Edema Case Report

(A) Diagnoses of Diseases and Patterns

1) The General Viewpoint of Edema in TCM

Shui Zhong (水腫)

Subcutaneous retention of fluid which leads to puffiness of the head, face, eyelids, limbs, abdomen and even the whole body is called edema. The causative factors are invasion of the body by the exogeneous pathogenic wind and water dampness, and internal injury by food or overstrain, which results in disturbance of water circulation and overflow of water. Since the water circulation in the body is related to the regulatory function of the lung qi, transporting function of the spleen qi, activity of the kidney qi and water communication of the three energizers, the functional derangement of the lung, spleen, kidney and three energizers may lead to edema. Clinically edema is divided into two patterns: yin edema and yang edema, according to their etiology and pathogenesis.

Etiology and Pathogenesis

1) Invasion of the wind upon the lung causes dysfunction of the lung in dispersion. The lung dominates the surface of the body and is associated with the skin and hair. If the lung is attacked by wind, the lung qi fails to regulate the water passages and send the water down to the bladder, leading to the confrontation between wind and water and the overflow of water to the superficial part of the body, and thus edema appears.

2) Living in a damp place, wading through water or drenching by rain makes water dampness attack the body. Irregular food intake causes failure of the spleen in normal transportation and transformation and impairment of downward flow of water dampness. In either case there may be overflow of water dampness to the superficial part of the body, resulting in edema.

3) Overstrain injures the spleen, leading to gradual weakness of the spleen qi, which fails to distribute the essence to the lung and to the whole body. Water is also retained if the spleen function in transporting and transforming fluid is impaired. Once the spleen fails to control water and lets it flow over, edema results.

4) Indulgent sexual activities damage the kidney qi, and also the function of the bladder. Retention of water follows and edema results.

According to the above-mentioned, edema resulting from invasion by wind, drenching by rain and irregular food intake is of yang nature, while that resulting from overstrain, internal injury and indulgent sexual activity, leading to weakness of the spleen and kidney, is of yin nature. However, the prolonged yang edema may lead to gradual weakness of the body resistance and increased water retention, and turn into yin edema. Pathogenetically, edema is closely related to the dysfunction of the lung, spleen and kidney.

Differentiation
Yang edema

Main manifestations: Abrupt onset of edema with puffy face and eyelids and then anasarca, lustrous skin, accompanied by chills, fever, thirst, cough, asthma and reduced urine output, thin white tongue coating, superficial or rolling, rapid pulse.

Analysis: In case of internal accumulation of water and external invasion by wind, confrontation between them causes an abrupt onset of edema starting from the upper portion of the body, as the wind is a pathogenic factor of yang nature and characterized by upward going. If the function of the bladder is impaired, the urine output is reduced. When the wind water attacks the lung, cough asthma, aversion to wind and chills result. If heat is dominant, there are thirst, fever and rolling rapid pulse. Thin white tongue coating and superficial pulse indicate wind water of cold nature.

2) Yin edema

Main manifestations: Insidious onset of edema, at first on the pedis dorsum or eyelids, and then over the whole body, especially remarkable below the lumbar region, accompanied by sallow complexion, aversion to cold, cold limbs, soreness of the back and loins, general weakness, epigastric fullness, abdominal distension, loss of appetite, loose stools, pale tongue, white coating, deep, thready pulse.

Analysis: Because of weakness of yang in the spleen and the kidney, yin is in excess and qi fails to transport water, causing overflow of water dampness in the lower portion of the body, and hence appears pitting edema which is especially remarkable below the lumbar region. In case of lowered function of the spleen and kidney, qi is unable to nourish the face, so the complexion is sallow. Weakened kidney yang with declined Mingmen fire is insufficient to warm the body, so there is aversion to cold with cold limbs. The lumbus is the house of the kidney. If the kidney qi is weakened and water dampness excessive, soreness is felt in the back and loins. In case of hypoactivity of the spleen yang, the function of transportation and transformations is weak, so epigastric fullness, loss of appetite, abdominal distension and loose stools result. Pale tongue, white coating, deep, thready pulse are also signs of deficiency of the spleen and kidney yang with excess of water dampness.

Treatment

a) Yang edema

Method: The points of the Lung and Spleen Meridians are selected as the principal points. Even movement is applied to clear the lung, relieve the exterior symptoms and remove the retained fluid. After the exterior symptoms are relieved, refer to method for yin edema.

Prescription: Lieque (LU 7), Hegu (LI 4), Pianli (LI 6), Yinlingquan (SP 9), Weiyang (BL 39).

Explanation: Edema above the tumbus should be treated by diaphoresis, therefore, Lieque (LU 7) and Hegu (LI 4) are used to clear the lung and relieve the exterior symptoms by diaphoresis, while edema below the lumbus should be treated by diuresis, then Pianli (LI 6) and Yinlingquan (SP 9) are applied to remove dampness and promote diuresis. Weiyang (BL 39) is able to regulate the qi activity of the
triple energizer and water passages.

b) Yin edema

Method: The points of the Spleen and Kidney Meridians are selected as the principal points. Reinforcing in combination with moxibustion is applied to warm the spleen and kidney.

Prescription: Pishu (BL 20), Shenshu (BL 23), Shuifen (CV 9), Guanyuan (CV 4), Fuliu (KI 7), Zusanli (ST 36).

Supplementary points:
  • Facial puffiness: Shuigou (GV 26),
  • Edema on the pedis dorsum: Zulinqi (GB 41), Shangqiu (SP 5).

Explanation: Yin edema is caused by decline of the kidney yang that fails to control water and by weakness of the spleen qi that leads to impairment of transportation in the middle energizer. Acupuncture and moxibustion to Pishu (BL 20), Shenshu (BL 23) and Fuliu (KI 7) may warm the primary yang of the spleen and kidney and remove cold water. Moxibustion to Shuifen (CV 9) and Guanyuan (CV 4) may promote the water circulation and reinforce the primary qi respectively. Reinforcing on Zusanli (ST 36) promotes the transporting and transforming function of the spleen and stomach, restoring normal distribution of the nuid.

