attacks the orifices of the Heart, manifestations include:

- wildly fluctuating emotions, violent behavior, language disabilities, clouding of consciousness, delays in cognitive development, perception defects, impairment of motor coordination or spatial orientation, and slow responses or blurring out responses too quickly.

If phlegm mainly attacks Heart-blood and is accompanied by wind-fire, manifestations include:

- delirium, convulsions and loss of consciousness.

If phlegm mainly attacks upward, manifestations include:

- dizziness, headache, visual disturbances, and loss of balance.

If phlegm mainly attacks the channels and network vessels (*jing luo* 经络), manifestations include:

- arthralgia with joint deformity, numbness and cysts.

Treatment principle

Transform phlegm.

Notes

If phlegm attacks the respiratory system as a result of Lung qi weakness, with manifestations such as

- susceptibility to respiratory tract infections, cough, catarrh, and asthma

see the section on “Insufficiency of Lung qi” for more information.

If congealing of phlegm is facilitated by food accumulation (*shi ji*), with manifestations such as

- a ravenous appetite, red cheeks, rashes, a tense or painful abdomen, and greenish foul-smelling stools

see the section on “Food accumulation (*shi ji*)” for more information.

If phlegm is complicated by heat, with manifestations such as

- rashes, constipation, disturbed sleep, short temper, impetuous behavior, blurting out responses too quickly, difficulty in sustaining attention, and a red tongue with a yellow coating

see the section on “Internal heat” for more information.

If phlegm accumulates as a result of insufficiency of Spleen qi, which impairs its ability to transform dampness, with manifestations such as

- generalized weakness, pallor, diarrhea-like bowel function, mucus in the stools, and poor appetite

see the section on “Insufficiency of Spleen qi” for more information.

Instability and clouding of the *shen*

- The *shen* is the most refined form of qi and has its root in the *jing*. If qi is insufficient and *jing* unstable, the emotions – being movements of qi – become disorganized and damage the interior.
- The *shen* has its residence in the Heart and may be attacked by fire, which perturbs and confuses it. This occurs fairly easily in children, who are yang in nature and tend to generate heat.
- In the early stages of life, the heat that agitates the Heart and *shen* mainly originates from food accumulation (*shi ji*), from the presence of lingering pathogens or from fetal toxins (*tai du*).
- The accumulation of non-substantial (*wu xing*) phlegm can obstruct the orifices of the Heart and cloud the mind and the emotions.
- If Spleen qi is weak, it cannot correctly perform its function of sending clear qi upward, thereby affecting the *shen*.
- If the *shen* is deprived of a place to reside, it becomes unstable and wanders about restlessly when yin is weak relative to yang, as happens with Kidney and *jing* insufficiency.

Main symptoms and signs

- Depending on age, difficulty in getting to sleep, night awakenings, night crying, or problems sleeping during the day.
- Agitation, constant fidgeting, inability to keep the hands and feet still, anxious gaze.
- Impulsivity, talking and moving impetuously without thinking.
- Irritability and anger, with outbursts of fury.
- Easily distracted, difficulty in sustaining attention or following instructions, seeming not to listen, unfocused gaze.
- Anxiety, fearfulness, need for constant reassurance, vulnerability to emotional stimuli, apprehensive gaze.

- Difficulties with cognition, language and perception.
- Somatic problems, which have a major impact on the emotional state.
- Red tongue or red tip or margins, sometimes with a pointed tip (indicating fire), and a yellow and greasy (phlegm-heat) or white and greasy (phlegm-cold) coating; or a tongue that is pale (qi deficiency), swollen or with teeth marks (dampness), has indentations at the base (*jing* insufficiency), or is quivering, stiff or deviated (internal wind).

Treatment principle

Stabilize and clear the *shen*.

Notes

If the *shen* is agitated as a result of internal heat, with manifestations such as

- restlessness, impulsive movements, blurting out responses too quickly, agitated gaze, constipation, rashes, dark urine, thirst, and a red tongue or a red tongue tip

see the section on “Internal heat” and, if appropriate, on “Food accumulation (*shi ji*)” for more information.

If the *shen* is clouded by congealed phlegm, with manifestations such as

- a slightly veiled gaze, wide fluctuations in behavior and emotions, poor motor coordination, problems in development of the cognitive function, catarrh, palpable lymph nodes, granular skin, and a greasy tongue coating

see the section on “Accumulation of phlegm” and, if appropriate, on “Food accumulation (*shi ji*)” for more information.

If the restless *shen* results from a shortage of qi or *jing*, with manifestations such as

- fearfulness or anxiety, an appearance of dreaminess or the child’s mind seeming to have wandered off somewhere, emotional fragility, lack of independence or a tendency to whine, poor appetite, physical frailty, pale face and tongue, tiring easily, susceptibility to illness, nocturnal enuresis, congenital diseases, or delayed development

see the sections on “Insufficiency of Spleen qi” or “Insufficiency of Kidney qi or *jing*” for more information.

