

Oriental Medicine: Narcolepsy

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Disease in O.M.

Understanding diseases in Oriental Medicine: disease is not mere surrender to attack but also a fight for health; unless there is a fight, there is no disease. Disease is not just suffering, but a fight to maintain the homeostatic balance of our tissues, despite damage. Symptoms are not disease. Symptoms accompany disease. Symptoms are evidence of disease. But **treating symptoms is like killing the messenger for bringing bad news**. In fact, treating symptoms can suppress the body's natural responses and inhibit the healing process. The many "successes" of conventional medical treatments were only temporary and often harmful, since the symptoms often returned or more threatening symptoms manifested as the body sought to reestablish its internal harmony. No matter what combination of conditions, complaints, and sufferings the patient experiences at any one time, all are manifestations of an internal physiological disorder that is unique to the individual. **No one organs of the body can be sick without affecting the person as a whole**. They are connected as shown in Five Phases theory in the aspect of generating and controlling relation. Therefore, all symptoms must be taken into account and pulse should be taken to give priority in the selection of treatment at that time. We do not treat symptoms. We treat the root causes. The symptoms and pulse guides the practitioner to the root causes that need to be taken care of with preference.

Narcolepsy

- **Narcolepsy** is a chronic sleep disorder. The condition is characterized by excessive daytime sleepiness (EDS) in which a person experiences extreme fatigue and possibly falls asleep at inappropriate times, such as whilst at work or at school. Night time sleep does not include as much deep sleep, so the brain tries to "catch up" during the day, hence EDS. People with narcolepsy may visibly fall asleep at unpredicted moments (such motions as head bobbing are common). People with narcolepsy fall quickly into what appears to be very deep sleep, and they wake up suddenly and can be disoriented when they do(dizziness is a common occurrence).
- **Causes:** There appeared to be a correlation between narcoleptic individuals and certain variations in HLA genes, although it was not required for the condition to occur. Certain variations in the HLA complex were thought to increase the risk of an auto-immune response to protein-producing neurons in the brain. The protein produced, called hypocretin or orexin, is responsible for controlling appetite and sleep patterns. Individuals with narcolepsy often have reduced numbers of these protein-producing neurons in their brains. In 2009 the autoimmune hypothesis was supported by research carried out at Stanford University School of Medicine.

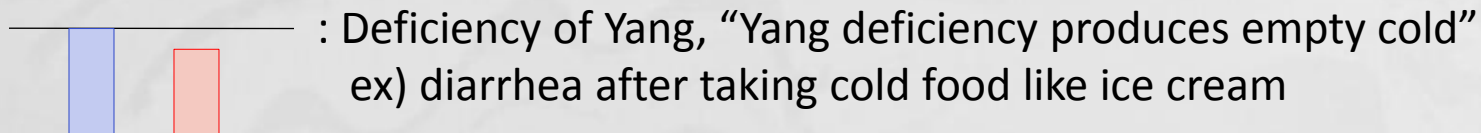
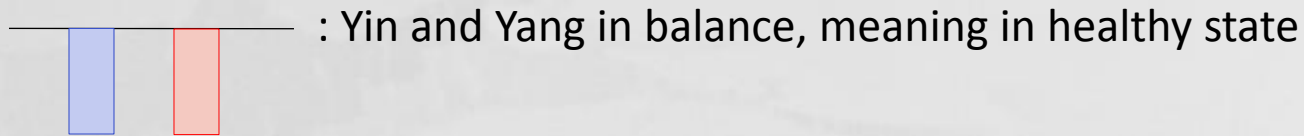
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narcolepsy>

Etiology & Pathology of Narcolepsy

- The cause of narcolepsy is not clearly understood in Oriental medicine as well. However, combinations of the following patterns were observed with most patients who were diagnosed as narcolepsy.
- **Yang deficiency**
: feeling cold, desiring warmth, cold limbs, pale urine, etc.
- **Blood deficiency**
: dull white sallow complexion, dizziness, poor memory, numbness or tingling, blurred vision, insomnia, pale lips, scanty periods, etc.
- **Clear Yang fails to ascend to the head**
: inability to think clearly, tiredness, poor appetite, muzziness, lack of concentration, etc.
- **(Non-substantial) Phlegm**
: numbness, epilepsy, mental illness, mental confusion, depression, etc.

