

I'm excited to have you join me today as I dive into the 15 most effective acupuncture points for clearing heat. Heat manifests in various ways in the body, and as practitioners, it's really important to discern between excess heat and deficiency heat, or Yin deficiency. It's not just about needling or selecting the right point. It's also about understanding first the underlying imbalances and applying our knowledge to promote balance and well-being for all our patients.

So today, I'm going to guide you through the key differences between excess heat and yin deficiency or deficiency heat. Then I'll dive into the 15 most effective acupuncture points for clearing heat and their use in clinical practice.

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!

When we go back to foundation, the basis of everything in Chinese medicine is the Yin Yang theory.

If you haven't seen my Yin Yang Theory video on YouTube, I'll have the link in the show notes below. You'll absolutely benefit from it if you're still not sure how to understand the key differences. However, today I wanted to talk specifically about Yang excess versus Yin deficiency, which is deficiency heat.

Because it's really important to understand the key differences in the symptoms in order to select the right point. Because if it's yin deficiency, we are going to nourish and tonify versus if it's excess heat, we are going to clear it. So it's a very different treatment. However, some acupuncture points can do both clear excess heat and nourish yin deficiency.

So we're going to talk about all this today. Let's start with excess heat. Excess heat can manifest as acute or chronic. So for acute, we would have fever, an infection, a sunburn. External pathogen invasion heat affecting us in an acute way. When it comes to chronic, which is what we see mostly in clinical practice, we will have chronic inflammation that shows with a red face, a red tongue with a yellow coat, a strong full rapid pulse, feeling hot all day long, sweating easily, specifically when it's hot, disliking the heat or summer.

Having a tendency to have constipation with a large amount of stools that are formed but smelly. Because that's excess heat as well. Now, the person may also be irritable or angry easily, like a volcano with a lot of anger coming out and exploding.

There may be insomnia where the person is waking up and cannot fall back asleep or is not sleeping at all. If waking up between 1 and 3 a.m., that's more of a liver yang rising, and if they can't fall back asleep, it could be liver fire.

If they are up all night and cannot sleep at all, that's heart fire. We always have to distinguish, no matter what, if it's excess yang or excess heat. In this case, excess fire, which is worse than heat. Now, when it comes to yin deficiency, all those symptoms we just talked about are going to be similar, but on a smaller scale.

For example, with excess heat, we're going to be really thirsty for cold drinks and we're going to gulp them. While for yin deficiency, we are going to be thirsty mostly at night and we're going to sip. We're not going to gulp. See, smaller versus bigger, gulping versus sipping. With excess heat, we are going to have a red face.

While yin deficiency will only have red cheeks. With yin excess, we're going to have a large amount of stools. While yin deficiency will have little beads, little pebbles, like sheep pebbles, that are really dry.

Because when there is yin deficiency, there's always a body fluid deficiency present. The yin deficiency person is going to be hotter at night because nighttime is yin time, while the yang excess person, yang being daytime, will be more sweating and hot during the day. The yin deficiency will have a thin, rapid pulse, while the yang excess will have a large, rapid pulse. The yin deficiency will have a red tongue, cracked with no coat, while the yang excess will also have a red tongue but with a thick, yellow coat.

So you see, there are a lot of differences here. It's really important to make the key difference between the symptoms so we can select the point for the treatment. However, because Chinese medicine is always complicated, it's never just one thing, right?

Can someone have yin deficiency and excess yang? Yes, they can. And that's very common with the liver. I've seen a lot of patients having liver yang rising or liver fire at the same time. They also have liver Yin deficiency. So when that happens, we can combine our treatment and usually, we will try to clear the excess first, then nourish the Yin after. Now, can you do them both at the same time?

Yes, you can clear the excess heat with acupuncture, for example, but nourish the yin with diet and herbs. That way, you can address both at the same time.

Now, let's talk about the 15 most effective points when it comes to excess heat.

Now, before we start, I wanted to share a story with you. When I was growing up, my mom had excess heat but also yin deficiency while she was going through menopause.

So, this will illustrate my point really well. She had night sweats. She was tossing and turning all night. This is very yin deficiency. She was very irritable and angry all the time because she was so stressed. Now, that was liver yang rising.

Check this out: I was around 10 when my mom went through menopause because she had me quite late at 42, so around 52 she went through menopause and one night she woke me up, shocked me in the middle of the night and woke me up and I was half asleep, what's going on, what's happening and she yelled at me, did you eat my last yogurt?