[2] Another Viewpoint of Edema in TCM

Edema

Edema refers to the abnormal retention of fluid. Fluid can be retained peripherally in the interstitial spaces leading to puffiness around the eyelids, face and limbs. Excess fluid can Relevant Diseases also be retained systemically leading to swelling of the entire body. In severe cases, edema can develop in the thoracic or abdominal cavities. Complications range from mild to life-threatening. Etiology and Pathogenesis Water metabolism depends on the movement of qi. Impairment of qi transformation may predispose a person to develop edema. The three organs accountable for water metabolism are the lung, spleen and kidney. Edema occurs when these three organs fail to disperse, transform, transport and eliminate water. Another important organ is the triple burner because it provides a patent passageway for the qi flow, and the metabolized fluid. In another word, the triple burner ensures that the metabolized fluid flows smoothly.

Exterior wind attacking the lung: The lung is the upper source of water metabolism. Its dispersing and descending functions are closely related to elimination of excessive fluid. The dispersing function of the lung ensures that metabolized water is evenly distributed on the surface of the body and eliminated as sweat. The descending function of the lung indirectly involves the elimination of water via urination. However, as the main organ dominating the exterior, the lung is highly susceptible to exterior wind invasion. If attacked, the lungs dispersing and descending functions will be impaired. Water metabolism will be disturbed and he fluid will not be eliminated via sweat or urine. Edema caused by exterior wind manifests as fluid accumulation in the superficial layer of the body.

Exterior dampness lingering around the spleen: Exterior dampness caused by a humid environment or a diet with excessive raw and cold food greatly hinders the spleens
function to transform and transport. Impairment of spleen's function is followed by water accumulation. The retained water will diffuse into the interstitial spaces and manifest as systemic edema.

Skin disorders contracted by exterior damp-heat toxicity affecting the lung and spleen: The skin is the extending exterior tissue of the lung whereas the muscle is the extending tissue of the spleen. Unremitting, prolonged skin disorders contracted through exterior damp-heat toxicity can affect these associated internal organs. Consequently, dysfunction of the lung and spleen limits their abilities to metabolize water and leads to edema.

Excessive damp-heat obstructing the triple burner: As a result of damp-heat obstructing the triple burner, the ascending and descending flow of fluid in the passage is interrupted. Sluggish water metabolism causes water retention.

Improper diet and overexertion injuring the spleen and stomach: By directly influencing the spleen and stomach organs, improper diet, physical exertion or stress can impair the functions of middle burner in transformation and transportation of fluid. Qi deficiency, following spleen deficiency, fails to properly transport and transform fluid. Indirectly, qi deficiency leads to fluid retention.

Excessive sexual activity or multiple deliveries directly consume the kidney. The exhausted kidney fails to properly evaporate the fluid and support the bladder in elimination water.

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**Diagram**

- Exterior wind, damp-heat or cold-dampness
- Improper diet and overexertion
- Excessive sexual activity or multiple births
- Lung fails to disperse
- Dampness lingering around the spleen
- Spleen deficiency
- Kidney deficiency
- Wind fused with fluid
- Dampness accumulation
- Damp-heat accumulation
- Failed to transform the fluid
- Failed to steam and excrete water
- Edema

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**Diagnosis**

1) Identification of yin and yang

Yang edema begins from the upper body and is caused by exterior pathogens, including wind, dampness, damp-heat or damp-heat toxicity. It pertains to an exterior, excess and heat condition. Yin edema starts from the lower body and is caused by miscellaneous factors, such as improper diet, overexertion, excessive sexual activity or
multiple deliveries. It pertains to an interior, deficient and cold condition.

2) Identification of inter-transformation between yin and yang edema

Yang edema pertains to an excess pattern whereas yin edema pertains to a deficient pattern or a complicated pattern of excess and deficiency. Under certain conditions, these two patterns undergo inter-transformation. Unremitting yang edema will eventually consume the righteous qi and deficiency will exacerbate water retention. The combination of both deficient qi and excessive water retention signifies the transformation into yin edema. Pre-existing yin edema complicated by repetitive invasions of exterior pathogens intensifies water retention. When excess preponderates, yang edema should be considered.

3) Identification of organ involvement

Congested fluids, palpitations, wheezing, dyspnea, tympanic abdominal distention, oliguria, anuria, dysphagia and gagging syndrome will manifest during a crisis of edema. These symptoms indicate involvement of the internal organs.

- Edema accompanied by palpitations indicates heart involvement.
- Edema with hypochondriac or abdominal distention and a significantly enlarged abdomen limiting movement suggests complication of the liver.
- Edema with epigastric and abdominal distention, heaviness of the limbs or poor appetite indicates that the water retention has affected the spleen.
- Lung involvement is confirmed when there is coughing, breathlessness and chest congestion.
- If the kidney is affected, symptoms in addition to edema include soreness of the lower back and knees and a cold sensation in the external genitalia.

4) Differential diagnosis of edema and tympanic abdominal distention

*Edema.* Water retention begins from either the head and face or the feet gradually, it spreads to the entire body to become systemic edema. Distended veins are not noticeable on the abdomen. Tympanic abdominal distention (*gu zhang*): Originates from the abdomen, gu zhang can develop further and affect the lower extremities and/or the entire body. It manifests with significant drum-shaped abdominal distention. Distended veins might also be apparent on the abdomen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Patterns</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yang edema</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Water retention due to external wind</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Damp-heat toxicity affecting the lung and spleen</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Dampness accumulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Damp-heat accumulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yin edema</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Spleen yang deficiency</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Kidney yang deficiency</td>
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*Differentiation and Treatment*
Treatment principle

The focus of treatment is to eliminate pathogenic fluids by inducing sweating, promoting urination and draining downwards to force out the excessive fluids. Benefiting the qi, strengthening the spleen and warming the kidney are used to support the righteous qi. In addition, supportive measures, such as regulating the qi, invigorating the blood, relieving toxicity and eliminating turbidity, accelerate the therapeutic effects.

1) Yang edema

**Summary:** Water retention due to external wind. Acute onset, edema starting from the eyelids and spreading to the limbs and the entire body, shiny thin skin tone, insignificant or no pitting on pressure, and oliguria.

**Symptoms:** Aversion to cold, fever, soreness or pain in the joints, coughing and wheezing, and possibly a swollen sore throat.

