

UTERINE FIBROIDS

Definition

Uterine fibroids, like many other palpable masses in the lower abdomen or pelvic cavity, fit into the traditional Chinese medical disease of “concretions and conglomerations” (癥瘕 *zhēng jiǎ*). Many patients with uterine fibroids also experience heavy menstrual bleeding, which falls under the TCM disease of “profuse menstruation.” If bleeding occurs outside of the normal menstrual cycle, the disease may be categorized as “flooding and spotting.”

Pathomechanisms

The TCM disease causes relevant to uterine fibroids may be broken up as follows: 1) external invasion of evil, 2) extremes of the seven affects, 3) visceral vacuity, and 4) damage to the qì, blood, and channels from surgical damage, sexual intemperance, or an imbalance of activity and rest.

This condition is located in the uterus, and its primary pathomechanisms revolve around the development of blood stasis. At its inception, it is primarily a repletion pattern. However, when static blood binds internally, blood cannot return to the channels. Incessant flooding or spotting often occur in patients with uterine fibroids; over time, this leads to qì vacuity or blood vacuity (if severe, the patient will present with dual vacuity of qì and blood). Furthermore, because enduring stasis forms heat, heat may scorch the yīn-essence, causing an insufficiency of yīn and a superabundance of yáng. This process manifests as vacuity heat. Thus, a complex mixture of vacuity and repletion often develops over time.

The pathomechanisms of this disease may be divided according to five general mechanisms through which static blood accumulates and develops into concretions or conglomerations (*zhēng jiǎ*). These mechanisms are: 1) collection of static blood (collection of blood that has left the channels), 2) qì stagnation leading to blood stasis, 3) congealing cold causing blood stasis, 4) phlegm and static blood binding together, and 5) qì vacuity leading to blood stasis.

Collection of static blood: “Blood that has left the channels” is static blood. A surplus of blood lodged outside of the channels may arise from residual blood left over from menstruation or childbirth, or may also result from surgical damage or damage from sex. During menstruation and after childbirth, the blood chamber is open and the uterine vessels are vacuous; thus, it is easy for evil to exploit vacuity to invade the body at this time. The surplus of blood outside the channels may contend with evil qì to bind within the uterus. When old static blood fails to leave, new blood is unable to return to the channels and congeals to form stasis. Over time, this forms concretions (癥 *zhēng*).

Qì stagnation with blood stasis: Qì is the commander of the blood, so qì stagnation can produce blood stasis. A primary cause of this pathomechanism is internal damage from the seven affects (joy, anger, anxiety, thought, sorrow, fear, and fright) that results in binding depression of liver qì. When the liver's free coursing function is impaired, the *chōng mài* (thoroughfare vessel) and *rèn mài* (controlling vessel) become inhibited. Thus, qì and blood stagnate in the uterus and gradually form concretions.

Congealing cold blood stasis: Cold by nature causes contraction and tautness. According to Chinese medical theory, "when blood contracts cold, it congeals and binds to form lumps." Either externally-contracted cold evil or cold resulting from yáng vacuity can lead to hypertonicity of the channels and slow stagnant movement of blood. This forms stasis, which lodges and gradually forms concretions or conglomerations over time.

Phlegm and static blood binding together: Constitutional spleen-kidney yáng vacuity results in weakened movement and transformation of water-damp; accumulating dampness then forms phlegm. This results in phlegm-turbidity obstructing the uterus and the uterine vessels. Phlegm is sticky and difficult to eliminate; it binds and congests the channels, obstructing the movement of blood. When phlegm and blood contend with each other over time, concretions may be formed.

Qì vacuity leading to blood stasis: When qì is weak, it lacks the strength to move blood, resulting in slow and stagnant movement in the channels and vessels. Inhibited movement of blood forms stasis over time, and can eventually result in concretions.

Treatment

The *Huáng Dì Nèi Jīng* ("The Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon") outlined the basic treatment methods for concretions and conglomerations, and the methods that it mentioned are still the basis of therapy today. According to the *Nèi Jīng*: "Hardness is whittled away, what intrudes is eliminated, lodging is treated by attacking, [and] binding is treated by dissipation."

1800 years later, the original concepts laid down in the *Nèi Jīng* remained the foundation of medicinal therapy in the Qing Dynasty, China's final dynastic period. The Qing emperors commissioned the compilation of the *Yī Zōng Jīn Jiàn* ("The Golden Mirror of Orthodox Medicine"), which summed up much of the useful clinical information that had accumulated throughout Chinese history. The *Yī Zōng Jīn Jiàn* was an influential text in the development of modern gynecology. It states: "In treating any kind of concretion or accumulation, first ascertain whether the physical body is strong or weak and whether the condition of the disease is mild or urgent, and then treat accordingly. If the patient is vacuous, then her qì-blood is debilitated, and she cannot undergo attacking and quelling therapies; even if the disease is in exuberance, first support the right qì and later treat the disorder. If there is repletion of both physical form and symptoms, attacking the disorder is appropriate. The *Nèi Jīng* says to reduce great accumulations and great gatherings by half, and then cease applying attacking therapy. This is because of fears that excessive attacking will damage the qì and blood. Luó Tiān-Yì said: 'Nourishing the right naturally eliminates accumulations.' He can be praised as one who understands the essence of the *Nèi Jīng*."

Clinically, treatment of uterine fibroids is primarily based upon treating presenting symptoms. The main objectives of treatment are to control the volume of menstrual blood, attend to presenting symptoms, and reduce the size of the fibroid. This condition

develops over a long time, and pathological changes are usually rather slow. It requires prolonged treatment with medicinal therapy. Because proper treatment with Chinese medicine produces few side-effects, integrative Chinese medical texts suggest using medicinal therapy for cases where surgery is not practical or desirable. Small fibroids (approximately the size of an eight-week fetus or smaller) are more suitable to Chinese medical treatment than large fibroids.

The major methods of treatment are: quickening blood, rectifying qì, breaking stasis, dispersing concretions, softening hardness, and dissipating binds. However, it is essential to consider the patient's constitutional strength or weakness, the duration of the condition, and the disease pattern; a balance between supporting right qì and dispelling evil is necessary for a good treatment effect. Although the fibroids themselves are primarily due to repletion, they frequently cause profuse bleeding which wears on yīn-blood. If large quantities of harsh blood-quickening, stasis-transforming medicinals are used, they may exacerbate the symptoms of vacuity.

Chinese medical texts indicate that symptom control is relatively easy to accomplish with Chinese medicine, but eliminating concretions and conglomerations is more difficult. Chinese texts typically recommend surgery in cases where the size of the fibroid is equal to or larger than a twelve-week fetus and profuse menstruation cannot be reduced. Surgery is also recommended for cases where the fibroid is growing very rapidly, as well as cases where the fibroids protrude into the vagina.

Integrative textbooks provide a number of basic treatments that can be administered regardless of pattern. However, most texts emphasize the importance of using pattern diagnosis as the basis for determining treatment. One of the basic protocols based on modern disease diagnosis is outlined below.

During the time of menstruation, use the following formula to boost qì, nourish the blood, and stanch bleeding while rectifying qì and transforming stasis:

dǎng shēn (党参 codonopsis, Codonopsis Radix) 30 g
hé shǒu wū (何首乌 flowery knotweed, Polygoni Multiflori Radix) (processed) 30 g
mǔ lì (牡蛎 oyster shell, Ostreae Concha) 30 g
yì mǔ cǎo (益母草 leonurus, Leonuri Herba) 30 g
lì zhī hé (荔枝核 litchiee pit, Litchi Semen) 30 g
bái zhú (白朮 white atractylodes, Atractylodis Macrocephalae Rhizoma) 15 g
xuè yú tàn (血余炭 charred hair, Crinis Carbonisatus) 15 g
guàn zhòng (贯众 aspidium, Aspidii Rhizoma) (dry-fried) 20 g
chǎo pú huáng (炒蒲黄 stir-fried typha pollen, Typhae Pollen Frictus) 10 g
shēng má (升麻 cimicifuga, Cimicifugae Rhizoma) 6 g

If there is severe abdominal pain during menstruation, add 10 g each of *yán hú suǒ* (Corydalis Rhizoma) and *wǔ líng zhī* (Trogopteri Faeces).