Figure 4.1 overleaf illustrates the interaction of the pathologies discussed and is accompanied by a summary explanation.

Interaction of pathologies

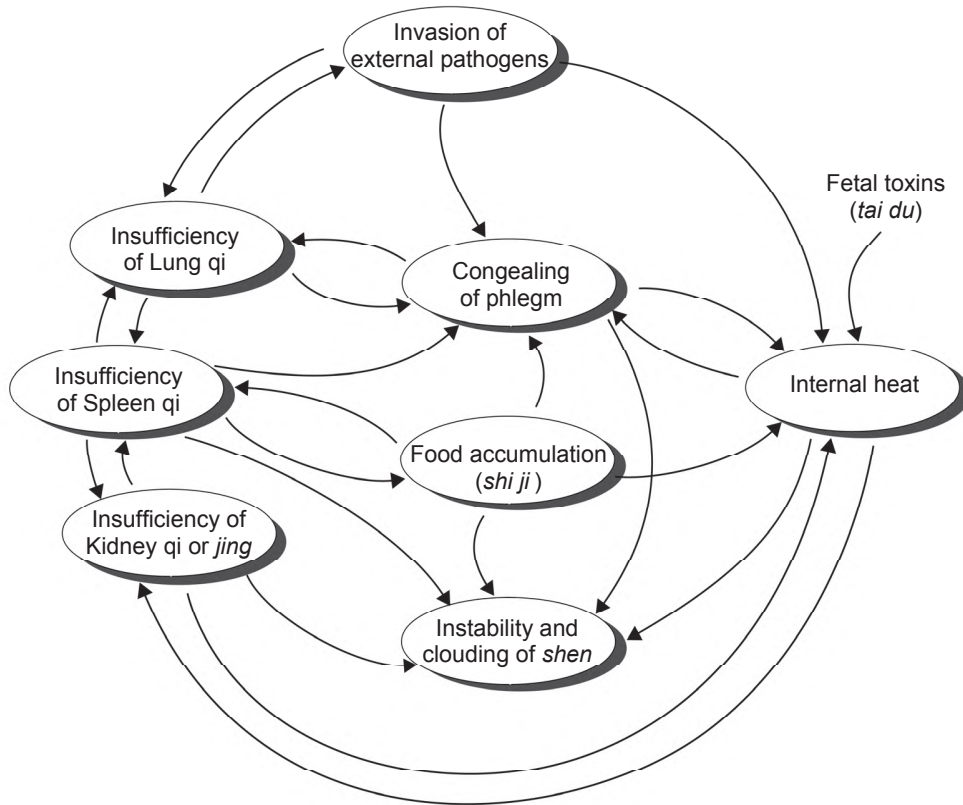


Figure 4.1

- Lack of maturity of qi
- Food accumulation (*shi ji*), less commonly,

can lead to

insufficiency of Spleen qi

that can

- fail to support Lung qi sufficiently, thereby allowing external pathogens to enter
- facilitate the congealing of phlegm and the lingering of pathogens
- fail to provide a stable foundation for the *shen*
- consume Kidney qi and *jing*.

- Lack of maturity of qi
- Congealing of phlegm
- Lingering of pathogens

can lead to

insufficiency of Lung qi

that can

- fail to support defensive qi (*wei qi*)
 - facilitate the further congealing of phlegm
 - consume Spleen and Kidney qi.
-

- Insufficiency of Earlier Heaven qi
- Spleen qi deficiency
- Heat or fire

can lead to

insufficiency of Kidney qi or jing

that can

- consume Spleen qi
 - make the *shen* unstable.
-

- Dietary habits that are totally inappropriate
- Insufficiency of Spleen qi, less commonly,

can lead to

food accumulation (shi ji)

that can

- generate heat
 - transform into phlegm
 - consume Spleen qi.
-

- Invasion of external pathogens
- Food accumulation (*shi ji*) and phlegm
- Fetal toxins (*tai du*)
- Insufficiency of Kidney qi and *jing*

can lead to

internal heat

that can

- dry up body fluids and cause phlegm to congeal
 - agitate the *shen*
 - consume Kidney-Water and *jing*.
-

- Insufficiency of Lung qi, frequently associated with phlegm, can facilitate the invasion and accumulation of

external pathogens

that can

- weaken Lung qi
 - facilitate the congealing of phlegm
 - transform into heat.
-

- Food accumulation (*shi ji*)
- Insufficiency of Lung qi
- Invasion of external pathogens
- Heat
- Insufficiency of Spleen (or Kidney) qi

can lead to

congealing of phlegm

that can

- obstruct the diffusion of Lung qi
 - foster an excess of heat
 - cloud the *shen*.
-