**Tongue:** Thin white or thin yellow coating.

**Pulse:** Floating, slippery and tight, or floating, slippery and rapid.

**Treat Principle:** Dispel wind, clear heat, disperse lung qi and eliminate water retention.

**Formula and Modification:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formula</th>
<th>Modification</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yue Bi Jia Zhu Tang</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Ma Huang</td>
<td>Disperses lung qi and induces sweating to release the exterior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Shi Gao</td>
<td>Releases the pathogens from muscle and clears heat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Bai Zhu and Sheng liang</td>
<td>Strengthen the spleen and transform dampness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Gan Cao</td>
<td>Augments the qi and harmonizes the formula.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Modification**

| · To strengthen the effects of dispersing lung qi, promoting urination and reducing edema. | (+) Fu Ping, Fu Ling, Ze Xie |
| · To strengthen the effects of clearing heat and promoting urination.                    | (+) Bai Mao Gen, Chi Xiao Dou |
| · Swollen sore throat.                                                                    | (+) Jie Geng, She Gan, Niu Bang Zi |
| · Coughing and wheezing.                                                                  | (+) Xing Ren, Jie Geng, Qian Hu |

a) Damp-heat toxicity affecting the lung and spleen

**Summary:** Acute onset, edema starting from the eyelids and spreading to the limbs and the entire body, dermal sores, rashes and ulcerations, and oliguria.

**Symptoms:** Aversion to wind, fever and severe itchiness of the skin.

**Tongue:** Red tongue with thin yellow coating.

**Pulse:** Slippery or floating, and rapid.

**Treat Principle:** Disperse lung qi, relieve toxicity, drain dampness and reduce swelling.

**Formula and Modification:**

Ma Huang Lian Qiao Chi Xiao Dou Tang and Wu Wei Xiao Du Yin
- Ma Huang, Xing Ren and Sang Bai Pi
  Disperse and descend lung qi and promote water metabolism.
- Lian Qiao
  Clears heat and relieves toxicity.
- Chi Xiao Dou
  Promotes urination and reduces edema.
- Jin Yin Hua, Ye Ju Hua, Pu Gong Ying and Zi Hua Di Ding
  Clear and relieve damp-heat toxicity.

**Modification**

- Excessive dampness with erosion. (+) Ku Shen, Tu Fu Ling
- Excessive wind with severe itchiness. (+) Bai Xian Pi, Di Ful Zi
- Excessive wind with severe itchiness. (+) Bai Xian Pi, Di Ful Zi
- Constipation. (+) Da Huang, Mung Xiao

b) Dampness accumulation

**Summary:** Systemic pitting edema and oliguria.

**Symptoms:** Heavy sensation of the body, chest stuffiness, nausea and poor appetite.

**Tongue:** White greasy coating.

**Pulse:** Deep and decelerating.

**Treatment Principle:** Strengthen the spleen, resolve dampness, unblock yang qi and transform water.

**Formula and Modification:**

Wu Pi San and Wei Ling Tang

- Sang Bai Pi, Chen Pi, Da Fu Pi, Fu Ling Pi and Sheng Jiang Pi Transform dampness and promote water metabolism.
- Bai Zhu and Fu Ling Strengthen the spleen and dry dampness.
- Cang Zhu and Hou Po Dry dampness and facilitate the movement of qi.
- Zhu Ling and Ze Xie Promote urination and reduce edema.
- Gui Zhi Assists the bladder to transform the qi.

**Modification**

- Wheezing (+) Ma Huang, Xing Ren, Ting Li Zi

c) Damp-heat accumulation

**Summary:** Systemic pitting edema and bright shiny skin tone.

**Symptoms:** Stuffy sensation in the chest and epigastrium, irritability, thirst, scanty urine, and constipation.

**Tongue:** Yellow greasy coating.

**Pulse:** Deep and rapid, or soft and rapid.

**Treatment Principle:** Clear heat and drain dampness.

**Formula and Modification:**

Shu Zao Yin Zi
| • Qiang Huo and Qin Jiao | Disperse wind and release the exterior pathogenic factors by way of sweating. |
| • Fu Ling Pi, Sheng Jiang and Da Fu Pi | Assist Qiang Huo and Qin Jiao to eliminate the water from the skin. |
| • Shang Lu | Drains downwards and forces out the fluids by ways of urination and bowel movements. |
| • Ze Xie, Mu Tong, and Chi Xiao Dou | Assist Shang Lu to promote urination. |

**Modification**

| • Severe abdominal distention, urinary retention and constipation. | (+) Ji Jiao Di Huang Wan |
| • Damp-heat injuring the yin | (use) Zhu Ling Tang |
| • Damp-heat infusing downwards with dysuria and hematuria. | (+) Da Ji, Bai Mao Gen, Ou jie |

2) Yin edema

a) Spleen yang deficiency

**Summary:** Systemic pitting edema especially in the lower part of the body.

**Symptoms:** Distention of the epigastrium and abdomen, loose stool, poor appetite, sallow complexion, fatigue, cold limbs and oliguria.

**Tongue:** Pale tongue with white greasy or white slippery coating.

**Pulse:** Deep and decelerating, or deep and weak.

**Treatment Principle:** Warm and tonify spleen yang to resolve water retention.

**Formula and Modification:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shi Pi Yin</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Gan Jiang, Fu Zi and Cao Guo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bai Zhu and Fu Ling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Da Fu Pi and Mu Gua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mu Xiang and Hou Po</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Modification**

| • Severe qi deficiency. | (+) Ren Shen, Huang Qi |
| • Impaired qi transformation with oliguria. | (+) Gui Zhi, Ze Xie |
| • Severe edema with chest congestion, dyspnea and orthopnea. | (use) Wu Ling San and Ting Li Da Zao Xie Fei Tang |

b) Kidney yang deficiency

**Summary:** Puffiness of the face, systemic pitting edema especially in the lower part of the body, and possibly decreased or increased urine output.

**Symptoms:** Palpitations, shortness of breath, soreness, heaviness and cold sensation of
the lower back and knees, frigid limbs, cold intolerance, lassitude and pale complexion.

*Tongue:* Pale and flabby tongue with white coating.