For patients tending to kidney vacuity, with severe aching lumbus, add 20 g of *tù sī zǐ* (Cuscutae Semen) and 15 g of *xù duàn* (Dipsaci Radix).

The basic treatment is modified for the rest of the menstrual cycle. The following set formula rectifies qì, quickens blood, breaks stasis, disperses concretions, softens hardness, dissipates binds, transforms phlegm, and eliminates dampness.

lì zhī hé (荔枝核 litchiee pit, Litchi Semen) 30 g

shēng mǔ lì (生牡蛎 raw oyster shell, Ostreae Concha Cruda) 30 g
shēng biē jiǎ (生鳖甲 raw turtle shell, Amydae Carapax Crudus) 30 g
jú hé (橘核 tangerine pip, Citri Reticulatae Semen) 15 g
zhè bèi mǔ (浙贝母 Zhejiang fritillaria, Fritillariae Thunbergii Bulbus) 15 g
hǎi zǎo (海藻 sargassum, Sargassum) 15 g
wū yào (乌药 lindera, Linderae Radix) 15 g
é zhú (莪朮 curcuma rhizome, Curcumae Rhizoma) 10 g
wǔ líng zhī (五灵脂 squirrel's droppings, Trogopteri Faeces) 10 g
sān léng (三棱 sparganium, Sparganii Rhizoma) 10 g
qīng pí (青皮 unripe tangerine peel, Citri Reticulatae Pericarpium Viride) 10 g
yì yǐ rén (薏苡仁 coix, Coicis Semen) 20 g
xià kū cǎo (夏枯草 prunella, Prunellae Spica) 20 g

For pronounced qì and blood vacuity, add 30 g of *dǎng shēn* (Codonopsis Radix) and *hé shǒu wū* (Polygoni Multiflori Radix), and 20 g of *bái zhú* (Atractylodis Macrocephalae Rhizoma).

For kidney vacuity, add 30 g of *tù sī zǐ* (Cuscutae Semen) and 15 g each of *dù zhòng* (Eucommiae Cortex) and *xù duàn* (Dipsaci Radix).

For patients with severe cold signs including pain of the smaller abdomen that responds to hot packs and copious thin clear vaginal discharge, remove *xià kū cǎo* (Prunellae Spica) and add 10 g of *xiǎo huí xiāng* (Foeniculi Fructus), 8 g of *wú zhū yú* (Evodiae Fructus), 20 g of *jīn yīng zǐ* (Rosae Laevigatae Fructus), and 30 g of *qiàn shí* (Euryales Semen).

For cases with damp-heat, manifesting in profuse yellow sticky foul vaginal discharge, short voidings of yellow urine, and a red tongue with slimy yellow fur, add 10 g of *cāng zhú* (Atractylodis Rhizoma), 15 g of *huáng bǎi* (Phellodendri Cortex), and 20 g of *dà xuè téng* (Sargentodoxae Caulis).

Acupuncture: Acupuncture is recommended as an adjuvant therapy for uterine fibroids. The points recommended in most texts are not varied according to pattern, but rather are presented as a group for general use. The main points are the extra point for the uterus (*zǐ gōng xué*) and CV-2 (*qū gǔ*). The supplementary points are BL-23 (*shèn shū*), BL-25 (*dà cháng shū*), and SP-6 (*sān yīn jiāo*).

Enema Therapy: The use of enemas is not a traditional component of Chinese medical treatment. However, enema therapy has seen more widespread use in China in recent years, and is thought to be particularly useful for certain gynecological diseases. Enema therapy is appropriate for conditions such as uterine fibroids because enemas provide rapid assimilation of medicinal constituents and the rectum is in close proximity to the site of the disorder. The following formula is made into 100 ml of concentrated liquid, which is inserted into the rectum following a general enema to empty the contents of the bowel. The formula is retained for two hours, once per day. Thirty days constitutes one course of treatment. This formula should not be used in the midst of profuse menstruation.

táo rén (桃仁 peach kernel, Persicae Semen) 13 g
chuān xiōng (川芎 chuanxiong, Chuanxiong Rhizoma) 13 g
sān léng (三棱 sparganium, Sparganii Rhizoma) 13 g

é zhú (莪朮 curcuma rhizome, Curcumae Rhizoma) 13 g
chuān shān jiǎ (穿山甲 pangolin scales, Manis Squama) 13 g
mù tōng (木通 trifoliolate akebia, Akebiae Trifoliatae Caulis) 13 g
lù lù tōng (路路通 liquidambar fruit, Liquidambaris Fructus) 13 g
chén pí (陈皮 tangerine peel, Citri Reticulatae Pericarpium) 13 g
zhǐ shí (枳实 unripe bitter orange, Aurantii Fructus Immaturus) 13 g
kūn bù (昆布 kelp, Laminariae/Eckloniae Thallus) 13 g
mǔ lì (牡蛎 oyster shell, Ostreae Concha) 13 g
zhè chóng (螭虫 ground beetle, Eupolyphaga seu Steleophaga) 12 g

For obese patients with severe phlegm-damp, add 15 g each of *xià kū cǎo* (Prunellae Spica) and *bàn xià* (Pinelliae Rhizoma).

A variety of pathomechanisms contribute to the development of uterine fibroids. However, most clinical presentations can be divided into three patterns: 1) blood stasis, 2) congealing of cold-damp, and 3) phlegm and blood stasis binding together. Treatment should always be modified to match the presentation of each patient, and the degree of repletion and vacuity must be carefully assessed.

Blood Stasis

Treatment Method: Quicken the blood and expel stasis, disperse concretions and dissipate binds.

Medicinal Therapy: Use the formula Rhubarb and Ground Beetle Pill (*dà huáng zhè chóng wán*) from the *Jīn Guì Yào Lǚ* (“Essential Prescriptions of the Golden Coffin”).

Dà Huáng Zhè Chóng Wán (大黄螭虫丸 Rhubarb and Ground Beetle Pill)

dà huáng (大黄 rhubarb, Rhei Radix et Rhizoma)
huáng qín (黄芩 scutellaria, Scutellariae Radix)
táo rén (桃仁 peach kernel, Persicae Semen)
xìng rén (杏仁 apricot kernel, Armeniacae Semen)
gān dì huáng (干地黄 dried rehmannia, Rehmanniae Radix)
sháo yào (芍药 peony, Paeoniae Radix)
gān cǎo (甘草 licorice, Glycyrrhizae Radix)
gān qī (干漆 lacquer, Toxicodendri Resina)
méng chóng (虻虫 tabanus, Tabanus)
shuǐ zhì (水蛭 leech, Hirudo)
qí cáo (蛭蟥 June beetle grub, Holotrichiae Vermiculus)
zhè chóng (螭虫 ground beetle, Eupolyphaga seu Steleophaga)

This formula has many insect ingredients and is thus too harsh for cases with significant vacuity. In such cases, *méng chóng* (Tabanus) and *qí cáo* (June beetle grub) may be removed. If there is profuse menstruation, add *chǎo pú huáng* (Typhae Pollen Frictus), *chǎo wǔ líng zhī* (Trogopteri Faeces Frictum), and *sān qī fěn* (Notoginseng Radix Pulverata). If prolonged bleeding has damaged qì and yīn, you should add *shēng mài sǎn* (Pulse-Engendering Powder) to this formula.

Congealing of Cold-Damp

Treatment Method: Warm the channels and quicken the blood, transform stasis and disperse concretions.

Medicinal Therapy: Use the formula *guì zhī fú líng wán* (Cinnamon Twig and Poria Pill) from the *Jīn Guì Yào Liè* (“Essential Prescriptions of the Golden Coffin”).

Guì Zhī Fú Líng Wán (桂枝茯苓丸 Cinnamon Twig and Poria Pill)

guì zhī (桂枝 cinnamon twig, *Cinnamomi Ramulus*)

fú líng (茯苓 poria, *Poria*)

chì sháo yào (赤芍药 red peony, *Paeoniae Radix Rubra*)

mǔ dān pí (牡丹皮 moutan, *Moutan Cortex*)

táo rén (桃仁 peach kernel, *Persicae Semen*)

Phlegm and Blood Stasis Binding Together

Treatment Method: Rectify qì and transform phlegm, transform stasis and disperse concretions.

