



Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) View of Obesity (July 2006)

Obesity is the excessive accumulation of body . It may be classified as mild (20-40% over average weight), moderate 41-100% over average weight), or severe (> 100% over average weight).

Obesity is one of most prevalence of chronic condition in the United States. Some data shows that obesity may effect over 45% female population and it may continue growing population. Etiology of obesity in modern medicine study still remains UNKNOWN, but the mechanism is simple: consuming more calories than are expended. Western Medicine also indicates that at least 7 factors, which may contribute to obesity: genetic factors, social factors, endocrine and metabolic factors, psychological factors, developmental factors, physical activity and brain damage.

Symptoms and signs: Obesity can lead to a variety of orthopedic disturbances, including low back pain, osteoarthritis and often-huge calluses developed on the feet and heels. In some women, it may be associated with Amenorrhea and irregular menstrual periods. Hypertension, skin lesion and swollen on ankle are common medical symptoms.

Western medicine treatment of: there is no effective treatment in the Western Medicine. Appetite suppressant has many side effects and nearly 100% experience rebound. Restricted diet only work for a short period of time which subjecting the body to a very dangerous motion. Not every one is a candidate for surgery treatment. Any effective obesity treatment must combine many remedies all together

How Chinese Medicine view of Obesity: Chinese Medicine believes that most obesity individuals are prone to have a spleen Qi (energy) deficiency, then further imbalanced with the energy of the Liver and Kidney. Obesity tends to happen to those individuals, if they consume more of greasy, sweet types of food with sedentary life style.



Spleen in our body works like a generator to produce energy (Qi) from fuel (food) and then transport that energy to all your organs, limbs and transport turbidity out off the body.

Whatever reason that causes Spleen deficiency and not producing energy, the body will react like there is not enough fuel (food) in the body, craving for instant energy such as sweet, and carbohydrates. The truth is that our body already has enough food; the problem is the generator (Spleen) not functioning efficiently to produce energy. Under this circumstance, two things happen in the body:

First, there is not enough energy in the body and organs; body feels fatigue, easily tired, experiencing lower immunity, allergy, no motivation and other signs that are related to each involved organ

Secondly, Lower body energy due to Spleen deficiency not only gives us a false sign that we do not have enough fuel (food), but also the Spleen's transportation function decreases that body tend to accumulate turbidity, phlegm and fat. Excessive phlegm and fat further cause blockage organs' function such as heart, blood vessel, and prostate, productive system. Each individual has different clinical signs and symptom depend on which organ has been blocked.

Proximally 1000 years ago, in Chinese Medical History, there was a specific SPLEEN SCHOOL led by Dr. Li, Dong Yan. His book is still one of the most completed discussions regarding the function of the Spleen today. Some Spleen School scholars stated **if one has Qi (energy) would not crave food. If there was no qi in body, body would crave food, accumulate phlegm, and then more meridian blockage and Qi cannot circulate through whole body.**

II. TCM Treatment of obesity

Treatment principle: strengthen and balancing rather than suppressing body

When the body and organ, especially the Spleen are balanced and strong, body not only stoop craving food esp. carbohydrates and sweet, but also efficiently dissolving and discharging turbidity and phlegm from body.

A. Acupuncture can play an important role in weight control: Acupuncture combined with moxibustion treatment has been useful in reducing weight without side effect and patient experience less weight rebound. In year 2000, a forum of acupuncture treatment for reducing and controlling weigh was created in China and has been very successful. This forum of acupuncture won the Gold Price at the World Acupuncture Conference in Australia.

B. Herbology in management of weight: various Chinese herbal formulas treat obesity and its complications are more efficient if combined with acupuncture. There are several methods:

a. Herbal formula tea: it is the most common form to strengthen and balance body, dissolve phlegm (fatty tissue), transform turbidity and toxic water out of body and reducing appetite.

b. Herbal hot bath: use of a herbal hot bath soaking to remove body stagnation, increase circulation and open pores in order to discharge turbidity through the skin to reduce weight

c. External herbal cream: apply to local problem area to help reducing local fatty tissue.

C. Qi Gong Therapy: a special kind of energy meditation to help suppressing appetite and energy enhancement. It is not for everyone, especially for who has dysfunction of the lungs and the heart. Qi gong therapy mostly combines with other forms of treatment.

D. Tui Na Therapy: It is also referred to as Acupressure in the United States. It is based on meridian and acupuncture point theory. It requires certain acupressure hand techniques on lung, stomach, spleen and bladder meridian points to help weight.

If you and your friends or relatives have any question in regarding weight loss, utilizing this new form of acupuncture, please contact Dr. Helen Hu and Associates at (619) 226-6506