*Pulse:* Deep and thready, or deep, slow and forceless.

*Treatment Principle:* Tonify and warm kidney yang to resolve water retention.

**Formula and Modification:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Li Sheng Shen Qi Wan and Zhen Wu Tang</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>• Rou Gui and Fu Zi</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>• Shu Di Huang, Shan Yao and Shan Zhu Yu</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>• Bai Zhu, Fu Ling, Ze Xie and Che Qian Zi</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>• Niu Xi</strong></td>
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**Modification**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shortness of breath with difficult inhalation aggravated by exertion, sweating and cold limbs. (+) Ren Shen, Wu Wei Zi, Ge Jie</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Palpitations, congested chest, cyanotic lips and tongue, and intermittent knotted pulse. (+) Gui Zhi, Zhi Gan Cao, Dan Shen, Hong Hua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headache, vomiting, trance, lethargy, loss of consciousness and ammonia breath. (+) Da Huang, Huang Lian, Ban Xia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3) Acupuncture Treatment

**Yang edema**

- **Manipulation:** Even method.
- **Prescription:** LU 7 Lieque, LI 4 Hegu, LI 6 Pianli, SP 9 Yinlingquan, BL 39 Weiyang.

**Yin edema**

- **Manipulation:** Reinforcing method and moxibustion.
- **Prescription:** BL 20 Pishu, BL 23 Shenshu, CV 9 Shuifen, CV 4 Guanyuan, KI 7 Fuliu, ST 36 Zusanli
- **Supplementary points:**

|Facial edema| (+) GV 26 Renzhong|
|---|
|Pedal edema| (+) GB 41 Zulinqi, SP 5 Shangqiu|

[3] Physical Symptoms of Edema in according to *Dong Yi Bao Jian* (東醫寶鑑)^3^:

1) Swollen shins, expanding abdomen, shortness of breath and an inability to lie down in patients diagnosed with edema indicate that both the superficial (標) and origin (本) are affected. That is why the lungs fail to take in air and edema forms in the kidneys. Because there is an upsiring from the lungs, the patient cannot lie down. (*Nei Jing*, 內經)*
2) If there is excessive dampness, the patient will have soggy diarrhea (濡泄), and in severe cases, water will be retained to form pitting edema (积水) (Nei Jing. 内径)  
3) There are 5 kinds of edema: (Zhong Jing. 仲景)  
   - The first kind is wind edema (风水). The pulse is floating and its external symptoms include pain in the joints and an aversion to wind.  
   - The second is skin edema (皮水). The pulse is floating and its external symptoms include swelling that gives in when pressed down and expansion of the abdomen. However, there is no aversion to wind nor thirst. Perspiration ought to be induced.  
   - The third is regular edema (正水). The pulse is sunken and slow and its external symptoms include shortness of breath.  
   - The fourth type is stony edema (石水). The pulse is sunken, its external symptoms include expansion of the abdomen but not shortness of breath.  
   - The fifth type is yellow sweat (黄汗). The pulse is sunken and slow, there is a fever on the body accompanied by uneasiness in the chest and swelling of the limbs, head and face. If left uncured for an extended period of time, it will surely develop into suppurations of abscesses. Also, it may cause the flesh to fester and water to seep out from the scrotum and shins.  
4) Also, there are 5 viscera edemas: (Zhong Jing. 仲景)  
   - Symptoms of a heart edema (心水) include a heavy sensation of the body, weakness of the body, inability to lie down, irritability and restlessness, and severe swelling of the scrotum.  
   - Symptoms of a liver edema (肝水) include expansion of the abdomen, inability to roll over, pain in the lower sides and abdomen, and frequent formation of fluid and humor that results in frequent urination.  
   - Symptoms of a lung edema (肺水) include a swollen body, hindered urination, and diarrhea that resembles duck stools.  
   - Symptoms of a spleen edema (脾水) include expansion of the abdomen, heaviness in the limbs, absence of fluid and humor, weakness of the body, and hindered urination.  
   - Symptoms of a kidney edema (肾水), include expansion of the abdomen, swelling of the umbilicus, pain in the lumbar region, hindered urination, dampness under the genitals due to sweating that resembles sweat on a cows nose, cold feet, and a yellow complexion.  
5) The area around the eyes swells up slightly, the entire body swells up, there is coughing and shortness of breath, the heart throbs, the area between the thighs feels cold, urination is hindered, the urine is golden, the skin is thin and glossy, and the affected area gives in when pressed upon but retains its shape when released. This is called edema. (Zhi Zhi. 直指)  
6) There are two kinds of edema yang edema (陽水) and yin edema (陰水) (Ru Men. 入門)  
   - Yang edema mostly develop due to external etiologic factors: they form as a result of crossing bodies of water, being soaked in rain, or being exposed to wind, heat or dampness. The symptoms include swelling of the upper body including the shoulders, back, arms and hand, a fever, thirst, and difficulty defecating and urinating.  
   - Yin edema generally forms due to internal etiologic factors. They form when one drinks too much water, tea or liquor, starves him/herself or overeats, or commits oneself to work or sexual activities. The symptoms include swelling of the lower body including the lumbar region, abdomen, shins and top of the feet, as well as chills and diarrhea.  
7) If there is vexing thirst, discharge of red urination, hindered urination and
constipation, it is yang edema (陽水). If there is no vexing thirst, but there the stool is soft and the urine is neither red nor hindered, it is yin edema (陰水). (Zheng Chuan, 正傳)

8) Also, stony edema (石水) is swelling of the lower abdomen caused by distention of kidney water (腎水) under the umbilicus. It is so called because it is rock-hard.

9) Lung edema (肺水) causes swelling in the entire body except for the abdomen and there is the thirst.

10) The symptoms of ascites (水腫) include expansion of the abdomen caused by distention of water poison qi, sounds in the abdomen when moving, persistent thirst, and scorched skin. (Lei Ju, 雷聚)

11) If the symptoms are bearable in the morning but deteriorate in the night, it is due to a deficiency of blood. If the symptoms are bearable in the night but deteriorate in the morning, it is due to deficiency of both qi and blood. (Dan Xin, 丹心)

Western Differential Diagnosis:

Swelling caused by the build-up of excess fluids in the body is called edema. The swelling may be limited to specific areas like the ankles or legs, or it may be spread over large areas of the body. Edema is classified primarily by the location of the swelling. For example, peripheral edema is swelling of the ankles, feet, and legs. Pulmonary edema is accumulation of fluid in the lungs. Periorbital edema is swelling around the eyes. Massive edema (also known as anasarca) is swelling covering a large part of the body. Other body locations that may become swollen include the gums, lymph glands, face, abdomen, breasts, scrotum (in men), or the joints.