Medicinal Therapy: Use the formula *kāi yù èr chén tāng* (Depression-Opening Two Matured Ingredients Decoction) together with the formula *xiāo luǒ wán* (Scrofula-Dispersing Pill).

Kāi Yù Èr Chén Tāng (开郁二陈汤 Depression-Opening Two Matured Ingredients Decoction) plus *Xiāo Luǒ Wán* (消瘰丸 Scrofula-Dispersing Pill)

chén pí (陈皮 tangerine peel, *Citri Reticulatae Pericarpium*)

fú líng (茯苓 poria, *Poria*)

cāng zhú (苍朮 atractylodes, *Atractylodis Rhizoma*)

xiāng fù (香附 cyperus, *Cyperis Rhizoma*)

chuān xiōng (川芎 chuanxiong, *Chuanxiong Rhizoma*)

bàn xià (半夏 pinellia, *Pinelliae Rhizoma*)

qīng pí (青皮 unripe tangerine peel, *Citri Reticulatae Pericarpium Viride*)

é zhú (莪朮 curcuma rhizome, *Curcumae Rhizoma*)

bīng láng (槟榔 areca, *Arecae Semen*)

gān cǎo (甘草 licorice, *Glycyrrhizae Radix*)

mù xiāng (木香 costusroot, *Aucklandiae Radix*)

xuán shēn (玄参 scrophularia, *Scrophulariae Radix*) (steamed)

duàn mǔ lì (煅牡蛎 calcined oyster shell, *Ostreae Concha Calcinata*)

zhè bèi mǔ (浙贝母 Zhejiang fritillaria, *Fritillariae Thunbergii Bulbus*) (steamed with the skin removed)

CONCRETIONS AND CONGLOMERATIONS

Definition

Chinese medicine has traditionally classified four types of abdominal masses, which are known as concretions, conglomerations, accumulations, and gatherings (癥瘕积聚 *zhēng, jiǎ, jī, jù*, respectively). These conditions are often associated with pain and distention. Concretions and accumulations are masses of definite form and fixed location, and are associated with pain of fixed location. They stem from disease in the viscera and blood aspect. Conglomerations and gatherings are masses of indefinite form, which gather and dissipate at irregular intervals and are attended by pain of unfixed location. They are attributed to disease in the bowels and qì aspect.

Accumulations and gatherings chiefly occur in the center burner. Concretions and conglomerations chiefly occur in the lower burner and in many cases result from gynecological diseases. In general, concretions, conglomerations, accumulations, and gatherings arise when emotional depression or dietary intemperance causes damage to the liver and spleen. The resultant organ disharmony leads to obstruction and stagnation of qì, which in turn causes static blood to collect gradually. Most often the root cause is insufficiency of right qì.

Pathomechanisms

The pathomechanisms of concretions and conglomerations are rooted in disharmony of the bowels and viscera and irregularities of qì and blood. When the qì dynamic is obstructed and stagnant, static blood collects internally. The most commonly seen patterns are qì stagnation, blood stasis, and phlegm-damp.

Qì stagnation: Qì stagnation may result when internal damage from the seven affects causes binding depression of liver qì (the “seven affects” are joy, anger, anxiety, thought, sorrow, fear, and fright). This pattern may also arise from evil qì obstructing the channels. Regardless of the original cause, when the qì dynamic is depressed and stagnant, the movement of blood is inhibited. Qì and blood stagnation then affects the *rèn mài* (controlling vessel), *chōng mài* (thoroughfare vessel), and uterus to accumulate in the smaller abdomen and bind to form concretions and conglomerations.

Blood stasis: Blood stasis may develop from a variety of pathomechanisms. For example, anger damages the liver and results in counterflow qì and lodging of blood, and anxiety and preoccupation damage the spleen, causing binding of qì and stagnation of blood.

During menstruation and after childbirth, the uterine vessels are vacuous and the blood chamber is open. If wind-cold invades at this time, qì and blood become congealed and stagnant. Another traditional cause of blood stasis is sexual intemperance when surplus blood has not been eliminated. Surplus blood contending with evil may form stasis. Whatever the cause, static blood in the uterus may accumulate to form concretions.

Phlegm-damp: Phlegm-damp develops for a variety of reasons. It may arise from constitutional spleen vacuity or when dietary irregularities and overconsumption of cold foods and drinks damage the spleen. Additionally, if liver qi is depressed and invades the spleen, it may cause impaired splenic movement and transformation. When movement and transformation is impaired, damp-turbidity collects internally and gathers to form phlegm. Phlegm-damp congealing with qi and blood can accumulate in the uterus to form concretions.

Treatment

Treatment of concretions and conglomerations is based on pattern identification. Generally speaking, when the disease is in the qi, treatment is primarily centered on rectifying qi and moving stagnation, and moving blood is secondary. When the disease is in the blood, breaking stasis is the foundation of treatment and moving qi is secondary. For phlegm-damp, appropriate treatment includes dispelling phlegm, dispersing accumulations, moving qi, and quickening the blood.

New conditions in strong patients may be treated by attacking and breaking, but old illnesses in weaker patients require concurrent supplementation. In general, when the size of the mass is reduced by half, harsh methods should no longer be used to prevent damage to the original qi.

Qi Stagnation

Treatment Method: Move qi and abduct stagnation, quicken the blood and dissipate binds.

Medicinal Therapy: Use the formula *xiāng léng wán* (Cyperus and Sparganium Pill) from the text *Ji Shēng Fāng* (full name *Yán Shì Ji Shēng Fāng* (“Yan’s Formulas for Saving Lives”).

Xiāng Léng Wán (香棱丸 Cyperus and Sparganium Pill)

mù xiāng (木香 costusroot, Aucklandiae Radix)

dīng xiāng (丁香 clove, Caryophylli Flos)

sān léng (三棱 sparganium, Sparganii Rhizoma)

é zhú (莪朮 curcuma rhizome, Curcumae Rhizoma)

qīng pí (青皮 unripe tangerine peel, Citri Reticulatae Pericarpium Viride)

zhǐ qiào (ké) (枳壳 bitter orange, Aurantii Fructus)

chuān liàn zǐ (川楝子 toosendan, Toosendan Fructus)

xiǎo huí xiāng (小茴香 fennel, Foeniculi Fructus)

zhū shā (朱砂 cinnabar, Cinnabaris) (often omitted)

For severe lower abdominal pain, add *yán hú suǒ* (Corydalis Rhizoma) and *sān qī* (Notoginseng Radix) to rectify qi and relieve pain. For irregular menstruation, delayed menstruation, or scanty menstruation, add *xiāng fū* (Cyperus Rhizoma) and *dān shēn* (Salvia Miltiorrhizae Radix) to move qi and quicken the blood. For profuse vaginal discharge, add *fú líng* (Poria) and *yì yǐ rén* (Coicis Semen).

Blood Stasis

Treatment Method: Quicken the blood and transform stasis, break accumulations and disperse concretions.

Medicinal Therapy: Use the formula *guì zhī fú líng wán* (Cinnamon Twig and Poria Pill) from the *Jīn Guì Yào Lǜe* (“Essential Prescriptions of the Golden Coffin”).

Guì Zhī Fú Líng Wán (桂枝茯苓丸 Cinnamon Twig and Poria Pill)

guì zhī (桂枝 cinnamon twig, *Cinnamomi Ramulus*)

fú líng (茯苓 poria, *Poria*)

chì sháo yào (赤芍药 red peony, *Paeoniae Radix Rubra*)

mǔ dān pí (牡丹皮 moutan, *Moutan Cortex*)

táo rén (桃仁 peach kernel, *Persicae Semen*)

This formula may be modified to treat menstrual block or delayed menstruation by adding *niú xī* (*Achyranthis Bidentatae Radix*) and *zé lán* (*Lycopi Herba*) to conduct the downward movement of blood. For profuse menstruation, prolonged menstruation, or incessant flooding and spotting, add *chǎo pú huáng* (*Typhae Pollen Frictus*), *sān qī fěn* (*Notoginseng Radix Pulverata*), and *xuè yú tàn* (*Crisis Carbonisatus*). For severe pain, add *yán hú suǒ* (*Corydalis Rhizoma*), *rǔ xiāng* (*Olibanum*), and *mò yào* (*Myrrha*). If there is lower abdominal cold pain, add *ròu guì* (*Cinnamomi Cortex*), *wú zhū yú* (*Evodiae Fructus*), *xiǎo huí xiāng* (*Foeniculi Fructus*), and *pào jiāng* (*Zingiberis Rhizoma Praeparatum*).