Yang deficiency

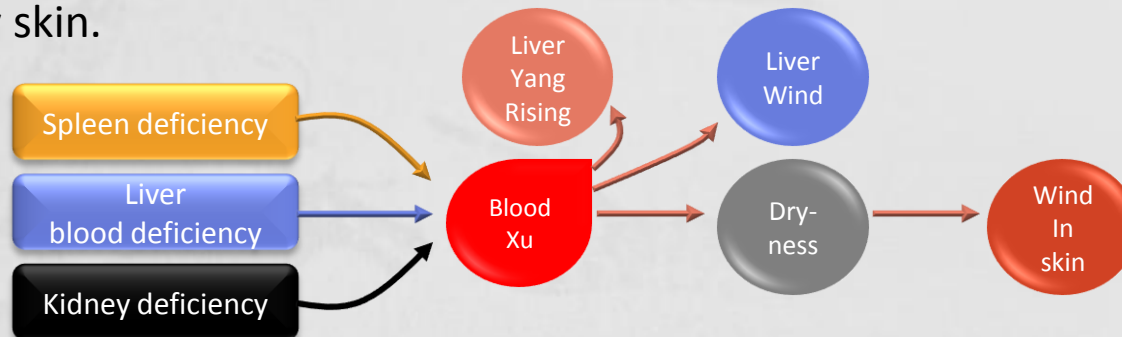
- Yin and Yang represent opposite but complementary qualities.



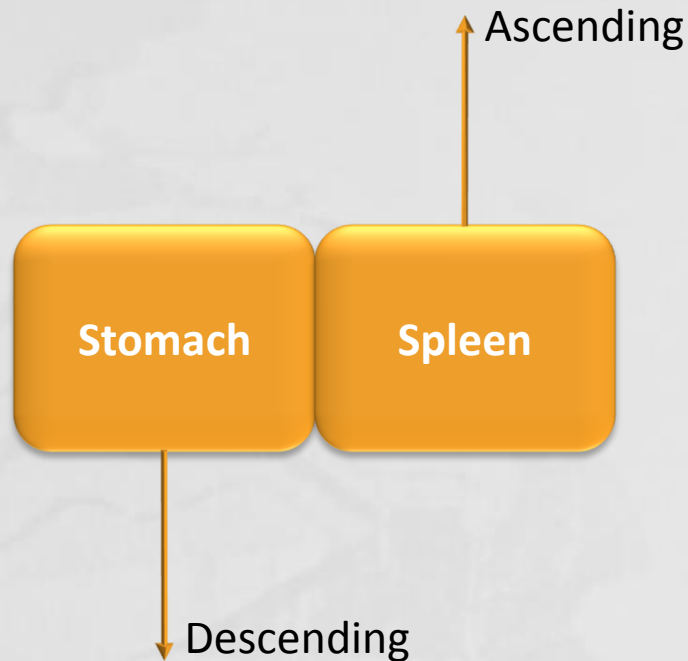
- ‘Yang deficiency’ denotes the deficiency of physiological heat.
- Yang deficiency leads to empty cold.
- **Symptoms:** feeling cold, desiring warmth, cold limbs, pale urine, etc.
- Can be caused by dietary factors (excessive consumption of cold foods).
- May also be caused by Full-Cold.
- Affects mainly the Heart, Spleen, Lungs, Kidneys and Stomach.

Blood deficiency

- Several organs are involved in the making of Blood, chiefly the Spleen, Kidneys and Liver; therefore Blood deficiency is usually combined with a deficiency of one or more of these organs.
- **Clinical manifestations:** dull white sallow complexion, dizziness, poor memory, numbness or tingling, blurred vision, insomnia, pale lips, scanty periods or amenorrhea, depression, slight anxiety, a pale and slightly dry tongue, a Fine pulse
- In long-standing cases, deficiency of Blood can further lead to some Dryness as Blood is part of Yin. This manifests with a particularly dry tongue, dry skin, dry hair and withered nails. In other cases, the long-standing dryness of the Blood can give rise to Wind in the skin, which, combined with Dryness, can cause some skin diseases characterized by dry and itchy skin.



