

# The Treatment of Disease in TCM

## Vol. 2: Diseases of the Eyes, Ears, Nose & Throat

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### 3

## Clouded Vision (Mu Hun)

This refers to dimness of the vision.

### **Disease causes, disease mechanisms:**

#### **1. Wind phlegm harassing above**

Dampness may be due to spleen vacuity in turn due to dietary irregularity and an exuberant liver which overwhelms the spleen. If accumulated dampness endures, it will engender heat with time. This heat will then steam this dampness into phlegm. The exuberant liver will give rise to hyperactivity of uprising and effusing and thus induce wind. If wind and phlegm go upward to harass the clear portals, the vision may be clouded.

#### **2. Liver depression/qi stagnation**

Depression and anger may damage the liver and lead to failure of the liver's orderly reaching. The liver channel connects with the ligation of the eyes. Thus, if liver qi counterflows upward along the channel to harass the eyes, clouded vision may occur.

#### **3. Blood vacuity of the liver & heart**

Blood vacuity of the liver and heart may result from great loss of the blood, spleen/stomach vacuity, overthinking, extended reading, etc. The liver stores, while the heart governs the blood. If there is liver blood vacuity, the eyes will be undernourished, since "The liver opens to the

eyes" and "The eyes are able to see only when the liver receives sufficient blood." If there is heart blood vacuity, the heart cannot circulate the blood normally, and thus the eyes may be deprived of sufficient nourishment. This is based on the saying, "The heart governs the blood." In such cases, clouded vision may occur.

#### **4. Spleen qi vacuity**

Spleen qi vacuity can result from overthinking, dietary irregularity, severe disease, etc. Damaged by the above-mentioned factors, the spleen's function of movement and transformation will become abnormal. First, the spleen will fail to distribute the essence of the viscera and bowels to the eyes. Secondly, less blood and qi will be engendered and transformed. And third, the spleen qi may fail to upbear clear yang qi to warm the eyes. As a result, the vision may become clouded.

#### **5. Yin vacuity of the liver & kidneys**

Yin vacuity of the liver and kidneys may result from sexual taxation, multiple births, aging, or severe or chronic diseases. In this case, yin vacuity of the liver and kidneys implies liver blood and kidney essence. Therefore, the eyes will not be properly nourished and clouded vision may occur since the liver and kidneys are responsible for the cornea and the pupil respectively.

#### **6. Debility of the life-gate fire**

Debility of the life-gate fire may result from aging, taxation, chronic disease, and original qi consumption. The debilitation may result in 1) poor engendering and transformation of the qi and blood, since the normal function of the spleen and stomach depends on the warming by the life-gate fire, and 2) blockage of the network vessels in the eyes, since normal blood flow also depends on the warming and freeing function of the life-gate fire. In other words, if the life-gate fire becomes debilitated, the eyes will be deprived of sufficient nourishment and the

vessels will be blocked due to slow flow of water or blood. As a result, clouded vision may occur.

## **Treatment based on pattern discrimination:**

### **I. Wind phlegm harassing the upper**

**Symptoms:** Clouded and flowery, *i.e.*, blurred, vision, twitching of the eyelids, dizziness, chest oppression, reduced food intake, profuse sleeping, nausea and vomiting with profuse phlegm, slimy, white tongue fur, and a wiry, slippery pulse

**Therapeutic principles:** Course wind, transform phlegm, and brighten the eyes

#### **Acupuncture & moxibustion:**

*Cheng Qi* (St 1)      A meeting point of the foot *yang ming*, yang motility vessel, and the conception vessel

*Jing Ming* (Bl 1)      A meeting point of the *tai yang*, foot *yang ming* channel, yin and yang motility vessels. Together, these points course wind and open the network vessels in the eyes.

*He Gu* (LI 4)      Together, these points course wind, clear the head,  
*Feng Chi* (GB 20) and brighten the eyes.

*Zu San Li* (St 36)      Together, these points fortify the spleen to move the  
*Feng Long* (St 40) qi and transform phlegm.

