

### Diagnosis by Hearing in Complementary and Alternative Medicine<sup>3</sup>

- Hiccup with a loud sound designates a “full” pattern (commonly, Liver Qi invades the Stomach)
- Hiccup with a quiet, low sound represents an “empty” pattern (often Stomach Qi or Stomach Yin deficiency).

### Differential Diagnosis by Observation, Palpation, and Interrogation<sup>4</sup>

- Retention of food  
Symptoms: loud hiccup, epigastric and abdominal distention, and anorexia  
Signs: thick, sticky tongue coating; rolling and forceful pulse.
- Stagnation of Qi  
Symptoms: continual hiccups, distending pain, and feeling of oppression in chest  
Signs: thin tongue coating; string-taut and forceful pulse.
- Cold in the Stomach  
Symptoms: slow and forceful hiccups relieved by heat and aggravated by cold  
Signs: white, moist tongue coating, and slow pulse; epigastric discomfort.

### Complementary and Alternative Medicine Treatment

Reducing is advised for retention of food and stagnation of Qi, while both acupuncture and moxibustion may be used for “cold” in the Stomach.

- Common Points  
Geshu (BL 17), Zhongwan (Ren 12), Neiguan (PC 6), Zusanli (ST 36)
- Supplementary Points  
Retention of food: Jueque (Ren 14), InnerNeiting (Extra)  
Stagnation of Qi: Tanzhong (Ren 17), Taichong (LV 3)  
Cold in the Stomach: Shangwan (Ren 13).
- Cupping  
May be considered in Geshu (BL 17), Gequan (BL 46), Ganshu (BL 18), Zhongwan (Ren 12), Rugen (ST 18).

### REFERENCES

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TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE (TCM) attributes hiccups to Heat or Cold in the Stomach, Yin or Yang Deficiency in the Spleen/Stomach, and Phlegm Stagnation.<sup>1</sup> Treatment involves choosing a few points from a number of standard points, supplemented by points to alleviate diaphragmatic tension and strategies directed toward the specific TCM categories. Several sessions may be required, although dramatic responses to a single treatment are possible. General points include GV 14, CV 22, CV 12, LI 4, ST 36, MH 6, and BL 20,21. Points to address diaphragmatic tension include BL 17 and LV 14. Additional points to address Heat, Cold, Deficiency, or Phlegm are listed in Table 1.

Ear points can be a useful adjunct and include Diaphragm, Stomach, Spleen, Liver, and Shenmen. However, before trying any of the above, it is always worth trying GV 14, either alone or in combination with CV 22.<sup>2</sup>

### REFERENCES

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2. Liu FC, Chen CA, Yang SS, Lin SH. Acupuncture therapy rapidly terminates intractable hiccups complicating acute myocardial infarction. *South Med J.* 2005;98(3):385–387. [http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/501978\\_print](http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/501978_print).

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TABLE 1. ADDITIONAL POINTS TO ADDRESS HEAT, COLD, DEFICIENCY, AND PHEGEM

CM Pattern	Points
Stomach Cold	SP 21 and CV 12 with Moxa
Stomach Heat with upsurge	ST 44
Phlegm Stagnation with upsurge	LV 3,14, ST 40, BL18
Spleen/Stomach Yang Deficiency	CV 6, BL 20,21 with Moxa
Stomach Yin Deficiency	BL 17, SP 6