Clear Yang fails to ascend to the head

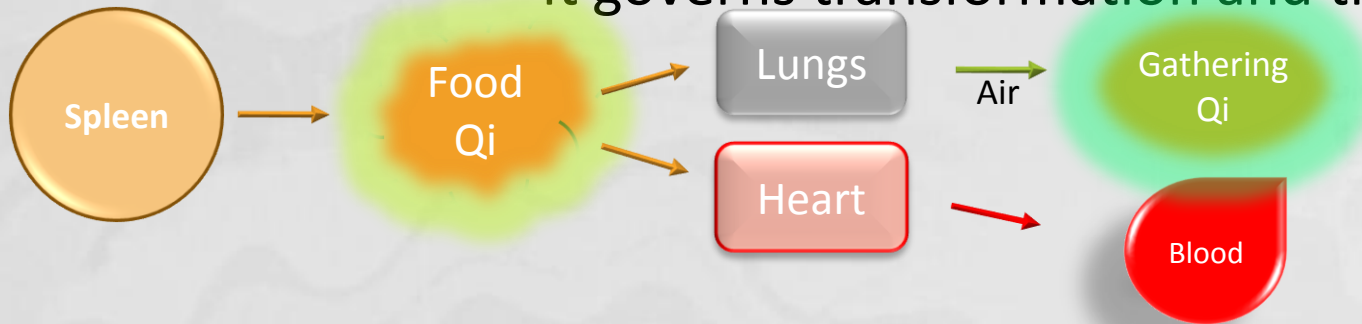


- The Spleen sends (clear) Qi upwards and the Stomach sends (impure) Qi downwards.
- **Clinical manifestations** when spleen fails to ascend Qi: tiredness, poor appetite, heaviness or muzziness, lack of concentration, dizziness, feeling of oppression of the chest, etc.

Organs-Spleen

- **The functions of the Spleen:**

It governs transformation and transportation.



Spleen Qi is ascending; ‘Raises’ clear Yang to the head.

It controls the Blood; keeps blood in vessels.

It controls the muscles and the four limbs.

It opens into the mouth.

It manifests in the lips.

Worry or over-thinking impairs the spleen.

(Non-substantial) Phlegm

- The main cause for the formation of Phlegm is Spleen deficiency. If the Spleen fails to transform and transport Body Fluids, these will accumulate and change into Phlegm. The Lungs and Kidneys are also involved in the formation of Phlegm. If the Lungs fail to disperse and descend fluids, and if the Kidneys fail to transform and excrete fluids, these may accumulate into Phlegm. However, the Spleen is always the primary factor in the formation of Phlegm.
- **Manifestations of Phlegm:** a feeling of oppression of the chest, nausea, a feeling of heaviness, a feeling of muzziness of the head and dizziness, sticky tongue coating, swollen tongue body, etc.



Treatment (Western Medicine)

- The main treatment of excessive daytime sleepiness in narcolepsy is with a group of drugs called central nervous system stimulants such as methylphenidate, racemic-amphetamine, dextroamphetamine, and methamphetamine, or modafinil, a new stimulant with a different pharmacologic mechanism. In Fall 2007 an alert for severe adverse skin reactions to modafinil was issued by the FDA.
- **Side effects:** anorexia (lost appetite), weight loss, insomnia, nervousness, headache, tachycardia (rapid heart rate), dizziness, excitement

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Treatment (Oriental Medicine)

- The general treatment principle is to enhance the function of Spleen in the aspect of transformation and transportation in order to raise clear Yang to the head as well as to prevent formation of Phlegm, which obstructs the rising of clear Yang Qi to the head.
- Additionally, may tonify Yang and nourish Blood depending on the diagnosis of each patients.

Case

Age: 51 years old, female

CC₁/: Excessive daytime sleepiness (Narcolepsy)

S/: Started when pt. was about 16 ~ 17 years old. Sleepy all the time even though pt. had enough sleep at night. Hardly wake up in the morning. Falls asleep at work. Cold hands and feet, color of the finger turns white when pt. is active in a few minutes.

O/: Tongue: normal color, thin tongue body, red tip, thick white coating

Pulse: thready, weak, rapid

General Information

Meds: Adderall (central nervous system stimulant),
20mg four times a day.

10 questions:

- Occasional palpitation
- Dry eyes, dry skin, dry nose
- numbness and tingling of hands and feet
- 20 pounds of weight loss after pt. started Adderall
- fatigue