Alternatively, for severe stasis accumulation, with hard concretion lumps, intense pain, menstrual block, dark eyes, fullness and distention in the chest and rib-sides, and dry bound stool, use *dà huáng zhè chóng wán* (*Rhubarb and Ground Beetle Pill*) from the *Jīn Guì Yào Lǜe* (“Essential Prescriptions of the Golden Coffin”).

Dà Huáng Zhè Chóng Wán (大黄䟽虫丸 Rhubarb and Ground Beetle Pill)

dà huáng (大黄 rhubarb, *Rhei Radix et Rhizoma*)

huáng qín (黄芩 scutellaria, *Scutellariae Radix*)

táo rén (桃仁 peach kernel, *Persicae Semen*)

xìng rén (杏仁 apricot kernel, *Armeniaca Semen*)

gān dì huáng (干地黄 dried rehmannia, *Rehmanniae Radix*)

sháo yào (芍药 peony, *Paeoniae Radix*)

gān cǎo (甘草 licorice, *Glycyrrhizae Radix*)

gān qī (干漆 lacquer, *Toxicodendri Resina*)

méng chóng (虻虫 tabanus, *Tabanus*)

shuǐ zhì (水蛭 leech, *Hirudo*)

qí cáo (蛴螬 June beetle grub, *Holotrichiae Vermiculus*)

zhè chóng (䟽虫 ground beetle, *Eupolyphaga seu Steleophaga*)

Phlegm-Damp

Treatment Method: Transform phlegm and eliminate dampness, dissipate binds and disperse concretions.

Medicinal Therapy: Use the formula *kāi yù èr chén tāng* (*Depression-Opening Two Matured Ingredients Decoction*).

Kāi Yù Èr Chén Tāng (开郁二陈汤 Depression-Opening Two Matured Ingredients Decoction) plus *Xiǎo Luǒ Wán* (消瘰丸 Scrofula-Dispersing Pill)

chén pí (陈皮 tangerine peel, Citri Reticulatae Pericarpium)

fú líng (茯苓 poria, Poria)

cāng zhú (苍朮 atractylodes, Atractylodis Rhizoma)

xiāng fù (香附 cyperus, Cyperi Rhizoma)

chuān xiōng (川芎 chuanxiong, Chuanxiong Rhizoma)

bàn xià (半夏 pinellia, Pinelliae Rhizoma)

qīng pí (青皮 unripe tangerine peel, Citri Reticulatae Pericarpium Viride)

é zhú (莪朮 curcuma rhizome, Curcumae Rhizoma)

bīng láng (槟榔 areca, Arecae Semen)

gān cǎo (甘草 licorice, Glycyrrhizae Radix)

mù xiāng (木香 costusroot, Aucklandiae Radix)

shēng jiāng (生姜 fresh ginger, Zingiberis Rhizoma Recens)

For spleen-stomach weakness, remove *bīng láng* (Arecae Semen) and add *dǎng shēn* (Codonopsis Radix) and *bái zhú* (Atractylodis Macrocephalae Rhizoma) to fortify the spleen and boost qì. For strong patients with repletion conditions, *tíng lì zǐ* (lepidium/descurainiae) and *jīn méng shí* (Micae Lapis Aureus) may be added.

PROFUSE MENSTRUATION

Definition

Profuse menstruation refers to greater menstrual flow or a longer menstrual period than normal. Some texts divide these two conditions and deal with them independently. Profuse menstruation was not historically quantified, although some modern texts suggest that over 100 ml of blood loss in a single menstrual cycle qualifies as profuse menstruation. Prolonged menstruation is typically defined as a menstrual period lasting longer than seven days. Profuse menstruation was recorded very early in Chinese medical history, and is found in the Han Dynasty text *Jīn Guì Yào Lǜe* (“Essential Prescriptions of the Golden Coffin”).

Profuse menstruation should be clinically differentiated from flooding and spotting. Profuse menstruation refers to profuse bleeding within a normal menstrual cycle, whereas flooding and spotting occur outside of the normal menstrual cycle. Profuse menstruation and prolonged menstruation are largely similar in terms of their pathomechanisms, pattern identification, and treatment.

Pathomechanisms

The core pathomechanisms in profuse menstruation relate to pathological changes affecting the *chōng mài* (thoroughfare vessel) and *rèn mài* (controlling vessel). Qi vacuity, blood heat, and blood stasis are the primary disease causes involved.

Qi vacuity: Qi vacuity can lead to profuse menstruation if the spleen fails to control the blood. This may occur as a result of constitutional weakness, dietary irregularities, excessive taxation, or damage to the spleen from major illness. Spleen vacuity causes loss of the spleen’s containing function. This causes insecurity in the *chōng mài* and *rèn mài*, which fail to contain the menstrual blood, producing profuse menstruation.

Blood heat: Blood heat damages the *chōng mài* and *rèn mài* and causes frenetic movement of hot blood. Deep-lying heat in the *chōng mài* and *rèn mài* may result from a variety of factors, including constitutional *yáng* exuberance, excessive consumption of acrid, dry, or *yáng*-assisting substances, as well as externally contracted heat evils or fire formation from the seven affects.

Blood stasis: When static blood collects and accumulates in the *chōng mài* and *rèn mài*, new blood cannot return to the channels. The blood thus moves frenetically, producing profuse menstruation.

Treatment

Treatment of profuse menstruation is generally based upon pattern identification. While many practitioners believe that pattern identification yields superior clinical results, modern textbooks also list empirical formulas that may be used regardless of pattern with

slight modifications. Such formulas are sometimes used in integrative medicine by practitioners who are either skeptical of the validity of pattern diagnosis or are not sufficiently trained to apply it; these practitioners typically use disease identification as the basis for determining treatment, and use standard formulas with slight variations.

For example, the following empirical formula is recommended for patients with uterine fibroids and concurrent profuse menstruation or prolonged menstruation. Three packs of this formula are taken for the first two days of the menstrual cycle to reduce bleeding and shorten the menstrual period.

yì mǔ cǎo (益母草 leonurus, Leonuri Herba) 30 g
guàn zhòng (贯众 aspidium, Aspidii Rhizoma) (charred) 15 g
qiàn cǎo (茜草 madder, Rubiae Radix) 12 g
shān zhā (山楂 crataegus, Crataegi Fructus) (unprocessed) 15 g
hóng huā (红花 carthamus, Carthami Flos) (dry-fried) 10 g
mò hàn lián (墨旱莲 eclipta, Ecliptae Herba) 30 g
shēng dì yú (生地榆 raw sanguisorba, Sanguisorbae Radix Cruda) 30 g
ōu jié (藕节 lotus root node, Nelumbinis Rhizomatis Nodus) 30 g
sān qī fěn (三七粉 powdered notoginseng, Notoginseng Radix Pulverata) 3 g

For qì vacuity, add *huáng qí* (Astragali Radix), charred *bái zhú* (Atractylodis Macrocephalae Rhizoma), *dǎng shēn* (Codonopsis Radix), and *shēng má* (Cimicifugae Rhizoma). For pronounced heat signs, add charred *tiáo qín* (Scutellariae Radix Nova), charred *zhī zǐ* (Gardeniae Fructus), and charred *huáng bǎi* (Phellodendri Cortex). For cold presentations, add *pào jiāng* (Zingiberis Rhizoma Praeparatum) and *ài yè* (Artemisiae Argyi Folium). For abdominal pain, add *yán hú suǒ* (Corydalis Rhizoma) and *wǔ líng zhī* (Trogopteri Faeces). Finally, for blood vacuity, add charred *bái sháo* (Paeoniae Radix Alba), charred *shú dì huáng* (Rehmanniae Radix Praeparata), and *ē jiāo* (Asini Corii Colla).

