

Do you agree that Spleen Qi deficiency has been really prevalent in clinical practice?

I've seen so many cases. Today, I wanted to talk about not only Spleen Qi Deficiency, but the causes, the consequences, what it could lead to, and of course, treatment with acupuncture points, herbal formulas, and foods.

Welcome to AcuPro, a show dedicated to making Chinese medicine and acupuncture easy to grasp and fun to learn. Hi, I'm your host, Clara Cohen. I support practitioners and students like you in changing the world one patient at a time. My goal is to share my passion for TCM and empower you to achieve superior patient care.

I love to showcase the amazing benefits of acupuncture because, after all, acupuncture rocks!

First, let's go back to Foundation

My favorite TCM teacher back in school used to say, if you don't understand something, go back to foundation to figure it out.

First Function

The Spleen function, according to TCM is to be in charge of digestion, right? Specifically with the Stomach. That's one of the things we're going to see in symptoms is: **loose stools or diarrhea**, having issues of **bloating, weak digestive system**, and **cravings**. That is going to be linked to that function.

Second Function

The second function is the Spleen is in charge of **holding the blood** within the blood vessels.

When there are issues of heavy bleeding, with abnormal, heavy bleeding, like heavy menstruation bleeding. Chronic nose bleed, chronic bleeding rectal bleeding that is accompanied with fatigue and a pale tongue and feeling exhausted. That is a **Spleen not holding the blood within the blood vessel**. This is very different from excess heat, which can also cause abnormal, heavy bleeding, but that would have a different tongue, different pulse and a lot of heat signs, right?

Third Function

The next function of the Spleen is to also **hold everything in place, raise Qi and keep the organs in place**. When there is **prolapse** or organs falling like the uterus, the blood, or the rectum, the transverse colon, that would be a **Spleen Qi Sinking** which means the Spleen Qi is not strong enough to hold all the organs in place.

There is also the fact that Spleen is in charge of **raising Qi**, specifically clear Qi, clear Yang to the head for clear thinking. Not overthinking or foggy brain or worrying constantly, which is the unhealthy imbalance part of the Spleen.

Fourth Function

The Spleen is also in charge of **water metabolism**. And that is in conjunction with the Lung, the Kidney and the San Jiao. So not by itself, but is in charge of water metabolism.

That's why, when there's a lot of bloating that could be leading or coming from Spleen, not being able to do its function. Also when people have a **puffy eyelid** because the upper eyelid is related to the Spleen or correspond to the Spleen. That's also a Spleen not being able to metabolize the water.

Fifth Function

Another function of the Spleen is to produce blood. So **producing blood**, meaning for menstruation, for a good flow of blood. The Spleen produces blood with nutrients, with good digestion with good food, good nutrients. So when there is blood deficiency, we have to look at what is wrong with the Spleen, what is wrong with diet, the digestive system, the absorption option.

Sixth Function

It really leads to the digestive system again, right? That's another function when there's Spleen blood deficiency, which can come up with scanty menstruation or very light menstruation or amenorrhea for that matter. That can lead to **dizziness** and **feeling fatigued** and having many symptoms with **pale**ness, pale face, pale nails, pale lips, et cetera, et cetera.

It's just looking at the function of the Spleen as a whole, so we know what to look for when we do treatment and for the consequences.

Consequences of not treating Spleen Qi Deficiency

I wanted to start by talking about the consequences of not treating Spleen Qi Deficiency what it can lead to, which is worse outcome. Then we'll look at the cause.

The consequences, if Spleen Qi is in charge of all those functions and it is depleted. We'll look at the cause in a minute. Then the consequences can be first of all, could be **Spleen Blood Deficiency**. Now we can have **Spleen Qi Deficiency** and **Spleen Blood Deficiency** because obviously

If we don't have good Spleen Qi we can't absorb nutrients

Or if we don't have a good diet, we're not able to produce blood. The second one is Spleen not holding the blood. Like we said within the blood vessel. So if Spleen is not doing that, then obviously we have abnormal bleeding. It does stem from Spleen Qi Deficiency to start with. So when there is those other patterns that we see, we still have to address the Spleen Qi, because it's usually at the root cause of everything, right?