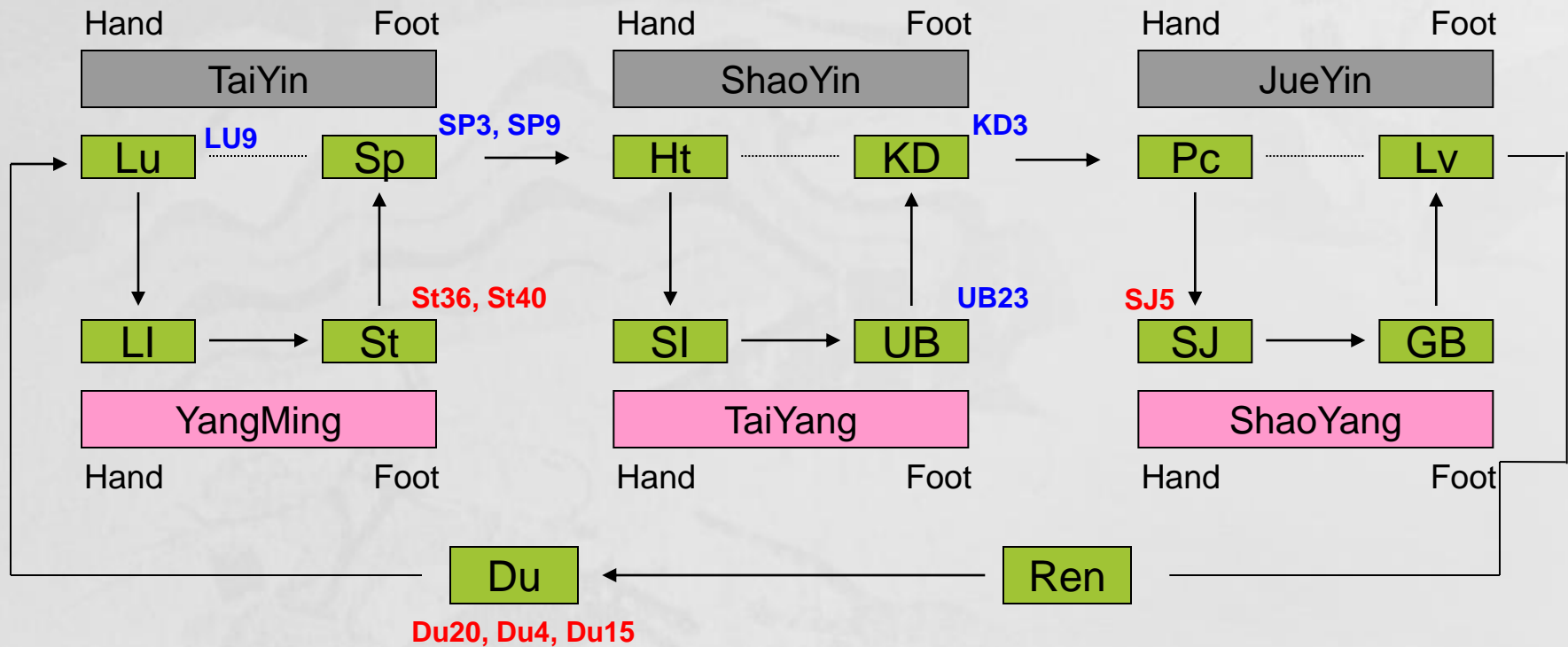
Diagnosis

A/: Excessive sleepiness d/t clear Yang fails to ascend to the head with Phlegm accumulation.
Coldness d/t Yang and Blood deficiency

P/: Transform Phlegm, Tonify Yang, Nourish Blood, Tonify Spleen

Treatment (Magnet & Acupuncture)

Pts. LU9, SP3, SP9, ST36, ST40, KD3, UB23, SJ5, DU20, DU4, DU15



Point Selection

Pts. LU9, SP3, SP9, ST36, ST40, KD3, UB23, SJ5, DU20, DU4, DU15

Points	Point-wise	Channel-wise
Du20, Du15	Raise Qi	Meeting pts of all the yang qi(Du20)
SP9, ST40	Transform Phlegm	Paired Yin and Yang channel to transform Phlegm
SP3, ST36	Tonify Spleen	Paired Yin and Yang channel to tonify Spleen
KD3, UB23	Tonify Kidney	-
DU4	Tonify Yuan Qi	-
LU9, SJ5	Control water passage	Can regulate water metabolism

After Treatment

- The patient had been treated with acupuncture once a week for a month. **After one month, pt. began to feel her hands and feet became to be warmer. Started to have appetite and could reduce the amount of medication from four times a day to three times a day.** After two months of treatment, pt. could reduce the dosage into two times a day. Since then, pt. had been treated for a year leading to taking medication once a day. Her overall health was also improved as well. Now, we are considering to add herbal supplements as a treatment modality for complete recovery.

Acupuncture Safety

- Remarkably few complications with >120 million needles inserted/year
- Essential to use clean needle technique
- Most common reported events
 - Pain at insertion site
 - Bruising, bleeding
 - Dizziness
 - Forgotten needles
 - Burn injury
- Organ puncture is rare

“Andy” Inki KIM



*Whenever I noticed an improvement
in a patient's health, I felt indebted to
Love from God and also to the
patient's trust in His Love.*

*I believe **healing is where Love is.***

- NFA Clinic of Oriental Medicine
- Apprentice of Grand Master
Hyunkyu Choi
- Member of Research Group of
MyeongMun Medicine
- Bastyr University, MSAOM
- Hanyang University, Master of
Engineering
- Seven Patents Registered
- Three Papers Published