



Lou Bai-Ceng treats asthma

The primary factor in asthma is phlegm, and this is phlegm lurking internally in the Lungs. It is brought out by a variety of external factors, whether externally contracted wind-cold, or foods, or emotional situations, or overwork, but it is particularly sensitive to weather change. This illness recurs and repeats on and off for a prolonged period of time, after which not only are the Lungs injured, but the Kidneys and Heart as well.

BECAUSE OF THE special characteristic of this illness, flaring up at times with intervals of peace in between, when treating with acupuncture one should be sure to utilise the principle of treating the branch when acute and treating the root during the peaceful periods.

Treating the branch: The three main points for needling are *Lieque* (Broken Sequence LU-7), *Hegu* (Joining Valley L.I.-4), and *Dingchuan* (Calm Dyspnoea M-BW-1) which is 0.5 to 1 cun lateral to *Dazhui* (Great Vertebra DU-14).

These should be reduced with a needle-twisting method, also using the “if hot, make it quick, if cold retain it” principle.

Treating the root: Moxa cone on ginger is the technique here, alternating three sets of points, one set per day for nine days (so

that each set is done three times). That is one course.

Set one: *Feishu* (Lung *Shu* BL-13) and *Lingtai* (Spirit Tower DU-10). Set two: *Shenshu* (Kidney *Shu* BL-23). Set three: *Shanzhong* (Chest Centre REN-17) and *Tiantu* (Heavenly Prominence REN-22). Each time one should use five to seven cones of moxa on the ginger.

A course of treatment like this usually gets very good results, especially in children.

I once treated a 13-year-old boy who had had asthma for five years after initially suffering from wind-cold invasion. In the first few years he would have an asthma attack two or three times per year, but in the last two years the attacks had increased so that he was getting one now five or six times each year.

He had tried all sorts of treatments, but none had gotten to the root.

The day before he had been exposed to cold, which brought on an attack, and he came to me. He was thin and pale with a wheezing sound in his throat; his breathing was difficult and his chest felt tight, pinched and uneasy. There was not much cough, but when he did cough the phlegm was thin white, scanty and not easy to cough out.

The boy's tongue coat was white and

slippery; his pulse was thready and wiry.

According to the principle of treating the branch when acute and treating the root when settled I needled *Lieque* (Broken Sequence LU-7) and *Hegu* (Joining Valley L.I.-4) both to five *fen* and used a rotating method to reduce, causing the needle sensation to reach the thumb and forefinger. My hope was that this would disseminate and free up the flow of Lung and Large Intestine qi, which would thereby restore the function of lifting the clear and directing the turbidity downwards.

I then used *Dingchuan* (Calm Dyspnoea M-BW-1) to assist, getting the needle sensation to radiate to the back of the throat, aiming to settle the wheezing and qi rebellion. Needles were left in each point for 10 minutes, during which time the asthma was visibly relieved. I ordered the family to do moxa with ginger during the summertime, in order to treat the root, benefiting Lungs, tonifying Kidneys, freeing up the qi flow and eliminating phlegm.

I asked the mother to treat her son with the following protocol: moxa cones about the size of date seeds to be burned on a thick

slice of ginger, and done on the following points in three sets: set one: *Feishu* (Lung *Shu* BL-13) and *Lingtai* (Spirit Tower DU-10); set two: *Shenshu* (Kidney *Shu* BL-23); set three: *Shanzhong* (Chest Centre REN-17) and *Tiantu* (Heavenly Prominence REN-22). These three sets were to be alternated, burning five to seven cones each day, for nine days (each set thereby receiving three treatments). If during the burning of the moxa, blisters formed on the acupuncture point targeted, this was not only *not* harmful but was to be welcomed as the results would be even better.

The rationale for the selection of these points is this: *Feishu* (Lung *Shu* BL-13) cultivates and enhances Lung qi; *Shenshu* (Kidney *Shu* BL-23) tonifies Kidney qi; and together with *Shanzhong* (Chest Centre REN-17) to smooth qi flow, *Lingtai* (Spirit Tower DU-10) to settle wheezing, and *Tiantu* (Heavenly Prominence REN-22) to free the throat and break up phlegm, the asthma could be cured.

In this case one course of treatment was done. I was able to follow up as long as 10 years later, and following the treatment the asthma settled and has never recurred.

■ Professor Lou Bai-Ceng (楼百层 1913-1992) had 50 years of experience using acupuncture to treat a variety of illnesses, and was a specialist in needle manipulation. Professor Lou was the director of the acupuncture research section of the Zhejiang Research Institute of Chinese Medicine in Hangzhou, and lectured in Australia in 1985. After this he and his wife welcomed many Australian visitors to his residence in Hangzhou. His short autobiographical piece "The Sweet Scent of the Plum Blossom" was published in Vol 5:1 of *The Lantern*. A related article "The four essentials in needling with Ju Ci" appeared in Vol 7:2.

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