If there is also excess damp, excess phlegm in the body, That is also coming from the Spleen Qi not being able to transform the water. Then we have this excess damp, excess phlegm. So when there is excess damp specifically or phlegm we want to look at the root cause coming back from the Spleen Qi Deficiency.

It can also lead to Spleen Yang Deficiency and with that to Kidney Yang Deficiency.

Prenatal Qi

So Spleen, when we have, if you go back to foundation, we have Prenatal Qi and Postnatal Qi. **Prenatal Qi is what we were born with.** It's really stored within the essence, which is the kidney function to store essence.

Postnatal Qi

After that we have Postnatal Qi and Postnatal Qi is going to be given to us by **anything that we need in order to survive.** Because we were given life with Prenatal Qi, Postnatal Qi is when we have anything that's gonna keep us alive, which is air.

So when we **breathe**, which goes through the lung, the Lung function allows us to breathe. If we can't breathe, we can't survive.

Same thing with . If we don't drink or eat for many weeks and months and for drinking, probably less than that, obviously we are going perish, right? So that's the things that we need. Postnatal Qi is **food and air.** Spleen is in charge of one of those, which is the food, the nutrients, right?

How the Spleen factors into our Qi

Absorbing nutrients, transforming it into energy, so we can have energy for the body. We can have good Spleen Qi and we are not fatigued because that's another one. When there is Spleen Qi Deficiency were very fatigued, right? Qi is Yang in nature, right? So when Qi starting to be deficient, the next stage would be Yang deficiency.

Yang Deficiencies

Plus Spleen loves warmth. It does not like cold. So the next step is it will get cold and it will lead to **Spleen Yang deficiency.** If there is Spleen Yang deficiency, it will affect the kidney. Because the kidneys are Prenatal Qi. It's what we were given. But if we're not protecting it with the other organs function, then kidney is gonna be depleted.

Often when there is **Kidney Yang Deficiency** underneath it, there is Spleen Yang Deficiency. Underneath that, there's Spleen Qi Deficiency. See how it all goes back out there. We still have

to treat the root cause, which is Spleen Qi Deficiency. When there is Spleen Qi Deficiency, it can also lead to Lung Qi Deficiency. Why is that?

Healing with Diet

We talked about air and food were the two Postnatal Qi. Lung Qi and Spleen Qi have this relationship about water metabolism as well. So if you look at people with asthma, what one thing they can do to **improve their asthma is their diet**, right? Because the digestive system, if it's able to not have too much mucus, to create asthma attacks.

So we have to **avoid dairy and sugar and process food**. The food that we have will affect the Lung and second in the five element, again, back to foundation in the five element earth generates metal. So earth is the mother of metal, which means earth is Spleen in stomach.

Spleen = the center of everything

So Spleen is the mother of Lung, which means that Spleen generates a healthy lung, which means that if we wanna have a strong immune system, we need to start with food, the gut, and making sure that it is strong and healing. So Spleen Qi Deficiency affects a lot of our other patterns and a lot of our health because it's **connected to our brain or clear thinking**.

It's connected to our aging system, through the Kidney, with the Postnatal versus Prenatal Qi. As well as, it **affects our breathing ability**. It's affecting our fatigue, our energy in general, it's affecting blood. The Spleen is such a key component to treat when there is any other issues that may stem from it.

One of the thing that we always do in clinic is to figure out the root cause specifically to help the patient understand how we're going to go about the treatment plan. Can we change the cause? Can we address the cause? Is it possible to either manage or remove the cause? Right.

Breaking down Spleen Qi Deficiency to your patient

Cause #1 = Stress

Spleen Qi Deficiency, because it's so prevalent, we need to explain to the patient how they got there. The causes of Spleen Qi Deficiency as you know, in TCM, there's only **three causes of disease**, which I always think is very funny and kind of quirky part of TCM. It's **external pathogens, internal emotions and others**. I love the others because it's a big umbrella of a lot of things.

So I think it's always very funny. Anyway, for Spleen Qi Deficiency, the causes. One, the first one, the one that I see the most in clinical practice is **Liver Qi Stagnation overacting on Spleen**.