Qì Vacuity

Treatment Method: Supplement qì and contain the blood, nourish the blood and regulate the menses.

Medicinal Therapy: Use the formula *jǔ yuán jiān* (Origin-Lifting Brew) from the *Jīng Yuè Quán Shū* (“Jing-Yuè’s Complete Compendium”).

Jǔ Yuán Jiān (举元煎 Origin-Lifting Brew)

rén shēn (人参 ginseng, Ginseng Radix)
huáng qí (黄芪 astragalus, Astragali Radix)
shēng má (升麻 cimicifuga, Cimicifugae Rhizoma)
bái zhú (白朮 white atractylodes, Atractylodis Macrocephalae Rhizoma)
gān cǎo (甘草 licorice, Glycyrrhizae Radix)

This formula may be modified to further reduce the length of menstruation and the quantity of bleeding by adding *ē jiāo* (Asini Corii Colla), *hǎi piāo xiāo* (Sepiae Endoconcha), *qiàn cǎo* (Rubiae Radix), and *yì mǔ cǎo* (Leonuri Herba). For sagging and cold in the smaller abdomen, *pào jiāng* (Zingiberis Rhizoma Praeparatum) and *ài yè* (Artemisiae Argyi Folium) may be added.

Other formulas applicable for this pattern include *bǔ zhōng yì qì tāng* (Center-Supplementing Qi-Boosting Decoction) and *guī pí tāng* (Spleen-Returning Decoction). In addition, the following empirical formula may be used:

shēng huáng qí (生黄芪 raw astragalus, Astragali Radix Cruda) 50 g
dāng guī (当归 Chinese angelica, Angelicae Sinensis Radix) 10 g
hǎi piāo xiāo (海螵蛸 cuttlefish bone, Sepiae Endoconcha) 40 g
qiàn cǎo (茜草 madder, Rubiae Radix) 10 g
shēng dì yú (生地榆 raw sanguisorba, Sanguisorbae Radix Cruda) 50 g
shān zhū yú (山茱萸 cornus, Corni Fructus) 20 g

This formula is decocted with 30 ml of vinegar, with one pack divided into three doses taken over the course of one day. Two to four packs generally stanch the bleeding.

Acupuncture: Base treatment mainly on the *rèn mài* (controlling vessel), spleen, and stomach channels. Select CV-6 (*qì hǎi*), CV-4 (*guān yuán*), SP-10 (*xuè hǎi*), ST-36 (*zú sān lǐ*), BL-20 (*pí shū*), SP-6 (*sān yīn jiāo*), SP-2 (*dà dū*), and LR-8 (*qū quán*); needle with supplementation and add moxa.

Blood Heat

Treatment Method: Clear heat and cool the blood, and stanch bleeding and regulate the menses.

Medicinal Therapy: Use the formula *bǎo yīn jiān* (Yīn-Safeguarding Brew) from the *Jīng Yuè Quán Shū* (“Jīng-Yuè’s Complete Compendium”), with the addition of *huái huā* (Sophorae Flos) and *dì yú* (Sanguisorbae Radix).

Bǎo Yīn Jiān (保阴煎 Yīn-Safeguarding Brew) (modified)

shēng dì huáng (生地黄 dried rehmannia, Rehmanniae Radix Exsiccata)
shú dì huáng (熟地黄 cooked rehmannia, Rehmanniae Radix Praeparata)
huáng qín (黄芩 scutellaria, Scutellariae Radix)
huáng bǎi (黄柏 phellodendron, Phellodendri Cortex)
bái sháo (白芍 white peony, Paeoniae Radix Alba)
shān yào (山药 dioscorea, Dioscoreae Rhizoma)
xù duàn (续断 dipsacus, Dipsaci Radix)
gān cǎo (甘草 licorice, Glycyrrhizae Radix)
dì yú (地榆 sanguisorba, Sanguisorbae Radix)
huái huā (槐花 sophora flower, Sophorae Flos)

If there is dry bound stool, add *zhī mǔ* (Anemarrhenae Rhizoma) and *dà huáng* (Rhei Radix et Rhizoma); this frees the stool and drains fire while also strengthening the blood-stanching effect. For dry mouth and throat, add *shā shēn* (Adenophorae seu Glehniae Radix) and *mài dōng* (Ophiopogonis Radix). Finally, for externally contracted heat evils, add *jīn yín huā* (Lonicerae Flos), *sāng yè* (Mori Folium), and *yú xīng cǎo* (Houttuyniae Herba).

Some texts suggest that cases of repletion patterns of blood heat profuse menstruation should be treated with *qīng jīng tāng* (Menses-Clearing Decoction), while vacuity patterns should be treated with *dì gǔ pí yīn* (Lycium Root Bark Beverage) or *liǎng dì tāng* (Rehmannia and Lycium Root Bark Decoction).

Acupuncture: For repletion patterns, base treatment on the *rèn mài* (controlling vessel), spleen, liver, stomach, and large intestine channels. Select the following points and needle with draining technique: CV-4 (*guān yuán*), SP-10 (*xuè hǎi*), LR-3 (*tài chōng*), LI-11 (*qū chí*), LI-2 (*èr jiān*), ST-44 (*nèi tíng*), and LR-2 (*xíng jiān*). For vacuity patterns, base treatment on the *rèn mài* (controlling vessel) and three yīn channels of the foot. Select CV-4 (*guān yuán*), SP-10 (*xuè hǎi*), KI-6 (*zhào hǎi*), KI-2 (*rán gǔ*), SP-6 (*sān yīn jiāo*), and HT-7 (*shén mén*). Needling should be done with even supplementation and drainage.

Blood Stasis

Treatment Method: Quicken the blood and transform stasis, stanch bleeding and regulate the menses.

Medicinal Therapy: Use the formula *shī xiào sǎn* (Sudden Smile Powder) from the *Tài Píng Huì Mǐn Hé Jì Jú Fāng* (“Tài-Píng Imperial Grace Pharmacy Formulas”), with the addition of *yì mǔ cǎo* (Leonuri Herba), *xuè yú tàn* (Crisis Carbonisatus), and *qiàn cǎo* (Rubiae Radix).

Shī Xiào Sǎn (失笑散 Sudden Smile Powder) (modified)

pú huáng (蒲黄 typha pollen, Typhae Pollen)
wǔ líng zhī (五灵脂 squirrel’s droppings, Trogopteri Faeces)
yì mǔ cǎo (益母草 leonurus, Leonuri Herba)
xuè yú tàn (血余炭 charred hair, Crisis Carbonisatus)
qiàn cǎo (茜草 madder, Rubiae Radix)

Alternatively, the following empirical formula may be used for patients with a blood stasis presentation of uterine fibroids and concurrent profuse menstruation:

huáng qí (黄芪 astragalus, Astragali Radix) 9 g
guì zhī (桂枝 cinnamon twig, Cinnamomi Ramulus) 9 g
fú líng (茯苓 poria, Poria) 9 g
mǔ dān pí (牡丹皮 moutan, Moutan Cortex) 9 g
táo rén (桃仁 peach kernel, Persicae Semen) 9 g
chì sháo (赤芍 red peony, Paeoniae Radix Rubra) 9 g
sān léng (三棱 sparganium, Sparganii Rhizoma) 9 g
é zhú (莪朮 curcuma rhizome, Curcumae Rhizoma) 9 g

Acupuncture: Base treatment mainly on the *rèn mài* (controlling vessel) and spleen channels. Select CV-6 (*qì hǎi*), SP-6 (*sān yīn jiāo*), SP-1 (*yīn bái*), SP-8 (*dì jī*), ST-30 (*qì chōng*), and SP-12 (*chōng mén*); needle with drainage.

FLOODING AND SPOTTING

Definition

Flooding and spotting refers to any abnormal discharge of blood via the vagina. Flooding (*bēng*) is heavy menstrual flow or abnormal bleeding via the vagina (uterine bleeding); spotting (*lòu*), literally “leaking” in Chinese, is a slight, often continual discharge of blood via the vagina. Since each may give way to the other, they are commonly referred to together. Flooding and spotting usually occur in puberty or at menopause. It is attributed to insecurity of the *chōng* (thoroughfare) and *rèn* (controlling) vessels, which may stem from a variety of causes.