Edema is a symptom associated with several different underlying diseases. Slight swelling is usually not a serious medical problem, but edema can be a long-term, progressive manifestation of disease with serious consequences such as leg ulcers.

A wide variety of medical conditions can cause edema, including kidney, liver, and heart disease. Several of the body's organs and glands affect fluid balance. Diseases that affect these organs and prevent them from functioning normally can cause the kidneys to retain salt and water (two major components of edema fluid). This excess fluid then "leaks" out of the body's circulatory system and into surrounding tissues, causing them to swell.

Pulmonary edema can be a complication of heart failure. Serious, inadequately treated heart failure can result in pulmonary edema. As the heart pumps less efficiently, fluid leaks out of the veins in the lungs and fills the air sacs, making it difficult to breathe. Pulmonary edema is life-threatening, and if left untreated, can rapidly become fatal. People with less severe heart failure that does not lead to pulmonary edema may also experience swelling in their ankles.

Edema may also be caused by chronic lung disease. Severe chronic lung disease—such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema, or chronic bronchitis—may restrict blood flow through the vessels in the lungs. This restricted blood flow creates pressure in the vessels that can back up throughout the rest of the circulatory system. The pressure causes fluid to leak into surrounding tissues, causing swelling, such as in the legs and feet.
Varicose veins may cause peripheral edema. Tiny valves in leg veins help the circulatory system move blood from the lower legs and feet back toward the heart. As people age, these valves often become weakened, resulting in blood pooling in the lower legs, forming varicose veins. The pressure from the pooling blood can cause fluid to leak into the surrounding tissue, causing swelling of the lower legs, ankles, or feet.

Sitting or standing too long may cause edema. This type of edema is called orthostatic edema. It may be aggravated by hot weather, and can occur after long automobile or airplane trips, or any time a person stands or sits in one position for a long period of time.

Several different types of medications can cause edema. These medications include oral contraceptives containing estrogen or progesterone, blood pressure medications, certain antidepressants, oral corticosteroids, and testosterone.

Swelling in the ankles and legs commonly occurs during the later stages of pregnancy. As the uterus enlarges, it puts pressure on the vena cava, a large vessel that returns blood to the heart from the rest of the body. This pressure then backs up through the circulatory system, causing increased blood pressure in the legs, ankles, and feet. Ultimately, this pressure causes fluid to leak into the surrounding tissue.

Other causes of edema include allergic reactions, sunburns, malnutrition, injury or trauma, blockages in the lymphatic system (caused by infection, inflammation, or cancer), exposure to high altitude (rare), and hormonal changes associated with menstruation (in some women). Nephrotic syndrome, in which damaged kidneys lose excess protein in the urine, can lead to severe swelling in the ankles. Severe liver disease can lead to cirrhosis and excess ankle swelling.

The symptoms of edema vary depending on the location and the extent of swelling. For most types of edema, fluid builds up under the skin, causing swelling and making the overlying area stretched and shiny. Edema may be pitting or non-pitting. With pitting edema, pressing a finger against a swollen area and then removing it leaves an indentation that slowly disappears. When edema becomes more severe, the tissue swells so much that it can’t be displaced, and no indentation is left in the skin after applying pressure. This type of edema is called non-pitting. Edema that occurs over pressure points over bony areas of the body can develop into serious sores or ulcers, especially in bedridden patients.

Peripheral edema causes swelling of the ankles, feet, or legs. This type of edema is very common, especially among older adults. It is often painless, and may affect both legs. Because of gravity, the swelling is usually most severe in the lower legs, but the upper calves and thighs can be affected as well.

Pulmonary edema is a medical emergency characterized by severe difficulty breathing. Symptoms of pulmonary edema include:
- shortness of breath
- grunting while breathing
- a crackling or rattling noise in the lungs heard with a stethoscope (rales)
- wheezing
- anxiety
• restlessness
• coughing
• excessive sweating
• abnormally pale skin (pallor)
• abnormal heartbeat or rhythm
• chest pain.

If you experience any of these symptoms, seek immediate medical attention.

Usually, edema is a symptom of another underlying condition. In such cases, the risk factors for edema are the same as those for the underlying condition. In other words, when edema is associated with serious conditions such as kidney, liver, heart, and lung disease, the risk factors for edema are the same as those for the underlying diseases. For example, smoking is a major risk factor for chronic lung disease, high blood pressure is a major risk factor for heart disease, and obesity is a major risk factor for both heart disease and diabetes. All of these risk factors, then, also increase a person’s risk of developing edema.

Edema becomes more common with age. Because many of the underlying causes of edema occur more frequently with age, edema itself also becomes more common as people get older.

Diagnosing the underlying cause is essential for treating edema effectively. When you seek treatment for unexplained edema, Western doctor will start by taking a medical history. The questions will focus on the timing, location, severity, and duration of your symptoms. Western doctor will also ask questions to determine whether you have had any other signs or symptoms of kidney, liver, thyroid, lung, or heart disease that may help in diagnosing the underlying cause of your swelling.

Western doctor will then perform a physical examination. The examination is likely to be extensive, and will include listening to your heart and lungs, examining your skin and nails, testing your skin tone and its response to pressure, and looking at the whites of your eyes. The purpose of the exam is to determine whether you display any signs or symptoms of heart, lung, liver, or kidney disease that may be causing your edema.

Blood and urine tests will help your physician determine whether or not you have liver or kidney disease. When the kidneys are damaged, they excrete excessive amounts of protein into the urine. A urine test can detect any excess protein. Similarly, reduced blood levels of the protein albumin may indicate serious kidney disease. Blood tests can also be used to test for liver disease, heart disease, and thyroid disease that may be contributing to your edema.