This is a 5 element pattern, right? In the 5 elements, the Wood can control Earth, but sometimes it overpowers Earth, it over controls. That's the case in a lot of practice, which means Liver Qi Stagnation. **We are tight. We are tense and stressed.**

All this tightens or makes the Spleen, the Liver Qi stagnated and more stress goes and overpowers the Spleen depleting the Spleen. So a lot of time when there's adrenal fatigue,

I think a lot of people think that adrenal fatigue is a kidney issue. At the beginning, it's always a Spleen issue.

I know because we think cortisol = adrenals are resting on the kidney. However, in TCM, when we are really fatigued and extremely low in energy, it starts with Spleen Qi Deficiency and often it could be caused by stress, which is Liver Qi Stagnation, overacts on Spleen. If you wanna know more about fatigue, you guys can watch the [video on fatigue](#) and how to treat [fatigue and acupuncture point](#) with it.

So that's one of the most common ones. When that's the case, we need to treat the Liver Qi Stagnation, **talk to the patient about stress management**, and then we can address the Spleen Qi Deficiency. That's the first cause. Which is very common, which is stress.

Cause #2 = Worry & Overthinking

Those mental health emotions and thinking in the brain that just can't stop chattering and worrying and thinking that is a Spleen Qi Deficiency.

This is kind of like the chicken and the egg. Either the Spleen Qi Deficiency came first. Maybe someone's not eating a good diet. And then the **diet is not feeding their brain**. And so they're always **constantly worrying, overthinking, get anxiety**, etc. Or the worry, the overthinking come first and depletes the Spleen, which one came first. It's not always easy to know when you treat patients, however, it's great to address as well.

Cause #3 = Diet

The next one is of course, like we said, because the Spleen is in charge of digestion is diet. Diet is a huge part of lifestyle and it can create Spleen Qi deficiency when there are years of really eating **irregular meals at irregular time** eating too fast depleting or weakening the digestive system with food that is **not going to feed the body and the mind properly with real nutrients**.

So diet of course, can lead to a lot of issues when someone has diabetes type two. Usually often, not always, but the **first pattern will be Spleen Qi Deficiency with dampness or phlegm**. That is often the case. So that is reversible type two, not talking about type one is a very different different disorders in TCM perspective.

It's really important to look at diet as well. So the stress, number one with Liver Qi Stagnation overacting on Spleen depleting Spleen. The worrying and overthinking which one came first, but it's there and the diet which we have to address, which **we have to talk about to the person.**

We have to heal the gut if it's been weakened by many years, that make sense?

So those are the main ones that are going to deplete Spleen Qi.

Acupuncture Points for Spleen Qi Deficiency

When it comes to acupuncture point for Spleen Qi deficiency, we are gonna start with the basics. **Spleen 3** is the Yuan source point of Spleen.

So it has to be there because it's in charge of absorption digestion. This is the point that is going to help with the digestive system specifically, it's been weakened for many years, right? The next one is **Stomach 36** because Stomach 36 has to be there. It is the commander point of the digestive system and it tonifies Qi and blood.

We want something that's going to tonify Qi because the treatment principle for Spleen Qi Deficiency, it is to tonify Qi, right, as the basis. Make sense?

The next one I would put in there is **Spleen 6** is also such a great point because it is the crossing point of the Spleen Meridian, the Liver Meridian and the Kidney Meridian.

As we saw earlier, the kidney Meridian is the prenatal Qi and it gets affected if it's Spleen Qi Deficiency for too long. Liver Qi Stagnation is often the root cause of a Spleen Qi Deficiency so it's great to put Spleen 6 to address the kidney liver and the Spleen as a whole. So Stomach 36, Spleen 3, Spleen 6 your basic points.

Extra Acupuncture Points

However, you can also put the **Front-Mu** points of the Spleen and the **Back Shu point of the Spleen**. If you wanted to add up it's up to you in that regard, however, it depends if you're doing a front treatment or back treatment, right. And that's always difficult in clinical practice. Sometimes I ask patients you'd rather face up or face down cuz sometimes patients like it one way or the other better.

I want them to relax. The whole point is to put them in a parasympathetic state so their body can self regulate and self-heal.

[AcuPoints Made Easy Book](#)

Have you gotten your copy of my AccuPoint Made Easy book yet? If you're a visual person, you're going to love it. I have put my passion for acupuncture into creating a fun, illustrated

guide of all acupuncture points with their function, location, depth, and angle of insertion, including special points categories, extra points, cupping, moxa, and all my years of clinical pearls.