Generally speaking, flooding and spotting refer to bleeding outside of the normal menstrual cycle. Abnormally heavy bleeding during menstruation is typically classified as profuse menstruation rather than flooding, although this distinction is not absolute. Likewise, abnormally light menstrual flow occurring at a regular menstrual interval is typically labeled as scant menstruation rather than spotting.

Pathomechanisms

Flooding and spotting is primarily caused by kidney vacuity, spleen vacuity, blood heat, and blood stasis. As in many menstrual diseases, TCM theory uses the *chōng mài* (thoroughfare vessel) and *rèn mài* (controlling vessel) to explain the disease process. While flooding and spotting is primarily due to insecurity of the *chōng* and *rèn* channels leading to failure to contain the menstrual blood, this insecurity is, in turn, rooted in basic disharmonies of *qì* and blood or the bowels and viscera.

Kidney vacuity: The importance of the kidney in menstrual pathologies inspired the text *Fù Qīng Zhǔ Nǚ Kē* (“Fù Qīng-Zhǔ’s Gynecology”) to state: “All menstrual bleeding [involves] the kidney.” Flooding and spotting are commonly seen in young women with earlier-heaven insufficiency. Such patients have weak kidney *qì*; thus, when *tiān-guǐ* arrives, their *chōng* and *rèn* channels lack exuberance. Serious vacuity may also be seen in older women, who gradually develop kidney *qì* vacuity during menopause. In addition, early marriage, multiparity, and sexual intemperance can damage the kidney *qì*.

If the essence-blood is damaged and kidney *yīn* is depleted, vacuity fire may stir the blood, leading to flooding and spotting. Alternatively, if there is vacuity detriment of the kidney *yáng*, the kidney loses its storing function. This causes insecurity of the *chōng* and *rèn* channels, which then fail to control the blood, producing flooding and spotting.

Spleen vacuity: The spleen may be damaged by excessive thought and preoccupation, dietary irregularities, or overexertion. Interestingly, Zhāng Jǐng-Yuè further developed the idea of thought damaging the spleen with his statement that “difficulty in releasing thought causes damage to the spleen.” When the spleen is damaged, there can be falling of *qì* and containment failure. The *chōng* and *rèn* channels become insecure and fail to control the menstrual blood, which results in flooding and spotting.

Liver depression: The liver governs free coursing and rectifies the sea of blood. Liver qì depressing over time forms fire and impaired free coursing causes irregular menstruation, alternating menstrual block and flooding, or incessant spotting. Liver qì depression may arise when affect-mind frustration leads to depression and anger that damage the liver and impair free coursing. It may also develop from invasion of external damp-heat and insufficiency of yin-blood depriving the liver of nourishment.

Blood heat: Blood heat may arise from either repletion or vacuity. Vacuity patterns are related to vacuous yīn producing intense vacuity fire internally. This may result from either constitutional yīn vacuity, damage to yīn by enduring illness or loss of blood, or the gradual depletion of yīn-essence in menopause. Repletion patterns generally arise from liver depression forming fire, constitutional yáng exuberance, externally contracted heat evils, or excessive consumption of acrid, spicy, and yáng-assisting substances. No matter what the original cause is, when fire is exuberant, heat harasses the *chōng* and *rèn* channels, manifesting in frenetic movement of hot blood.

Blood stasis: This pathomechanism may arise when damage from the seven affects causes qì and blood to stagnate in the *chōng* and *rèn* channels. It may also arise when surplus blood has not been eliminated during menstruation or after childbirth, and evils such as heat and cold bind with the blood to form stasis. When static blood obstructs the *chōng* and *rèn*, new blood cannot return to the channels. The blood thus moves frenetically, producing bleeding.

If flooding and spotting go unresolved and there is further contraction of evil qì, or if flooding and spotting are prolonged and form stasis, the presentation becomes a mixture of vacuity and repletion. In such cases, recurrences are difficult to treat. Although flooding and spotting is basically due to disharmony of qì and blood, it may have a complex presentation and involve many viscera; thus, it is described as a serious and difficult disease in the field of gynecology.

Treatment

Practitioners should seek to identify the pathomechanisms at the root of the disease and should treat appropriately based on the nature and pattern of the presentation. In young patients, pay attention to whether or not there is insufficiency of kidney qì and a corresponding lack of fullness in the *chōng* and *rèn* channels. In women of childbearing age, be sure to assess whether or not there has been damage to the *chōng* and *rèn* channels. For menopausal women, assess whether there are signs of liver and kidney vacuity. Generally speaking, if the blood loss is severe then the branch should be attended to first; if the bleeding is moderate or has stopped, the root pattern should be emphasized. Because flooding and spotting can be a complex disorder, it is essential to thoroughly correlate the four examinations to maximize diagnostic accuracy.

Additionally, some texts recommend acupuncture treatment to complement the blood-stanching aspect of therapy. One recommended set of points is: GV-20 (*bǎi huì*), CV-8 (*shén què*), and SP-1 (*yīn bái*). If there is clouding reversal (sudden loss of consciousness and collapse, sometimes accompanied by reversal cold of the limbs), urgently needle GV-26 (*rén zhōng*), LI-4 (*hé gǔ*), ST-36 (*zú sān lǐ*), and GV-20 (*bǎi huì*).

Another text recommends the following acumoxa protocol: Needle the primary points CV-4 (*guān yuán*), SP-6 (*sān yīn jiāo*), and SP-1 (*yīn bái*). This treatment is then modified by pattern: To treat repletion heat, also apply draining needle technique to

SP-10 (*xuè hǎi*) and KI-5 (*shuǐ quán*). For yīn vacuity, add PC-6 (*nèi guān*) and KI-3 (*tài xī*). If there is spleen vacuity, add BL-20 (*pí shū*) and ST-36 (*zú sān lǐ*). For vacuity desertion, moxa GV-20 (*bǎi huì*) and CV-6 (*qì hǎi*). For spleen and yīn vacuity, use supplementing needle technique. Some additional acupuncture treatments are outlined in the patterns below.

Kidney Qì Vacuity

Treatment Method: Supplement kidney qì, secure the *chōng mài* (thoroughfare vessel), and stanch bleeding.

Medicinal Therapy: Use the formula *tōng mài dà shēng piàn* (Vessel-Freeing Great Engendering Tablets) from the text *Zhōng Yī Fù Kē Zhì Liáo Xué* (“Treatments in Chinese Medical Gynecology”). This formula is mostly supplementing, so it is often used in the later stages of treatment; it is particularly suited to young women.

Tōng Mài Dà Shēng Piàn (通脉大生片 Vessel-Freeing Great Engendering Tablets)

dù zhòng (杜仲 eucommia, Eucommiae Cortex)

xù duàn (续断 dipsacus, Dipsaci Radix)

tù sī zǐ (菟丝子 cuscuta, Cuscutae Semen)

sāng jì shēng (桑寄生 mistletoe, Loranthis seu Visci Ramus)

ài yè (艾叶 mugwort, Artemisiae Argyi Folium)

shā rén (砂仁 amomum, Amomi Fructus)

fú líng (茯苓 poria, Poria)

shān yào (山药 dioscorea, Dioscoreae Rhizoma)

lù jiǎo shuāng (鹿角霜 degelatinated deer antler, Cervi Cornu Degelatinatum)

hé shǒu wū (何首乌 flowery knotweed, Polygoni Multiflori Radix)

wū yào (乌药 lindera, Linderae Radix)

dāng guī (当归 Chinese angelica, Angelicae Sinensis Radix)

ròu cōng róng (肉苁蓉 cistanche, Cistanches Herba)

chē qián zǐ (车前子 plantago seed, Plantaginis Semen)

gǒu qǐ zǐ (枸杞子 lycium, Lycii Fructus)

zǐ hé chē (紫河车 placenta, Hominis Placenta)

lì zhī hé (荔枝核 litchee pit, Litchi Semen)

Another treatment option is to combine the formula *shòu tāi wán* (Fetal Longevity Pill) with the formula *gù běn zhǐ bēng tāng* (Root-Securing Flood-Stanching Decoction). The former contains *tù sī zǐ* (Cuscutae Semen), *xù duàn* (Dipsaci Radix), *sāng jì shēng* (Taxilli Herba), and *ē jiāo* (Asini Corii Colla); while the latter contains *rén shēn* (Ginseng Radix), *huáng qí* (Astragali Radix), *bái zhú* (Atractylodis Macrocephalae Rhizoma), *shú dì huáng* (Rehmanniae Radix Praeparata), *dāng guī* (Angelicae Sinensis Radix), and *pào jiāng* (Zingiberis Rhizoma Praeparatum).