Western doctor may order an x-ray of your lungs to test for lung disease or pulmonary edema. Tissue damage caused by chronic lung diseases such as COPD, emphysema, or chronic bronchitis is usually visible on a chest x-ray. In addition, the x-ray can also determine whether fluid is building up in the air sacs of your lungs, resulting in pulmonary edema.

In cases where heart disease is a suspected cause of the edema, Western doctor may order cardiac tests.
Electrocardiogram: An electrocardiogram (ECG) is a test that records the electrical impulses of the heart. It can show any type of heart rhythm disturbances.

Echocardiogram: An echocardiogram uses sound waves that are transmitted to the heart, and is essentially the same technology used in an ultrasound to observe a fetus in a pregnant woman. The echoes are produced when the waves are reflected back and turned into images by an instrument called a transducer. An echocardiogram provides very specific information about the size of the heart chambers, the valve movements (which show whether they are closing and opening properly), and any changes in the blood vessels and other structures in and around the heart. One part of the echocardiogram, known as a "Doppler," measures the speed and quality of the bloodflow, and can pinpoint stenosis or regurgitation.

Western Medicine Disease Names
1. Acute and chronic nephritis (ICD Codes: 583.9)
2. Nephrosis (ICD Codes: 581.3)
3. Primary hyperaldosteronism (ICD Codes: 255.10)
4. Hypoproteinemia (ICD Codes: 273.8)
5. Vitamin B1 deficiency (ICD Codes: 266.9)
6. Severe anemia (ICD Codes: 285.9)
7. Hypothyroidism (ICD Codes: 244.9)
8. Liver cirrhosis (ICD Codes: 571.5)
9. Heart Failure (ICD Codes: 428.9)

TCM Patterns (Pattern/Syndrome Differentiation):
1. Yang edema (Water retention due to external wind)
2. Yang edema (Damp-heat toxicity affecting the lung and spleen)
3. Yang edema (Dampness accumulation)
4. Yang edema (Damp-heat accumulation)
5. Yin edema (Spleen yang deficiency)
6. Yin edema (Kidney yang deficiency)

(P) Treatment

Acupuncture Points:

a) Prescription:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yang Edema</th>
<th>Principle Points: Clear Lung, relieve the exterior by diaphoresis, remove dampness and promote diuresis, regulate the qi activity of the San jiao and water passage, promote the</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Invasion of the wind, water dampness attack the body, irregular food intake, etc. result in edema: abrupt onset of edema with puffy face and eyelids and then anasarca, lustrous skin, accompanied chills and fever, thirst, cough, asthma, reduced urine output</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Tongue: Thin white tongue fur</td>
<td>LU 7, LI 4, LI 6, SP 9, SP 6, UB 39, UB 22, REN 9, ST28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yin Edema</td>
<td>Transformation of fluids, resolve edema.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overstrain injures the SP-qi, or indulgent sexual activities damage KD-qi and the function of UB; insidious onset of edema, at first on the pedis dorsum, especially remarkable below the lumbar region, accompanied by sallow complexion, aversion to cold, cold limbs, soreness of the back and loins, general weakness, epigastric fullness, abdominal distension, loss of appetite, loose stools</td>
<td>Principle Points: Warm the primary Yang of SP and KD, remove the qi of cold water, promote transformation and transportation function of SP and ST, promote the water circulation, reduce swelling, tonify the Yuan-qi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tongue: Pale tongue with white fur</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulse: deep and thready pulse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warm SP and KD</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Needling* Points of SP and KD meridians are mainly selected with tonifying method, combined with moxa.

**b)** Function of each point

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yang Edema</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LU 7 – Open up LU and dispels wind cold, strengthen the wei qi and get pathogens out, sweat and open pores</td>
<td>Clear and regulate the Ren channel (uterine, menstruation, lower intestine, throat), benefit UB open water passage.</td>
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<tr>
<td>LI 4 – Disperse wind, relieve exterior, suppress pain, clear the meridian, tonify qi and consolidate exterior, harmonize ascending and descending.</td>
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<tr>
<td>LI 6 – open LU water passage.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SP 9 – Transform damp stagnation, benefit the Lower Burner, benefit urination, remove obstruction from meridian.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SP 6 – Strengthen SP and transform dampness, spread LV qi and benefit KD, nourish blood and yin, benefit urination, regulate uterus and menstruation, move blood and eliminate stasis, cool blood, stop pain, calm the mind.</td>
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<tr>
<td>UB 39 – Regulate water pathways, benefit UB.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>UB 22 – Regulate transforming of qi, eliminate dampness, open water passage.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>REN 9 – Promote fluid transformation, control the water passage.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ST28 – Cool damp-heat, benefit UB, regulate menstruation, stop pain.</td>
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<tr>
<td>DU 26 – Clear the sense, cool heat, calm the spirit, benefit lumbar spine.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yin</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UB 20 – Regulate SP qi and assist its transformation and transportation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edema</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eliminate dampness, harmonize blood and nourish qi.</td>
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<tr>
<td>UB 23 – Regulate KD qi, strengthen lumbar vertebrae, benefit ears and eyes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>KD 7 – Regulate KD qi, clear and cool damp-heat, eliminate edema, strengthen lower back.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ST 36 – Oder SP and ST, regulate qi and blood, strengthen weak and deficient conditions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ST 28 – Cool damp-heat, benefit UB, regulate menstruation, stop pain.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UB 22 – Regulate transforming of qi, eliminate dampness, open water passage.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REN 9 – Promote fluid transformation, control the water passage.</td>
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<tr>
<td>REN 4 – Nourish and stabilize KD, regulate qi and restore yang, regulate the uterus, calm the mind.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GB 41 – Spread and drain LV and GB, clear and regulate Du channel, resolve damp-heat.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SP 5 – Strengthen SP and ST, transform damp stagnation.</td>
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</table>

**Herbal Prescription:**

**Therapeutic Principle and Method**

a) Different treatment for the upper and lower: in the case of severe edema in upper, inducing sweating is its main therapeutic method; for severe edema in lower, promoting urination is the main therapeutic method.

b) Different treatment for yang edema and yin edema: for yang edema, the therapeutic method is eliminating pathogen by inducing sweating, promoting urination or expelling and attacking; for yin edema, the main therapeutic method is strengthening healthy qi by invigorating the spleen and warming the kidney.

c) For the case manifested as stasis blood or conventional therapy is unable to be effective, methods of promoting blood circulation and removing blood stasis may be added.

