

Acupoints and Method of Treatment

Constipation

Excess Heat in the Large Intestine/Stomach

- BL 25×2, BL 21×2, ST 25×2, CV 12, GV 14; all will require cupping to reduce heat
- LR 11×2, ST 37×2, ST 36×2.

Large Intestine Yin Deficiency

- SP 9×2, LI 7×2, LI 11×2, BL 25×2 cups, ST 37×2, TE 6×2.

Excessive Yang in the Spleen

- SP 6×2, SP 9×2, SP 21×2, BL 20×2, BL 25×2, LR 13×2 cups.

Kidney Qi Deficiency

- KI 3, KI 7, KI 10×2, BL 23×2, CV 6, CV 17.

Balancing Body Systems/Reduce Liver Yang

- Physically LI 11×2; Mentally BL 17×2; Spiritually GB 41×2, LR 2×2, LR×8×2, BL 18×2, LR 13×2.

Diarrhea

Remove Dampness and Damp Heat in the Large Intestine

- ST 40×2, ST 8×2, ST 36, ST 37×2, LI 11×2, CV 12
- If heat is involved, ST 25 cup, BL 21×2, BL 25×2 cup.

Spleen Qi Deficiency

- SP 2×2, SP 4, SP 6, SP 9, SP 10×2, BL 20×2, LR 13×2.

Remove Cold and Treat Kidney Yang Deficiency

- BL 23×2, GV 4, KI 7, KI 10×2, GB 25×2, LR 13.

Remove Liver Qi Stagnation and Remove Phlegm

- Moxibustion to KI 7×2, KI 10×2
- LI 3, LI 8, LI 13×2; BL 18, BL 21, BL 23×2; ST 8, ST 40×2.

Immune Enhancement Therapy

- LI 11×2, ST 25, ST 36, ST 37×2, SP 6, SP 10×2, GV 14.

Auricular Acupuncture

Constipation

Heat points: Large Intestine, Stomach, Spleen, Kidney.

Diarrhea

Sympathetic points: Large Intestine, Spleen, Liver, Kidney.

Treatment Plan

Constipation

- First visit, twice a week for 2 weeks
- Then, once a week for 4 weeks
- If patient responds well, then once a month for 4 times (onward).

Diarrhea

- First, treat twice a week for 2 weeks
- Then, followed by once a week for 4 visits
- If patient responds well, then once a month for 4 times (onward).

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TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE (TCM) attributes diarrhea and constipation to imbalances in the Tai Yin Spleen and Yang Ming Large Intestine orbs.¹ Some of the common syndromes can be found in Table 1. Treatment involves selecting a few general points for the primary symptom, then adding a few specific points directed toward the underlying TCM syndrome.

Acute diarrhea such as gastroenteritis tends to be due to excess conditions (Shi), while chronic diarrhea reflects deficiency (Xu). Constipation also has Shi and Xu types and in addition, optimal hydration is a key factor. Too much Heat can dry out the stools, while too much Cold can freeze the water necessary for adequate hydration.

General points for diarrhea include: ST 36 (TSusanli), ST 25 (Tianshu), SP 6 (Sanyinjiao), BL 20 (Pishu), BL 21 (Weishu), PC 6 (Neiguan), LI 11 (Quchi), and CV 4 (Guanyuan). General points for constipation include ST 36 and TH 6 (Zhigou), with additional points SP 15 (Daheng), BL 30 (Baihuanshu), GB 34 (Yanglingquan), and ST 44

TABLE 1. TCM SYNDROMES REFLECTING DIARRHEA AND CONSTIPATION

	<i>Diarrhea</i>	<i>Pattern points</i>	<i>Constipation</i>	<i>Pattern points</i>
SHI	Damp Cold	CV 4, 12 (Moxa), LI 11, GB 20, BL 20	Heat excess	ST 37, LI 4, LU 5, SP 6
	Damp Heat	LI 4, ST 44, SP 9, GV 14, ST 37, CV 10	Qi stagnation	CV 12, LV 13, LI 4
	Excess food	CV 21, LV 13, ST 25,29	Food obstruction	LV 1,3,8, GB 31, TH 4,5
Xu	Liver invading Spleen	LV 3, 4, LI 4, SP 9	Qi Xu	ST 36, SP 6, BL 26,18,20,38 (moxa)
	Spleen Qi Xu	ST 21, CV 4, SP 6	Blood Xu	ST 36, SP 6, LU 11, LI 11 (moxa on cold areas)
	Kidney Yang Xu	KI 10, CV 6 (moxa)	Kidney Yang Xu	CV 4,6 (moxa), KI 3,6, BL 23,25,32

(Neiting). Ear points can be added, specifically Lung, Large Intestine, Spleen, Endocrine, Sympatheticus, and Brain.²

The number of treatments necessary will vary considerably depending on the pattern, from perhaps 1 treatment for food obstruction, to ongoing regular treatments for chronic deficiency conditions. In the case of Liver invading Spleen, which is often rooted in anxiety, acupuncture may be more useful as an adjunct to formal meditation techniques.

Of course, any contemplated acupuncture should be preceded by a conventional medical workup with drug review, and supplemented by common sense. For many patients, diet and lifestyle counseling are essential, and for some, herbal therapy can be significant; for example, Liu Jun Zi Tang for Spleen Qi Xu, or You Gui Wan for Kidney Yang Xu. Interested readers can find appropriate formulas in a standard herbal text.³

REFERENCES

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