**Chinese medicinal formula:** *Ban Xia Tian Ma Bai Zhu Tang* (Pinellia, Gastrodia & Atractylodes Decoction)

**Ingredients:** Rhizoma Pinelliae Ternatae (*Ban Xia*), 10g, Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae (*Bai Zhu*), 15g, Rhizoma Gastrodiae Elatae

(*Tian Ma*), 10g, Sclerotium Poriae Cocos (*Fu Ling*), 10g, Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae (*Chen Pi*), 10g, mix-fried Radix Glycyrrhizae (*Zhi Gan Cao*), 3g

## **2. Liver depression/qi stagnation**

**Symptoms:** Clouded vision, distention in the eyes, dizziness, a bitter taste in the mouth, emotional depression, pain in the lateral costal regions, a red tongue with white fur, and a wiry, rapid pulse

**Therapeutic principles:** Course the liver, resolve depression, and brighten the eyes

### **Acupuncture & moxibustion:**

<i>Qiu Hou</i> (M-HN-8)	An empirical point for vision problems
<i>Tong Zi Liao</i> (GB 1)	A meeting point of the small intestine, triple burner, and gallbladder channels
<i>Feng Chi</i> (GB 20)	A meeting point of the gallbladder and yang linking vessel
	Together, these points free the flow of qi and blood in the eyes.
<i>Tai Chong</i> (Liv 3)	The source point of the liver
<i>Qi Men</i> (Liv 14)	The alarm point of the liver
	Together, these points course the liver, resolve depression, and brighten the eyes.

**Chinese medicinal formula:** *Xiao Yao San Yan Fang* (Rambling Powder Experiential Formula)

**Ingredients:** Radix Angelicae Sinensis (*Dang Gui*), 10g, Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae (*Bai Zhu*), 12g, Radix Albus Paeoniae Lactiflorae (*Bai Shao*), 10g, Cortex Radicis Moutan (*Dan Pi*), 6g, Sclerotium Poriae Cocos (*Fu Ling*), 6g, Fructus Gardeniae Jasminoidis

(*Zhi Zi*), 6g, Flos Chrysanthemi Morifolii (*Ju Hua*), 10g, Fructus Lycii Chinensis (*Gou Qi Zi*), 12g, Rhizoma Acori Graminei (*Shi Chang Pu*), 6g, Radix Glycyrrhizae (*Gan Cao*), 3g

### 3. Blood vacuity of the heart & liver

**Symptoms:** Indistinct vision with dry, rough eyes which are exacerbated by overwork. Other symptoms may include a lusterless facial complexion, heart palpitations, insomnia, a pale tongue and lips, and a fine, forceless pulse.

**Therapeutic principles:** Supplement the blood, nourish the liver, and brighten the eyes

#### Acupuncture & moxibustion:

*Feng Chi* (GB 20)      Together, these points free the flow of qi and  
*Cheng Qi* (St 1)      blood in the eyes.  
*Qiu Hou* (M-HN-8)

*Xin Shu* (Bl 15)      Together, these points supplement heart/liver  
*Gan Shu* (Bl 18)      blood to nourish the eyes.  
*Pi Shu* (Bl 20)

**Chinese medicinal formula:** *Si Wu Tang* (Four Materials Decoction) plus Modified *Bu Xin Dan* (Supplement the Heart Elixir)

**Ingredients:** Prepared Radix Rehmanniae (*Shi Di*), 12g, Radix Albus Paeoniae Lactiflorae (*Bai Shao*), 10g, Radix Ligustici Wallichii (*Chuan Xiong*), 6g, Radix Angelicae Sinensis (*Dang Gui*), 12g, Tuber Ophiopogonis Japonici (*Mai Dong*), 12g, Tuber Asparagi Cochinchinensis (*Tian Dong*), 12g, Radix Polygalae Tenuifoliae (*Yuan Zhi*), 10g, Rhizoma Acori Graminei (*Shi Chang Pu*), 6g, Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae (*Bai Zhu*), 10g, Sclerotium Pararadicis Poriae Cocos (*Fu Shen*), 10g

#### 4. Spleen qi vacuity

**Symptoms:** Indistinct vision, weak eyelids, fatigue of the eyes when used for extended periods, a sallow yellow facial complexion, fatigue, lack of strength, scant food intake, loose stools, a slightly red tongue with thin, white fur, and a vacuous, weak pulse

**Therapeutic principles:** Fortify the spleen, supplement the qi, and brighten the eyes

##### Acupuncture & moxibustion:

*Cheng Qi* (St 1)            Together, these points free the flow of qi and  
*Qiu Hou* (M-HN-8)       blood in the eyes.