And I was just like, what, what? No, I didn't. And she's yelling at me because she thought I ate her last yogurt. Maybe I did. I don't know, but I was half asleep and I couldn't believe my mom was yelling at me. And eventually she left and I fell back asleep. But this is how irrational anger really affected her.

And we know as women, Our hormones get us in really weird places. So I remember I was scared of my mom because she would yell so much. She never did anything physical, but she would yell for about six months to a year. She was not a pleasant person to be around. She would burst out with yelling bouts.

That really, really scared me because her voice was very loud. And I was a very sensitive child as I am still sensitive, by the way. So for my mom, it was a very tough balance to navigate because she had a strong personality and I was very sensitive. But to add to this, she smoked two packs of cigarettes a day, like a typical French woman in that time.

She had a lot of heartburn, acid reflux, which is stomach heat, as we know, right, because she smoked a lot, which affects the esophagus and affects the stomach. Most people who smoke don't relate acid reflux or stomach chi rebelling or stomach heat with smoking, but it's the same little pipe, the esophagus gets affected, right?

Yes, that makes sense. Stomach heat in Chinese medicine presents with symptoms such as heartburn, acid reflux, bad breath, and acid regurgitation. These symptoms can arise from the stomach creating heat due to acidity, specifically exacerbated by smoking, as in her case.

She also had lung heat due to smoking, which eventually turned into lung yin deficiency from years of smoking. This manifested as a dry cough, which is more characteristic of yin deficiency.

So, she experienced both excess and deficiency heat symptoms.

Now, excess heat can affect various organs. In the large intestine, it can cause constipation with large, smelly stools. Damp heat can lead to diarrhea and smelly stools as well. Temporal headaches that feel relieved with a cold compress are typically associated with liver yang rising or liver fire. Heat can affect different organs, with the most common being lung heat, stomach heat, liver heat, and liver fire.

Let's dive into those effective acupuncture points to clear excess heat and how to differentiate them so we can select the best ones for each of our patients.

Let's start with the best point to clear heat anywhere in the body: Large Intestine 11. This is a fantastic point because it clears heat for both acute and chronic disorders. Acute conditions like fever, infection, hives, and sore throat, as well as chronic conditions characterized by excess heat and inflammation in the body, which can manifest as irritability, smelly stools, diarrhea, or constipation.

Additionally, because it's a ghost point, it's often used for people who feel out of control and become enraged, which can also affect their bowel movements, leading to bouts of

diarrhea when they're very angry. This is a perfect ghost point to clear heat when emotions can create heat in the body.

Large Intestine 11 is located at the end of the lateral elbow crease. While many practitioners use Large Intestine 11 for tendonitis, it's important to consider its suitability. For instance, if the pain is due to blood deficiency or has been persistent with numbness and tingling, Large Intestine 11 may not be the best choice as it primarily clears heat.

A few years ago, I had a patient who competed in cross-country skiing races and had elbow pain or tendonitis on the lower side of her elbow. Due to her blood deficiency, I opted for Large Intestine 10, which relaxes the extensor but doesn't clear heat. It's crucial to understand the function of each point to use them properly in practice.

Now, you can use Large Intestine 11, for example, when there's heat in the blood, which creates a lot of heavy bleeding. That is a good point to use during menstruation, specifically combined with Spleen 10. If there are acute red hives, Large Intestine 11 with Spleen 10 works really well and quickly as well.

Secondly, Stomach 44 is the best point to clear fire. How do we distinguish between heat and fire? Think about this: Fire is worse than heat. So, we know all the symptoms of excess heat because we discussed them earlier. Fire has the same symptoms, but on top of it, there's added bleeding, abnormal bleeding. When there is fire, it moves and rushes the blood, which creates this abnormal bleeding. It could be red bloodshot eyes, like in liver fire. It could be heavy, abnormal menstruation, which could also indicate liver fire. It could be blood in the urine or blood in the stools, which could be associated with large intestine fire, fire in the bladder, or vomiting blood. Bleeding ulcers indicate stomach fire. When there is fire, the tongue will be really cracked, really dry, because fire dries fluid, with strawberry prickles, and of course, it's still red.

I love Stomach 44, specifically for stomach issues like acid reflux, bad breath, bleeding gums, regurgitation, or vomiting, specifically chunky, sour pieces of vomit. I'm sorry, I know that sounds really gross, but watery vomiting is due to excess cold, while chunky pieces that are sour indicate excess heat. Sorry!