- Heat
- Food accumulation (*shi ji*)
- Phlegm
- Insufficiency of Spleen qi
- Insufficiency of Kidney qi and *jing*

can lead to

instability and clouding of the shen

that can

- consume qi and *jing*.
-
-

Clinical notes on diagnosis

The supplementary comments that follow relating to the most commonly seen diseases and disorders are essentially included for explanatory purposes. The underlying diagnostic thought process can be applied to the range of symptoms, syndromes and diseases that are met in the clinic.²

- Colds and influenza-type syndromes can generally be classified as patterns with a pathology of wind-heat or wind-cold during the acute phase of invasion by external pathogens, whereas frequent recurrence is a sign of qi deficiency.
- The acute phase of conjunctivitis, tonsillitis or otitis is also related to wind-heat or internal heat, the latter in turn being frequently caused by food accumulation (*shi ji*). Liver heat or Liver fire is most frequently involved in conjunctivitis, whereas tonsillitis is generally related to Lung heat or Stomach heat.
- When these pathologies recur or become chronic, they are expressions of heat that has reached the interior (lingering pathogens), with involvement of dampness to a greater or lesser degree.
- The inner ear is attributed to the Kidney (hearing defects), whereas recurrent infections of the middle ear or eczema of the auricle are primarily related to deficiency (*xu*) of *wei qi* and an excess (*shi*) pattern of phlegm, to damp-heat, to wind-heat, and to the channels that pass near the ear, notably the Triple Burner (*san jiao* 三焦) channel.
- Cough is a manifestation of Lung qi that has not been diffused and sent downward as normal. Depending on the characteristics of the cough and the overall pattern, the following may be present – phlegm-damp, manifesting as profuse catarrh (yellow in cases of heat, white in cases of cold); heat that consumes yin and body fluids, manifesting as dry cough; Lung qi deficiency, manifesting as weak, recurrent cough; Kidney qi deficiency, manifesting as a more serious pattern or asthma; or food accumulation (*shi ji*) that transforms into phlegm, obstructs the diffusion of qi and consumes it.
- Weakness of middle *jiao* qi can be brought to light in all chronic or recurrent pathologies; this weakness is aggravated by repeatedly taking cold-natured medicines such as antibiotics or anti-inflammatories.
- In cases with lingering pathogens, both the root (*ben* 本) and the manifestations (*biao* 标) should be treated, since the symptoms indicate where the system is most fragile. It is also important to use points that release the exterior so that pathogens are drawn to the surface and expelled.
- Frequently waking up, disturbed sleep, physical and mental restlessness, hyperactivity, impetuous and impulsive behavior, and difficulty in sustaining attention and concentrating are all manifestations of heat disturbing the tranquillity of yin and hindering

² Only those conditions most frequently encountered in a clinical setting are considered here, for example those referred to in chapter 13 on the Federation of Italian Schools of Tuina and Qigong (FISTQ) pilot project carried out at the Xiaoxiao clinic (see also the discussion on various disorders in chapter 11).

adequate rest. There is a need to understand the origin of the imbalance between yin-Water and yang-Fire that rises to disturb the qi and agitate the *shen*.

- It is easy for heat or fire to be produced in young children, who are yang in nature. Heat is frequently caused by food accumulation (*shi ji*), but can also be present at birth as a result of fetal toxins (*tai du*) or may arise from external pathogens being retained in the interior, for example as lingering pathogenic factors or latent (*fu* 伏) heat. Sometimes heat may result from an insufficiency of yin (Kidney yin or *jing*).
- An imbalance between yin and yang can produce internal wind, with manifestations such as febrile convulsions (excess heat), tics or epilepsy.
- A child who does not sleep quietly at night, is fidgety during the day, fights obstinately against everything, and readily throws tantrums is displaying symptoms of a blockage of qi. Food accumulation (*shi ji*) obstructs the movement of Liver qi, leading to anger with sudden outbursts of rage, irritability and stubbornness; the dynamics of the process are the opposite of that in adults where rage and frustration damage the Liver and constrain (*yu*) qi, consequently leading to a pattern of Liver qi stagnation.
- Wildly fluctuating emotions, violent behavior, sudden lack of energy, language disabilities, clouding of consciousness, a dull gaze that may appear “disconnected”, impairment of motor coordination or spatial orientation, and slow responses or blurting out responses too quickly are generally manifestations of phlegm clouding the orifices of the Heart.
- Qi is delicate in children with fragile emotions – they require constant attention, are almost totally dependent, tend to whine, everything upsets and destabilizes them, they are afraid, anxious and fearful, and sometimes give an appearance of dreaminess or that their mind has wandered off somewhere. If qi and blood are deficient, then the *shen* has no place to reside; if the *jing* is weak, then the *shen* has no root.
- Pathologies such as delayed physical and psychic development, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and autism are set within the overall framework of the basic diagnostic process. We need to recognize which are the main *zangfu* organs affected by deficiency, to determine whether the insufficiency mostly involves qi, blood, yin, yang, or *jing*, and we need to understand the role played by fire, phlegm and wind.