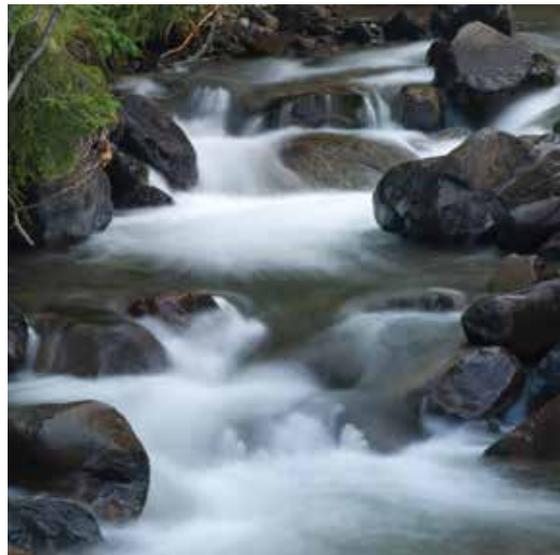


Cough & stress incontinence

A useful herb formula



By **Cui Yin-Chun**

Cough leading to urine leakage or incontinence is called *ké sou yí niào* (咳嗽遗尿). The *Su Wen* (Basic Questions) chapter 38 entitled “Treatise on cough” has a passage that states: “The symptoms of Urinary Bladder cough are coughing then leakage of urine.” So this condition can also be called 膀胱咳 *Páng Guāng ké*: Urinary Bladder cough.

IN THE EXPERIENCE of this author, Urinary Bladder cough is often a problem with those women who are older or weaker in health, those having had numerous pregnancies, or those with histories of difficult labours.

The most common pathological mechanisms that cause incontinence while coughing in women include constitutional Spleen qi deficiency, Lung yin deficiency, and injured qi and blood following difficult labour. Under these conditions, exposure to external pathogens giving rise to a cold or ‘flu can lead to a cough, which is the loss of proper rhythmic Lung qi descent. In this way the Liver loses its smooth-flowing draining action. This disruption to normal ascent and descent causes urine to leak when Lung qi rebels upward in a cough, due to improper downward directing of middle burner qi.

Many years ago the author designed the *Fu Ren Ke Sou Yi Niao Fang* (Women’s Cough Incontinence Formula) which has proven

itself with prolonged successful clinical use. The basic formula’s constituents are as follows:

Dang Shen	Codonopsis Radix
Bai Zhu	Atractylodis macrocephalae Rhizoma
Huang Qi	Astragali Radix
Dang Gui	Angelicae Sinensis Radix
Mai Men Dong	Ophiopogonis Radix
Wu Wei Zi	Schisandrae Fructus
Chai Hu	Bupleuri Radix
Huang Qin	Scutellariae Radix
Qing Pi	Citri reticulatae Viride Pericarpium
Chen Pi	Citri reticulatae Pericarpium

The formula was developed by combining *Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang* (Tonify the Middle and Augment the Qi Decoction), *Sheng Mai San* (Generate the Pulse Powder) and *Xiao Chai Hu Tang* (Minor Bupleurum Decoction), with a few adjustments.

The first three herbs lift Spleen qi and are the chief herbs. The next three herbs nourish yin and moisten the Lungs, and are deputy herbs. *Chai Hu* and *Huang Qin* free Liver qi flow and cool heat, as assistant herbs; *Qing Pi* and *Chen Pi* open the chest and regulate qi movement, as envoy herbs.

Altogether the design matches the pathologic mechanism, tonifying Spleen, moistening Lung yin, freeing Liver qi so that the movement of qi can resolve pathogenic obstruction, and releasing internal flow while yet reaching the surface.

■ Cui Yin-Chun was born in 1950 and practises Chinese medicine in Lyuliang City Shanxi.

What about acupuncture?

[Editor's addition to the article]

In the *Su Wen* chapter mentioned above which first described Urinary Bladder cough, the final line discusses acupuncture treatment point selection, which may be useful as well. Since it is short, the characters, pinyin and translation are included:

皇帝曰：治之奈何？

Huáng Dì yuē: zhì zhī nài hé?

Huang Di said: How should this be treated?

岐伯曰：治臟者治其俞治腑者治其合浮腫者治其經。

Qí Bó yuē: zhì zàng zhě zhì qí shù, zhì fǔ zhě zhì qí hé, fú zhǒng zhě zhì qí jīng.

Qi Bo said: When you are treating the *zang* organ, treat using its *shu*-stream point; when you are treating the *fu* organ, treat using its *he*-sea point; when you are treating fluid retention, treat its channel.

皇帝曰：善！

Huáng Dì yuē: shàn!

Huang Di said: Wonderful!

Discussion

Bear in mind that this chapter discussed cough resulting from each different *zang* and *fu*, so “treat its *he*-sea point” means of course the point on the recalcitrant channel, and so on for the others. Note that *shù* (俞) can also mean the back-*shu* points, here the context suggests the *shu*-stream point on the channel, but an equally good argument could be made for the back points, if you put it like this: “The problem is deeper, in the *zang*-organ, therefore a stronger point is called for.” On the other hand, in this chapter the *zang* are affected first, then the *fu*, if the *zang* cannot clear itself.

Oh, the razor-sharp hazards of the *Nei Jing*! Compare Maoshing Ni's translation, which is quite good, and note where he hedged his bets (p. 146).

Here however since we are discussing

the *fu*-organ of Urinary Bladder, of course the *he*-sea point should be used: *Weizhong* (U.B.-40).

In actual practice, while *Weizhong* can be utilised, a more modern point combination involves:

Guanyuan (REN-4), *Shenshu* (U.B.-23) and *Zhongji* (REN-3) as the main points; combined with *Yinlingquan* (SP-9), *Sanyinjiao* (SP-6) and *Zusanli* (ST-36) as assistant points.

A study of 100 incontinence patients using one of these main points and one assistant point each day or every other day with a tonifying technique that made needle sensation radiate to the urinary bladder from *Guanyuan* (REN-4) or *Zhongji* (REN-3) achieved good results.

Of the 100 incontinence patients observed in the study, 68 returned to normal bladder functioning, 18 improved but not completely back to normal, and 14 had some subjective improvement in bladder control. Those with a shorter illness history did best.

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