If there is severe bleeding, remove *dāng guī* (Angelicae Sinensis Radix) and add *zōng lǚ tàn* (Trachycarpi Stipulae Fibra Carbonisata), *duàn mǔ lì* (Ostreae Concha Calcinata), and *duàn lóng gǔ* (Mastodi Ossidis Fossilis Calcinata). If the bleeding is already scant, simply add *pú huáng* (Typhae Pollen) and *wǔ líng zhī* (Trogopteri Faeces) in place of the formula *gù běn zhǐ bēng tāng* (Root-Securing Flood-Stanching Decoction). For young

women, it may be appropriate to add *lù jiǎo shuāng* (Cervi Cornu Degelatinatum) and *bǔ gǔ zhī* (Psoraleae Fructus).

Acupuncture: The general acupuncture treatments listed above may be applied here. In addition, basic treatments for kidney qì vacuity may be used. Such treatments are based mainly on the *dū mài* (governing vessel), *rèn mài* (controlling vessel), bladder, and kidney channels. Select the points BL-23 (*shèn shū*), GV-4 (*mìng mén*), CV-4 (*guān yuán*), CV-6 (*qì hǎi*), ST-36 (*zú sān lǐ*), and KI-3 (*tài xī*), and needle with supplementation.

Kidney Yáng Vacuity

Treatment Method: Warm the kidney and assist yáng, and secure the *chōng mài* (thoroughfare vessel) and stanch bleeding.

Medicinal Therapy: Use the formula *yòu guī wán* (Right-Restoring Pill) from the *Jīng Yuè Quán Shū* (“Jīng-Yuè’s Complete Compendium”), but remove *dāng guī* (Angelicae Sinensis Radix) and *ròu guì* (Cinnamomi Cortex) and add *huáng qí* (Astragali Radix), *fū péng zǐ* (Rubi Fructus), and *chì shí zhī* (Holloysitum Rubrum).

Yòu Guī Wán (右归丸 Right-Restoring Pill) (modified)

fù zǐ (附子 aconite, Aconiti Radix Lateralis Praeparata)
shú dì huáng (熟地黄 cooked rehmannia, Rehmanniae Radix Praeparata)
shān yào (山药 dioscorea, Dioscoreae Rhizoma)
shān zhū yú (山茱萸 cornus, Corni Fructus)
gǒu qǐ zǐ (枸杞子 lycium, Lycii Fructus)
tù sī zǐ (菟丝子 cuscutea, Cuscutae Semen)
lù jiǎo jiāo (鹿角胶 deerhorn glue, Cervi Cornus Gelatinum)
dù zhòng (杜仲 eucommia, Eucommiae Cortex)
huáng qí (黄芪 astragalus, Astragali Radix)
fū péng zǐ (覆盆子 rubus, Rubi Fructus)
chì shí zhī (赤石脂 halloysite, Halloysitum Rubrum)

For young patients with kidney vacuity, some practitioners add *zǐ hé chē* (Hominis Placenta), *yín yáng huò* (Epimedium Herba), and *xiān máo* (Curculiginis Rhizoma). If there is congealing cold leading to stasis, with pain in the smaller abdomen and profuse bleeding of dark blood with clots, add *rǔ xiāng* (Olibanum), *mò yào* (Myrrha), and *wǔ líng zhī* (Trogopteri Faeces).

Acupuncture: General points for kidney yáng vacuity, such as BL-23 (*shèn shū*), GV-4 (*mìng mén*), KI-7 (*fù lǚ*), and KI-3 (*tài xī*) may be used in addition to the basic points listed in the treatment section above.

Kidney Yīn Vacuity

Treatment Method: Enrich the kidney and boost yīn; secure the *chōng mài* (thoroughfare vessel) and stanch bleeding.

Medicinal Therapy: Use the formula *zuǒ guī wán* (Left-Restoring Pill) from the *Jīng Yuè Quán Shū* (“Jīng-Yuè’s Complete Compendium”), but remove *chuān niú xī* (Cyathulae Radix) and add *mò hàn lián* (Ecliptae Herba) and *dì yú* (Sanguisorbae Radix).

Zuǒ Guī Wán (Left-Restoring [Kidney Yīn] Pill) (modified)

shú dì huáng (熟地黄 cooked rehmannia, Rehmanniae Radix Praeparata)

shān yào (山药 *dioscorea*, *Dioscoreae Rhizoma*)
shān zhū yú (山茱萸 *cornus*, *Corni Fructus*)
gǒu qǐ zǐ (枸杞子 *lycium*, *Lycii Fructus*)
tù sī zǐ (菟丝子 *cuscuta*, *Cuscutae Semen*)
lù jiǎo jiāo (鹿角胶 *deerhorn glue*, *Cervi Cornus Gelatinum*)
guī bǎn jiāo (龟版胶 *tortoise plastron glue*, *Testudinis Carapacis et Plastris Gelatinum*)
dì yú (地榆 *sanguisorba*, *Sanguisorbae Radix*) (dry-fried)
mò hàn lián (墨旱莲 *eclipta*, *Ecliptae Herba*)

Acupuncture: Here, the treatment is based mainly on the *rèn mài* (controlling vessel), spleen, kidney, and liver channels. Select CV-4 (*guān yuán*), SP-6 (*sān yīn jiāo*), BL-23 (*shèn shū*), BL-18 (*gān shū*), KI-3 (*tài xī*), KI-2 (*rán gǔ*), KI-10 (*yīn gǔ*), and LR-3 (*tài chōng*), and needle with supplementation.

Liver Depression

Treatment Method: Course the liver and rectify qì, and secure the *chōng mài* (thoroughfare vessel) and stanch bleeding.

Medicinal Therapy: Use the formula *xiāo yáo sǎn* (Free Wanderer Powder) from the text *Tài Píng Huì Mǐn Hé Jì Jú Fāng* (“Tài-Píng Imperial Grace Pharmacy Formulas”). When bleeding, modify this formula by removing *dāng guī* (*Angelicae Sinensis Radix*) and *wēi jiāng* (*Zingiberis Rhizoma Ustum*) and adding *mǔ dān pí* (*Moutan Cortex*), *zhī zǐ* (*Gardeniae Fructus*), charred *wū méi* (*Mume Fructus*), and charred *shān zhā* (*Crataegi Fructus*).

Xiāo Yáo Sǎn (逍遥散 Free Wanderer Powder) (modified)

chái hú (柴胡 *bupleurum*, *Bupleuri Radix*)
bái sháo (白芍 white peony, *Paeoniae Radix Alba*)
bái zhú (白朮 white atractylodes, *Atractylodis Macrocephalae Rhizoma*)
fú líng (茯苓 *poria*, *Poria*)
gān cǎo (甘草 licorice, *Glycyrrhizae Radix*)
bò hé (薄荷 mint, *Menthae Herba*)
mǔ dān pí (牡丹皮 *moutan*, *Moutan Cortex*)
shān zhī zǐ (山梔子 *gardenia*, *Gardeniae Fructus*)
wū méi (乌梅 *mume*, *Mume Fructus*) (charred)
shān zhā (山楂 *crataegus*, *Crataegi Fructus*) (charred)

Acupuncture: Here, treatment should be based mainly on the *rèn mài* (controlling vessel), spleen, liver, and pericardium channels. Select the points CV-6 (*qì hǎi*), SP-6 (*sān yīn jiāo*), SP-1 (*yīn bái*), LR-3 (*tài chōng*), PC-6 (*nèi guān*), TB-6 (*zhī gōu*), and LR-1 (*dà dūn*). Needle with draining technique.

Spleen Qì Vacuity

Treatment Method: Fortify the spleen and boost qì, secure the *chōng mài* (thoroughfare vessel) and stanch bleeding.