**Selecting Treatment by Differentiating Syndrome**

[Yang Edema]

1) Invasion and overflow of wind-water

*Main symptoms:* Edema starts from the eyelids, followed by four limbs and the whole body. It has acute onset and usually accompanied by exogenous wind-heat syndrome or exogenous wind-cold syndrome.

*Accompanying symptoms, tongue appearance and pulse condition:* Aversion to cold, fever, soreness of the limbs and joints, dysuria. In cases with predominant wind-heat, there may also be swelling and pain in the throat, red tongue and floating, slippery and rapid pulse. In severe edema cases, deep pulse may also be present. In cases with predominant wind-cold, aversion to cold, cough, dyspnea, thin and white coating, floating and slippery or floating and tense pulse may be present.

*Main points of the pathogenesis:* Pathogenous wind invades the lung and impairs the function of the lung in ascending and descending.
**Therapeutic method:** Expelling wind, removing heat and promoting water metabolism by activating function of the lung in dispersing.

**Prescription:** Yue Bi Jia Zhu Tang.

**Modification:**
- In the case of swelling and pain in the throat, remove Sheng Jiang and Da Zao, add Ban Lan Gen, Pu Gong Ying and Lian Qiao.
- In the case of excessive heat causing consumption of body fluid which is manifested as dry mouth and red tongue, add Sheng Di and Xuan Shen.
- In the case of dominant wind-cold, remove Shi Cao, add Su Ye and Fang Feng.
- In the case of haematuria, add Xiao Ji and Bai Mao Gen.
- In the case of cough and dyspnea, add Xing Ren, Qian Hu; if severe, add Sang Bai Pi and Ting Li Zi.
- In the case of deficiency of defensive yang marked by sweating and aversion to wind adopt Fang Ji Huang Qi Tang.

**Formula:** Ma Huang 6g, Sheng Shi Gao 15g, Bai Zhu 15g, Gan Cao 6g, Sheng Jiang 10g, Da Zao 10g.

2) Retention of Damp Toxin

**Main symptoms:** Edema of the eyelids followed by the whole body, dysuria, pyogenic infection, or even ulceration of skin.

**Accompanying symptoms, tongue appearance and pulse condition:** Fever with aversion to wind, red tongue with thin yellow coating, and floating and rapid or slippery and rapid pulse

**Main points of the pathogenesis:** Retention of damp toxin, impairment of lung function in dispersing and descending, dysfunction of spleen in transportation.

**Therapeutic method:** To disperse lung qi, remove toxic substance, and promote flow of water to relieve edema.

**Prescription:** Ma Huang Lian Qiao Chi Xiao Dou Tang and Wu Wei Xiao Du Yin.

**Modification:**
- In the case of severe sepsis, add Pu Gong Ying and Zi Hua Di Ding.
- In the case of predominant dampness with skin ulceration, add Ku Shen and Tu Fu Ling.
- In the case of predominant wind with itchy, add Bai Xian Pi and Di Fu Zi.
- In the case of severe swelling due to heat in blood, add Dan Pi and Chi Shao.
- In the case of constipation, add Da Huang and Mang Xiao.

**Formula:** Ma Huang 6g, Lian Qiao 15g, Chi Xiao Dou 15g, Sheng Zi Bai Pi 15g, Xing Ren 10g, Gan Cao 6g, Sheng Jiang 10g, Da Zao 10g, Jin Yin Hua 15g, Ye Ju Hua 15g, Pu Gong Ying 15g, Zi Hua Di Ding 15g, Zi Bei Tian Kui 15g.

3) Retention of Water and Dampness

**Main symptoms:** Pitted edema of the whole body, scanty urine, chronic onset with long period of disease course.

**Accompanying symptoms, tongue appearance and pulse condition:** Sensation of heaviness in the body, oppression in chest, anorexia, nausea, greasy and white coating, deep and slow pulse.

**Main points of the pathogenesis:** Dampness invades muscle and skin and the triple energizer fails to take charge of water circulation, which causes disturbance of bladder in qi transformation.

**Therapeutic method:** To invigorate the spleen, eliminate dampness, activate yang and promote flow of water.
Modification:
• In case of severe edema, add Ma Huang, Xing Ren and Ting Li Zi.
Formula: Sang Bai Pi 20g, Chen Pi 15g, Da Fu Pi 20g, Fu Ling Pi 20g, Sheng Jiang Pi 15g, Cang Zhu 15g, Hou Po 15g, Rou Gui 10g, Bai Zhu 15g, Fu Ling 15g, Zhu Ling 15g, Ze Xie 15g.

4) Excess of Damp-heat

Main symptoms: General edema with the skin shiny and wiry.
Accompanying symptoms, tongue appearance and pulse condition: Fullness in the chest and abdomen, vexing heat, thirst, scanty and dark urine, or dry stools, yellow and greasy coating, deep and rapid or soggy and rapid pulse.
Many points of the pathogenesis: Pathogenic damp-heat obstructs in muscle, skin and meridian path and causes qi dysfunction of the triple energizer in rising and falling.
Therapeutic method: Removing damp-heat by promoting water metabolism.
Prescription: Shu Zao Yin Zi.
Modification:
• In the case of additional flatulence without decrease and constipation, add Ji Jiao Li Huang Wan.
• In the case of severe edema accompanied by oppression in chest, asthmatic breathing, inability of lying flat, and wiry pulse with strength, add Wu Ling San, Wu Pi San and Ting Li Da Zao Xie Fei Tang.
• If there is long retention of damp heat, and it can also transform into dryness which further damages yin, then add Zhu Ling Tang.
• In the case of retention of damp-heat in the bladder that damages the blood vessels, add Da Ji, Xiao Ji, and Bai Mao Gen.

Formula: Qiang Huo 15g, Qin Jiao 15g, Fang Feng 15g, Da Fu Pi 20g, Fu Ling Pi 20g, Sheng Jiang Pi 15g, Zhu Ling 15g, Fu Ling 15g, Ze Xie 15g, Chi Xiao Dou 15g, Huang Bai 15g, Shang Lu 5g, Bing Lang 15g, Sheng Da Huang 8g. (Sheng Da Huang is to be decocted later.)