Like I said, Stomach 44 is fantastic when it comes to clearing fire. It brings the fire down and allows the person to be more calm because often when there's excess stomach fire or fire in general, there's going to be a lot of dreams at night or manic behavior that brings the person into a rage or a manic state.

Have you gotten your copy of my AcuPoint 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.

You can download the digital version on any device, and it comes with many video links to complement it. Or, if you'd prefer the hard copy version, like me, you like to look at real books. The publisher ships it all over the world. Before you invest in it, I want to make sure that it is everything you were looking for in a fun guide for Acupuncture Point.

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I'm glad you found the information helpful! Thank you for your kind words. Helping students and practitioners understand acupuncture concepts in different ways for better understanding and memory is indeed important.

Check out the links in the show notes below, or visit my website acuproacademy.com and click the shop tab on the menu bar to invest in your copy today.

Next is Heart 5, and I think that point is misunderstood in clinical practice or not used enough. Heart 5 is the luo-connecting point of the heart, connecting the heart to the small intestine, its paired organ or meridian. And because of that, it's really good to use when there is interstitial cystitis. I see a lot of patients with that issue. Remember that the small intestine in TCM is in charge of separating the clear from the turbid for water metabolism to come out as urination. In TCM, it is more related to fluids than solids. So when there is a bladder infection, we can look at the bladder in TCM. That's usually excess heat, excess fire, excess damp heat in the bladder. However, if there is inflammation like cystitis, then we can have a look at the small intestine and the heart. And Heart 5 is a great point specifically combined with Liver 5 and Large Intestine 11 to clear heat when it comes to interstitial cystitis. Large Intestine 11 clears heat, Liver 5 is the lower connecting point, and it actually connects to the external genitalia. So it really helps this burning sensation when the person has cystitis.

Next is Heart 8. It is a yin spring point, and pretty much all yin spring points clear heat. But Heart 8 is a really good point for hysteria. For when people get into a manic or hysteric behavior that have a lot of excess fire. So Heart 8 cools, calms the mind, it brings the fire down. And also remember that the heart opens into the tongue. So if there are canker sores or bleeding canker sores on the tongue, this is a really good point as well because it shows as excess fire. The difference is mouth sores that are on the tongue are heart fire if they bleed or heart heat if it's in the mouth or in the cheeks, it is going to be stomach heat, and if they're bleeding, stomach fire. Thank you, because the stomach opens into the mouth, while the heart opens into the tongue. This is why going back to foundation and distinguishing the key symptoms can help us with our diagnosis and leads to better treatment.

The next point is Kidney 1. It had to be there. The most grounding point on the body. Now remember at the beginning we said can people have yin deficiency and yang excess? Well, this is the perfect point for this because it clears excess fire, excess heat, brings the heat down, but also nourishes yin deficiency, specifically kidney yin deficiency. When people have that scattered brain and they cannot ground themselves, this is a great point. On top of it, if that person has a tendency to be irritable, have

insomnia, the kind of insomnia where they're really tired, but they cannot fall asleep. They stay up, they're exhausted, they can't fall asleep.

If you combine Kidney 1 with Du20 to help patients who cannot fall asleep but are really tired, it's the perfect combination. The highest point in the body with the lowest point in the body, perfect for a great night's sleep. It works like a charm, and you'll sleep like a baby.

Next is Kidney 2, which is another yin spring. As I said, all yin spring points clear heat. And by the way, if you haven't seen my video on the Shu Transporting points and how they work, and how we can use them in clinical practice, specifically using the five-element theory, check it out because it's one of my most popular. I'll have the link in the show notes for you as well.

Now, Kidney 2 is really good when it comes to coughing blood, specifically combined with Lung 6, which is an acupoint that we use when there's coughing blood. If you combine Lung 6 and Kidney 2 for coughing blood, this is not looking at the root cause of the problem. This is addressing only the symptoms. So it's really important that we figure out the root cause and that we send the patient to figure out what's going on because that is a really bad symptom that needs to be looked into further. Kidney 2 can also be used for heavy, abnormal menstruation, bleeding, specifically when the person feels hot, and there are excess heat symptoms. Do not use Kidney 2 if the problem is blood deficiency or the spleen not holding blood within the blood vessel, and the person would not have any heat signs. They will be fatigued and they would have a pale tongue. It's a completely different story.