Medicinal Therapy: Use a modified version of the formula *gù běn zhǐ bēng tāng* (Root-Securing Flood-Stanching Decoction) from the text *Fù Qīng Zhǔ Nǚ Kē* (“Fù Qīng-Zhǔ’s

Gynecology”), or select *bǔ zhōng yì qì tāng* (Center-Supplementing Qi-Boosting Decoction) from the *Pí Wèi Lùn* (“On the Spleen and Stomach”).

Gù Běn Zhǐ Bēng Tāng (固本止崩汤 Root-Securing Flood-Stanching Decoction) (modified)

rén shēn (人参 ginseng, Ginseng Radix)

huáng qí (黄芪 astragalus, Astragali Radix)

bái zhú (白朮 white atractylodes, Atractylodis Macrocephalae Rhizoma)

shú dì huáng (熟地黄 cooked rehmannia, Rehmanniae Radix Praeparata)

dāng guī tàn (当归炭 charred tangkuei, Angelicae Sinensis Radix Carbonisata)

pào jiāng (炮姜 blast-fried ginger, Zingiberis Rhizoma Praeparatum)

If there is spotting that is difficult to terminate, add *zōng líú tàn* (Trachycarpi Stipulae Fibra Carbonisata) and powdered *sān qī* (Notoginseng Radix).

Bǔ Zhōng Yì Qì Tāng (补中益气汤 Center-Supplementing Qi-Boosting Decoction)

rén shēn (人参 ginseng, Ginseng Radix)

huáng qí (黄芪 astragalus, Astragali Radix)

bái zhú (白朮 white atractylodes, Atractylodis Macrocephalae Rhizoma)

gān cǎo (甘草 licorice, Glycyrrhizae Radix)

shēng má (升麻 cimicifuga, Cimicifugae Rhizoma)

chái hú (柴胡 bupleurum, Bupleuri Radix)

chén pí (陈皮 tangerine peel, Citri Reticulatae Pericarpium)

dāng guī (当归 Chinese angelica, Angelicae Sinensis Radix)

When the patient is bleeding, remove *dāng guī* (Angelicae Sinensis Radix) or use it in a charred form. Blood-nourishing medicinals such as *hé shǒu wū* (Polygoni Multiflori Radix) and *ē jiāo* (Asini Corii Colla) may be used instead, and *duàn mǔ lì* (Ostreae Concha Calcinata) and *duàn lóng gǔ* (Mastodi Ossid Fossilia Calcinata) are often added to astringe the bleeding. After the flooding and spotting is resolved, many practitioners use the formula *guī pí tāng* (Spleen-Returning Decoction) to treat the root.

Acupuncture: Base your treatment mainly on the *rèn mài* (controlling vessel) and spleen channels. Select GV-20 (*bǎi huì*), CV-12 (*zhōng wǎn*), CV-6 (*qì hǎi*), BL-20 (*pí shū*), CV-4 (*guān yuán*), ST-36 (*zú sān lǐ*), and SP-6 (*sān yīn jiāo*); needle with supplementation and add moxa.

Blood Heat

Treatment Method: Clear heat and cool the blood, and secure the *chōng mài* (thoroughfare vessel) and stanch bleeding.

Medicinal Therapy: Use the formula *qīng rè gù jīng tāng* (Heat-Clearing Menses-Securing Decoction) from the text *Jiǎn Míng Zhōng Yī Fù Kē Xué* (“Concise Chinese Medical Gynecology”).

Qīng Rè Gù Jīng Tāng (清热固经汤 Heat-Clearing Menses-Securing Decoction)

shēng dì huáng (生地黄 dried rehmannia, Rehmanniae Radix Exsiccata)

dì gǔ pí (地骨皮 lycium root bark, Lycii Cortex)

zhì guī bǎn (炙龟板 processed tortoise shell, Testudinis Carapax et Plastrum cum Liquido Fricti)
mǔ lì fěn (牡蛎粉 oyster shell powder, Ostreae Concha Pulverata)
ē jiāo (阿胶 ass hide glue, Asini Corii Colla)
huáng qín (黄芩 scutellaria, Scutellariae Radix)
ōu jié (藕节 lotus root node, Nelumbinis Rhizomatis Nodus)
chén zōng tàn (陈棕炭 charred old trachycarpus, Trachycarpi Stipulae Fibra Veta Carbonisata)
gān cǎo (甘草 licorice, Glycyrrhizae Radix)
zhī zǐ tàn (栀子炭 charred gardenia, Gardeniae Fructus Carbonisatus)
dì yú (地榆 sanguisorba, Sanguisorbae Radix)

If there is heart vexation, irascibility, and distention and pain in the smaller abdomen and rib-sides from heat in the liver channel, add *chái hú* (Bupleuri Radix), *xià kū cǎo* (Prunellae Spica), and *yì mǔ cǎo* (Leonuri Herba). If blood heat flooding and spotting causes severe damage to yīn, be sure to also assess the treatments outlined under kidney yīn vacuity above.

Acupuncture: For this pattern, base your treatment on the *rèn mài* (controlling vessel) and spleen channels. The main points are: CV-6 (*qì hǎi*), SP-6 (*sān yīn jiāo*), and SP-1 (*yīn bái*). For repletion patterns of blood heat, add SP-10 (*xuè hǎi*) and KI-5 (*shuǐ quán*) and needle with draining technique. For qì depression transforming into fire, add LR-3 (*tài chōng*), TB-6 (*zhī gōu*), LR-1 (*dà dūn*), and LR-2 (*xíng jiān*), and needle with drainage. For yīn vacuity blood heat, add KI-6 (*zhào hǎi*), KI-2 (*rán gǔ*), KI-3 (*tài xī*), and HT-7 (*shén mén*), needling with even supplementation and drainage.

Blood Stasis

Treatment Method: Quicken the blood and dispel stasis, and secure the *rèn mài* (controlling vessel) and stanch bleeding.

Medicinal Therapy: Use the formula *zhú yū zhǐ bēng tāng* (Stasis-Expelling Flooding-Stanching Decoction) from the text *Ān Huī Zhōng Yī Yàn Fāng Xuǎn Jí* (“Selected Empirical Formulas in Chinese Medicine from Anhui Province”).

Zhú Yū Zhǐ Bēng Tāng (逐瘀止崩汤 Stasis-Expelling Flooding-Stanching Decoction)

dāng guī (当归 Chinese angelica, Angelicae Sinensis Radix)
chuān xiōng (川芎 chuanxiong, Chuanxiong Rhizoma)
sān qī (三七 notoginseng, Notoginseng Radix)
mò yào (没药 myrrh, Myrrha)
wǔ líng zhī (五灵脂 squirrel’s droppings, Troglodyteri Faeces)
mǔ dān pí (牡丹皮 moutan, Moutan Cortex) (charred)
dān shēn (丹参 salvia, Salviae Miltiorrhizae Radix) (dry-fried)
ài yè (艾叶 mugwort, Artemisiae Argyi Folium) (dry-fried)
ē jiāo (阿胶 ass hide glue, Asini Corii Colla) (stir-fried with *pú huáng* (Typhae Pollen))
lóng gǔ (龙骨 dragon bone, Mastodi Osis Fossilis)
mǔ lì (牡蛎 oyster shell, Ostreae Concha)
hǎi piāo xiāo (海螵蛸 cuttlefish bone, Sepiae Endoconcha)

For concurrent qì stagnation signs such as distention in the smaller abdomen, chest, and rib-sides, add *chái hú* (Bupleuri Radix), *xiāng fù* (Cyperi Rhizoma), and *chuān liàn zǐ* (Toosendan Fructus) to rectify qì and move stagnation. If there is concurrent cold evil manifesting in smaller abdominal cold pain, add *wū yào* (Linderæ Radix) and *pào jiāng* (Zingiberis Rhizoma Praeparatum).

Acupuncture: Base your treatment on the *rèn mài* (controlling vessel) and spleen channels. Apply draining needle stimulus to CV-6 (*qì hǎi*), SP-6 (*sān yīn jiāo*), SP-1 (*yīn bái*), SP-8 (*dì jī*), ST-30 (*qì chōng*), and SP-12 (*chōng mén*).

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