[Yin Edema]

1) Deficiency of Spleen yang

Main symptoms: General edema, especially the part below the loins, sunken surface with difficulty in recovery if passed, oliguria, withered and sallow complexion, poor appetites, loose stool.
Accompanying symptoms, tongue appearance and pulse condition: Listlessness, cold limbs, stuffiness in epigastrium, abdominal distention, pale tongue, white and greasy or watery and slippery coating, deep and slow or weak pulse.
Main points of the pathogenesis: Failure of spleen yang leads to dysfunction of the spleen in transport and makes qi fail to transform water, resulting in water diffusion in lower energizer edema.
Therapeutic method: Warming and activating spleen yang to excrete water and remove dampness.
Prescription: Shi Pi Yin.
Modification:
• In the case of genera edema which is more pronounced in face and head in the morning, sallow complexion, normal appetite, listlessness, normal or loose stool, diuresis, thin and greasy coating, weak pulse, then adopt Shen Ling Bai Zhu San
to tonify qi, invigorate spleen, and promote qi to resolve dampness.

• Patients should pay attention to diet and nourishment and may choose soybean and peanut as adjunctive therapy.

Formula: Gan Jiang 10g, Fu Zi 6g, Cao Guo Ren 15g, Gui Zhi 10g, Bai Zhu 15g, Fu Ling 15g, Zhi Gan Cao 10g, Sheng Jiang 10g, Ze Xie 15g, Che Qian Zi 15g, Mu Gua 15g, Mu Xiang 15g, Hou Po 15g, Da Fu Pi 15g.

2) Deficiency of Kidney Yang

Main symptoms: General pitted edema which is more pronounced below the loins, palpitation, shortness of breath, soreness and heaviness in the loins, hypourocrinia of diuresis.

Accompanying symptoms, tongue appearance and pulse condition: Cold limbs, aversion to cold, lassitude, pale complexion, pale and swollen tongue with white coating, deep and thready or deep, slow and weak pulse.

Main points of the pathogenesis: Deficiency of kidney qi causes yang to fail to transform water, leading to water and dampness to gather in the lower part of body.

Therapeutic method: To warm the kidney and assist yang as well as activate qi to promote flow of water.

Prescription: Ji Sheng Shen Qi Wan and Zhen Wu Tang.

Modification:

• In the case of hyperdiuresis, remove Ze Xie and Che Qian Zi and add Tu Si Zi and Bu Gu Zhi.
• In the case of palpitations and cyanotic lips, weak and rapid pulse, or slow and knotted pulse, increase the amount of Fu Zi and add Gui Zhi Zhi Gan Cao and Dan Shen.
• If there is asthmatic breathing, sweating, and floating, weak and rapid, add Ren Shen, Ge Jie, Wu Wei Zi, Shan Zhu Yu, Mu Li and Long Gu.
• In the case of lassitude, soreness in the loins, nocturnal emission, dry mouth and throat, feverish sensation in the palms, soles and chest, red tongue and thready, rapid pulse, choose Zhu Gui Wan, Ze Xie and Fu Ling.
• If long deficiency of kidney yin leads to water failing to nourish wood and such symptoms as yin deficiency of kidney and liver, symptoms of liver yang hyperactivity and upper excess and lower deficiency appear, add Zuo Gui Wan, Zhen Zhu Mu, Long Gu, Mu Li and Bie Jia.
• In the case of listlessness, nausea and uric taste in the mouth, add Fu Zi, Zhi Da Huang, Huang Lian and Ban Xia.
• If long-term edema leads to stagnation of blood stasis, add Yi Mu Cao, Ze Lan Ye, Tao Ren and Hong Hua.

Formula: Shu Di 15g, Shan Yao 15g, Shan Zhu Yu 15g, Dan Pi 15g, Fu Ling 15g, Ze Xie 15g, Pao Fu Zi 6g, Gui Zhi 15g, Chuan Niu Xi 15g, Che Qian Zi 15g, Bai Zhu 15g, Bai Shao 15g, Sheng Jiang 10g.

In case of my patient:

• TCM Diagnosis: Deficiency of Kidney Yang
• Acupuncture Points: LI 4, LV 3, UB 20, UB 23, KD 7, ST 36, ST 28, UB 22, REN 9, REN 4, GB 41, SP 5, Yintang. These points are only for edema (excluding other symptoms).
• Formula: She didn’t want a formula prescription.
• Duration of Treatment: 5/31/2014 – 11/22/2014
• Numbers of Treatment: 10
• Result: Swelling in the knee and edema in her lower legs are a little better. (But other symptoms were much better.) She wants to continue treatment with me for knee pain.

Recommendations / Nursing / Lifestyle Advice:

Control salt intake. The recommendation is to avoid salt intake during the initial stage of edema. As edema is gradually reduced, a low-sodium diet can be resumed.

Remarks:

Strengthen the spleen to extract dietary essence. When the spleen is deficient and fails to transform and transport, sufficient essence may not be extracted from food and water. In this case, puffiness of the face in the morning and swelling and distending sensation of the lower body in the evening will manifest along with symptoms of spleen qi deficiency, such as fatigue, loose stool, sallow complexion and increased urination. This is not considered a pattern of edema. Strengthening the spleen’s function to extract the essence from diet should be the focus of the treatment nutritional supplements are encouraged.

Integrate the method of promoting blood circulation. The strategy of invigorating the blood to transform stasis is often used to address the need of unblocking obstruction in the triple burner. This method is especially useful in the treatment of ascites and end stage renal disease, in which, according to TCM, the water passage is no longer patent due to blood stasis and poor circulation. By using large doses of Yi Mu Cao, Ze Lan, Tao Ren and Hong Hua, obstruction in the water passage can be removed as blood stasis is resolved and the blood circulation is facilitated.

References:
2) 2003, Editors: Shih-Shun Lin, Leigh Caldwell, Essentials of Chinese Medicine Internal Medicine, Bridge Publishing Group, Walnut, USA, pp. 279-86.