

Gastric Pain

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Doctor: You look as if you are in gastric pain?

Patient: Yes, I' ve got pain in my stomach again.

Doctor: Could you tell me exactly where the pain is?

Patient: It' s right here.

Doctor: What kind of pain is it? Can you describe it to me?

Patient: It' s a needling like pain.

Doctor: When did the pain start?

Patient: Last night.

Doctor: What did you eat last night?

Patient: The same as usual. I didn' t eat anything out of the ordinary.

Doctor: Have you ever had this before?

Patient: Oh... I' ve had it for years..... several times a year.

Doctor: Do you feel nauseous at all and any vomiting?

Patient: Occasionally.

Doctor: Do you burp a lot?

Patient: Sometimes, and sometimes I get acid regurgitation as well.

Doctor: Are you aware of anything that brings the stomachache on?

Patient: It' s hard to tell. The first few times I think it was from eating raw and cold food. I was very careful after that and it happened less often. Recently there' s a few times when I' ve been really busy at work or I' m in a bad mood. That can also cause it.

Doctor: When does it usually occur? Right after meals or when your stomach' s empty?

Patient: Usually about three hours after meals. Sometimes it wakes me up at night.

Doctor: Does it ever happen when you' re hungry?

Patient: Yes, often, But it gets a bit better if I eat something.

Doctor: Does kneading and massaging it help at all?

Patient: Yes. It does. Sometimes a hot water bag helps too.

Doctor: Do your hands and feet often feel cold?

Patient: Yes, often... and very cold too.

Doctor: How is your appetite?

Not very good, I can' t eat much.

Doctor: What are your bowel movements like? Any diarrhea or constipation?

Patient: They' re fairly soft and sometimes I have diarrhea.

Doctor: Have you ever had an X-ray or ultrasound B for this problem?

Patient: Yes, last year I had an X-ray. They said that I had a duodenal ulcer.

Doctor: Have you ever had any treatment before this?

Patient: Yes. I' ve taken lots of tablets, but they haven' t had much

effect. So this time I' d like to try some Chinese herbs.

Doctor: All right. First, I' d like to look at your tongue. Then I' ll take your pulse. Mmm... the tongue' s pale and a dull purple color. The coating' s thin and white. Your pulse is deep slow and uneven. According to TCM theory, the kind of stomachache you' ve got belongs to the spleen-stomach-deficiency-cold pattern. Since cold evil stops in the stomach and stomach qi is blocked. The stomachache you are suffering occurs again and again. Coldness belongs to yin evil which easily hurt yang qi. So you dislike cold and raw food and prefer hot drink. And you' ll feel more comfortable when your gastric is being pressed. Cold evil is blocked in the middle Jiao and make the ascending and descending of qi activity abnormal. Therefore, you get acid regurgitation. Spleen is coupled with stomach. Spleen governs hands and feet. When spleen yang is hurt, it can' t be spread to the whole body. Then your four limbs are very cold all the time. Since cold evil is stagnated internally, the tongue' s pale and a dull purple color exists. The treatment principle is to warm the centre and dispel the cold.

Patient: OK. I' ll go and get the prescription filled right away. I' ll be back to see you next time.

Doctor: OK. See you next time! Goodbye.