The next acupuncture point is Bladder 65, and I also think this one is underutilized in clinical practice. It is a great point and the only point in the body that can actually detoxify, specifically after an insect bite. Bladder 65 helps the body release its natural antihistamine to try to fight that insect bite. It's a great point for that. For chronic issues though, it's also used to calm the mind. When there is a lot of confusion, let's say we look at people with Alzheimer's who have excess heat. Not every person with Alzheimer's has excess heat, but if they do, then this is a perfect point to be in combination with your whole treatment for the person affected by Alzheimer's. Is it going to stop it and eradicate the disorder? No. Is it going to manage the disorder? Yes. That's what acupuncture is there to do.

Heart 8 and Pericardium 8 are both located on the palm and this is a really sensitive area to needle, but they're both so good when it comes to mental health and excess heat. So I talked about Heart 8 earlier; now let's talk about Pericardium 8. It is a ghost point used for paranoia and hallucination, specifically when it's due again to excess heat, including hysteria. It's also used for uncontrollable laughter, which often comes from phlegm heat misting the mind. This is a very specific Chinese medicine pattern because the person is laughing with no reason.

There is nothing funny, but it can't stop laughing, out loud, very loud. And this is a disorder that can be like schizophrenia, for example.

Next point we'll love, Liver 2. You knew I was going to talk about Liver 2. Best point to bring liver yang rising down. When there is Liver 3 stagnation, if someone has a lot of stress and the buttons got pushed and pushed and pushed, and the volcano effect happened, suddenly there's a burst of anger, irritability, and we explode, that is liver yang rising coming from liver stagnation. Eventually, hopefully, after we burst, we can calm down from it. So Liver 2 is a great point to bring that volcano effect, that irritability, that anger down quickly. It's also used for temporal headaches that are worse at the end of the day when the person is stressed and feels better with a cold compress. It's used for irritability, anger, but also waking up between 1 and 3 a.m., which is liver time.

Liver 5 is another luo-connecting point. Like I said earlier when I was talking about Heart 5, as a luo-connecting point, this one connects the liver to the gallbladder, but also the luo collateral starts at Liver 5 and ends up wrapping around the external genitalia. This is why this is a really good point when there is swelling, heat in the testes, for example, or an external genitalia outbreak like herpes, or combined with Heart 5 for interstitial cystitis. And for people, specifically women, who have tendencies to have a urinary tract infection after intercourse, that is the best point.

Next coming in strong is Gallbladder 43. That is another Yin spring point. See, I'm choosing a lot of them. But this one is fantastic for migraines and headaches that are very hot to the touch and that feel so much better with a cold compress. This is the perfect point for that, specifically combined with Large Intestine 11 and Large Intestine 4, because Large Intestine 4 is the best point for headaches, and Large Intestine 11 clears heat. Gallbladder 43 is also used for dizziness and vertigo when there is a lot of heat rising up to the head.

Now you know we prick to bleed Jing Well points that are at the fingers and toes because they do clear heat specifically for acute disorders. And I haven't picked any Jing Well point until now. Well, Gallbladder 44 is the Gallbladder general point and it is

great for fever like all of them. However, I love to use it for dream-disturbed sleep. So when a person has a lot of nightmares and they have excess heat, this is the perfect point specifically combined with my favorite point of all time, Stomach 40. Because it will clear the phlegm and it will calm the mind as well. When there are recurring nightmares, there's definitely phlegm that affects the stomach and the gallbladder. And so combining those two points, Gallbladder 44 and Stomach 40, is perfect for that. Gallbladder 44 is also used to clear fire for vertigo and dizziness as well, just like Gallbladder 43. But 44 is a little bit stronger in clearing fire and bringing it down, while 43 clears heat.

The next one is coming on strong, it's Du14. And if you remember, in the channel meridian theory, all yang channels converge and pass through Du14 at C7 area. So this is a powerful point because all yang meridians, all six of them, converge right there. So it's a hotbed for the yang energy, right? So Du14 is the best point to clear heat when it's acute, specifically when there is fever, especially for children. When children have an infection or fever, you can cup Du14 to try to really help the process along. It works really well for the acute state for children, and you don't have to use needles. And because it's located in the upper part of the body and close to all the lung points like the back shoe point of the lung, Bladder 13, it is really good for asthma due to excess heat. So someone coughing, having wheezing, with a lot of heat as well. And it can be used for wind heat, like the flu. So Du14 is really good for acute heat that creates fever.

There are many points when it comes to clearing heat. I just wanted to give you my favorite 15 most effective ones I've seen in clinical practice since 2003 because I think they are just fantastic. It doesn't mean they're the only ones, but they're so powerful. And if you haven't listened to my podcast on the 15 most effective acupuncture points to calm the mind, check it out. I'll have the link in the show notes below as well. It is one of my most popular.

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