*Bai Hui* (GV 20)           With moxibustion, upbears the qi

*He Gu* (LI 4)              Together, these points supplement the qi.  
*Zu San Li* (St 36)

**Additions & subtractions:** Add *Qi Hai* (CV 6) if there is severe qi vacuity. In that case, moxibustion is suggested.

**Chinese medicinal formula:** *Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang* (Supplement the Center & Boost the Qi Decoction)

**Ingredients:** Radix Astragali Membranacei (*Huang Qi*), 12g, Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae (*Bai Zhu*), 15g, Radix Panacis Ginseng (*Ren Shen*), 5g, Radix Angelicae Sinensis (*Dang Gui*), 6g, Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae (*Chen Pi*), 6g, Radix Bupleuri (*Chai Hu*), 3g, Rhizoma Cimicifugae (*Sheng Ma*), 3g, mix-fried Radix Glycyrrhizae (*Zhi Gan Cao*), 6g

#### 5. Yin vacuity of the liver & kidneys

**Symptoms:** Indistinct vision, dry, rough eyes, dizziness, tinnitus, low back and knee pain and weakness, seminal emission, night sweats, a dry, painful throat, a red tongue, and a fine, rapid pulse

**Therapeutic principles:** Nourish and supplement the liver and kidneys, brighten the eyes

**Acupuncture & moxibustion:**

*Feng Chi* (GB 20)      Together, these points brighten the eyes.  
*Qiu Hou* (M-HN-8)

*Gan Shu* (Bl 18)      Together, these points enrich and supplement  
*Shen Shu* (Bl 23)      liver/kidney yin.  
*Tai Xi* (Ki 3)

*Guang Ming* (GB 37)      The network point of the gallbladder; regulates  
the liver and brightens the eyes

**Chinese medicinal formula:** Modified *Zuo Gui Wan* (Restore the Left [Kidney] Pills)

**Ingredients:** Prepared Radix Rehmanniae (*Shu Di*), 10g, Radix Dioscoreae Oppositae (*Shan Yao*), 10g, Fructus Lycii Chinensis (*Gou Qi Zi*), 15g, Fructus Corni Officinalis (*Shan Zhu Yu*), 10g, Radix Achyranthis Bidentatae (*Huai Niu Xi*), 10g, Semen Cuscutae Chinesis (*Tu Si Zi*), 12g, Gelatinum Cornu Cervi (*Lu Jiao Jiao*), 5g, Gelatinum Plastris Testudinis (*Gui Ban Jiao*), 5g, Fructus Ligustri Lucidi (*Nu Zhen Zi*), 12g

**6. Debility of the life-gate fire**

**Symptoms:** Dimming of the vision, a drained white facial complexion, cold body and chilled limbs, impotence, premature ejaculation,

spontaneous perspiration, frequent urination at night, and a deep, fine, forceless pulse

**Therapeutic principles:** Warm and supplement the life-gate fire and brighten the eyes

**Acupuncture & moxibustion:**

*Feng Chi* (GB 20)            Together, these points free the flow of qi and  
*Cheng Qi* (St 1)            blood in the eyes.

*Bai Hui* (GV 20)            Together, these points warm and supplement life-  
*Qi Hai Shu* (Bl 24)        gate fire.  
*Guan Yuan Shu* (Bl 26 )  
*Ming Men* (GV 4)

**Note:** Moxibustion should be applied on the last four points after acupuncture.

**Chinese medicinal formula:** Modified *You Gui Wan* (Restore the Right [Kidney] Pills)

**Ingredients:** Prepared Radix Rehmanniae (*Shu Di*), 10g, Radix Dioscoreae Oppositae (*Shan Yao*), 10g, Fructus Corni Officinalis (*Shan Zhu Yu*), 10g, Fructus Lycii Chinensis (*Gou Qi Zi*), 12g, Semen Cuscutae Chinesis (*Tu Si Zi*), 12g, Semen Astragali Complinati (*Sha Yuan Zi*), 12g, Fructus Rubi Chingii (*Fu Pen Zi*), 12g, Radix Angelicae Sinensis (*Dang Gui*), 6g, Gelatinum Cornu Cervi (*Lu Jiao Jiao*), 5g, Cortex Cinnamomi Cassiae (*Rou Gui*), 3g

**Remarks:** Although acupuncture is effective for clouded vision, its effect will not be remarkable before at least 3 months of treatment.

## 20 The Treatment of Disease in TCM

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