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So you can [download the sample of all the Heart points](#) to see if the format of the book is what you truly were looking for. Listen to what people who invested in Acupoint Made Easy have to say.

"I adore the book. It has answered so many questions on my mind and is logically and clearly laid out. It was a great investment."

That made my day! "Absolutely love this. Thank you for thinking outside the box. I have ADD and I'm easily distracted. You made it easy to retain this required information for acupuncture students in different ways for better understanding and memory."

You rock that also made my day because that's the whole point of having creating a book and being on social media and helping support everyone, students and practitioners, because I feel like a lot of us felt lonely when we were on our own. So the internet has provided such a great resource for all of us.

Basic Diet

The basic diet for Spleen Qi deficiency has to be really tailored to the person, right?

The environment they are in. Meaning do they live in Canada, Alaska, or do they live in Arizona or somewhere where it's warmer? Right. **We have to look at the environment as well as the season.** It's very important to look at that. And of course the person's background history, et cetera. But for Spleen Qi deficiency, basics, we want to avoid raw cold food and cold drinks.

Like icy drinks, right. We don't need that. Because it's gonna weaken the digestive system. We need to be gentle, kind of like a baby. You know, when babies are pretty young up until one year old, they obviously have breast milk, but they start to be introduced to food. And it's always mashed. It's always, it's never super cold, right?

We don't wanna give them super cold food. We give them soup and mashed peas and everything. That's been really pureed.

It's the same with Spleen Qi deficiency.

We want to be gentle to the digestive system and give the body rest.

So eating really well as in **chewing the food properly** and **not swallowing fast**. Having the time to be mindful and eating food that is easy to digest.

That's why often it's going to be sweet potatoes, things that are more puree: yams, eggs salmon, because it's very easy to digest.

You don't have to chew it a lot compared to nuts, for example, which are great if you use nut butter, because it's already chewed. But if you are going to chew the nuts it's probably not gonna be the best. **Popcorn is really bad because it's really hard to digest.**

And then it gets into the digestive villa in the colon, in the large intestine that creates more issues. So we wanna be really gentle having **a lot of stews and soup and cook food**. It's okay to have **Fruits that are baked**. You could bake a pear with some cinnamon on it 🍏

Avoid hard, raw foods

There's a lot of things that we can do, but we really wanna avoid the hard, raw broccoli's so hard on the Spleen because it's very hard to digest or hard carrots that is raw broccoli and raw carrots should not be given to people with Spleen Qi Deficiency however, cooked one. Great idea. Makes sense? We want to have food that is warmer. So like cinnamon is great. Ginger is great.

Ginger is great because it also dries dampness and it's warm. So the Spleen loves that because the Spleen is, tendency to have excess dampness as we saw earlier. Makes sense?

Chinese Herbal Formulas for Spleen Qi Deficiency

When it comes to Chinese herbal formulas, there are a couple of basic one classic formulas that are really good for Spleen Qi efficiency.

It has to be tailored to each person with formula, but let's look at the basic.

Si Jun Zi Tang

The first one is Si Jun Zi Tang. So Si Jun Zi Tang is a main formula for Spleen Qi deficiency **specifically when it's affecting the digestive system**.

So it's a really good formula for that. It's very basic for that.

Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang

Now one that I really like is Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang it's one of my favorite formulas because it's really good for people that **have really chronic fatigue syndrome**. That are really exhausted, that exhaustion, that fatigue, mental and physical, and they're exhausted. It also works really well for **Spleen Qi Sinking for prolapse of organ**, but it's a great basic formula.

It's also really good to protect the Lung as well. Lung and Spleen, which are connected as mother and son in the 5 Elements.

I just wanted to talk about the two basic formulas. There are many formulas that we can look at, depending on each patient's symptoms, if there is a lot of dampness or phlegm or it's leading to Yang deficiency, et cetera, I just wanted to stay basic because I like to make it simple, easy to grasp and fun to learn.

Conclusion

Thank you so much for spending your time with me today. I truly hope you benefited from this episode, and I would love for you to share it with a friend that may benefit from it as well. Follow the show, leave a review, and if you want more. Go to my website, acuproacademy.com. I have tons of resources there with treatment protocols, case studies, free courses, and so much more.

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