

CHAPTER 58

Men's Health: Erectile Dysfunction

Erectile dysfunction (*yáng wěi* 阳痿) is an inability to achieve and maintain an erection, achieve ejaculation, or both. Men presenting with erectile dysfunction often experience other complaints in addition to difficulty with erections, including loss of libido, ejaculatory failure, inability to achieve orgasm and premature ejaculation. These problems can also be dealt with using the strategies outlined in this chapter.

Erectile dysfunction is a complicated issue, often associated with vascular disease and a tangle of social and emotional factors such as overwork and fatigue, anxiety and depression, disinterest in the sexual partner, fear of sexual incompetence, marital discord or guilt about unconventional sexual impulses.

In Chinese medicine, the ability to achieve erection (with reasonable frequency, based on the age of the patient) ultimately reflects the state of the Kidneys and the distribution of qi and blood. A number of factors must be in sync in order for erection and reproduction to take place. First, intact Kidney yang is necessary to provide the 'fire of desire' and the yang hydraulics to enable erection to occur. Second, Liver qi must be free flowing so that qi and blood can reach the extremity of the Liver channel to inflate the ancestral sinew of the Liver (i.e., the penis). Third, sufficient quantities of qi and blood must be available to fill the penis when opportunity presents. Finally, the *shén*, which relies on adequate qi and blood for stability, focus and anchorage, must be willing and able.

PATHOLOGY

Experience suggests there are five main groups of erectile dysfunction:

1. Those due to stress and poor circulation of qi and blood to the periphery. Mostly Liver constraint problems, this type of erectile dysfunction is intermittent and reflects increasing stress levels; when relaxed or on holiday, normal service is resumed.
2. Blockage of the penile vasculature by blood stasis. Clinical experience suggests that blood stasis is a significant contributor to erectile dysfunction. Erectile dysfunction may appear before other classic features of blood stasis, and is considered an early warning sign of

BOX 58.1 PATTERNS

Liver qi constraint

- traditional approach
- modern strategy

Blood stasis

- systemic, mild to moderate
- severe, with marked stasis in lower burner
- alternative strategies

Damp-heat

- chronic, dampness greater than heat
- with yin deficiency

Qi and blood deficiency

- Heart blood and Spleen qi deficiency
- fear damaging Kidney qi
- Heart and Kidney axis disruption

Kidney deficiency

– yang deficiency

- diminished *mìng mén* fire
- with enlarged prostate and poor fluid metabolism

– yin deficiency

developing cardiovascular disease and systemic blood stasis. In the absence of clear Kidney deficiency signs and symptoms, patients with an inability to achieve erection and no nocturnal or early morning erections, blood stasis is the most likely diagnosis.

3. Associated with chronic infection or inflammation of the genitourinary system. This is usually associated with a chronic prostate infection, or prostatic inflammation and swelling.
4. Insufficient qi and blood available to fill the penis; disturbance of the *shén* and *zhì* (anxiety, lack of confidence, fear of failure/intimacy). Seen in patients with weak or scattered qi and blood. There are mechanical aspects of insufficient 'hydraulic fluid' to inflate the penis, and a *shén* that is too scattered to focus the qi and blood where it is required.
5. From exhaustion or age. This is the classic pattern of erectile dysfunction, involving weakness of Kidney yang and yin, and diminishing *mìng mén* fire.

ETIOLOGY

External pathogens

These can invade the lower burner via the local collaterals or the *tai yang* channels, becoming lodged and chronic if the acute phase is mismanaged. Persistent damp-heat in the lower burner 'steams and softens' the ancestral sinew of the Liver, blocking movement of qi and blood to the penis.

Emotional factors

Male sexual function depends on both physiological and psychological health, with the emotional aspects of the Heart, Liver and Kidney systems all influencing sexual ability. Specifically, mental stress can obstruct the flow of Liver qi, with a very direct and dismal effect on the functioning of the 'ancestral sinew'. Anxiety and extremes of emotion, which destabilize the Heart and the *shén*, can also play havoc with the ability to achieve and maintain an erection. Kidney dysfunction can result from fear or shock. Severe or prolonged fear or a sudden shock damages *zhi*, the anima of the Kidney and the *shén*, or disrupts the Heart-Kidney axis. In such cases, timidity and nervousness may become constant personality traits. Such traits do not lend themselves to confident and effective sexual encounters.

Dietary factors

A diet that introduces damp-heat into the system, or that weakens the Spleen, can contribute to erectile dysfunction. Damp-heat from excessive rich, sweet, oily food and alcohol, or simply overeating, accumulates in the middle burner then gradually seeps into the lower burner, softening the sinews, inducing swelling and blocking qi and blood distribution. Middle burner damp-heat also gradually depletes yin and drains the Kidneys while chronic damp-heat gradually influences the blood by increasing its thickness and viscosity, resulting in blood stasis.

A raw or cold diet, or one with insufficient protein, weakens the Spleen and leads to qi and blood deficiency, damages Spleen yang and ultimately drains Kidney yang. A by-product of a weak Spleen and resulting inefficient digestion is dampness, which can sink into the lower burner, stagnate, and over time generate damp-heat.

Medications and drugs

Certain prescription and recreational drugs have a deleterious effect on desire and the ability to develop and maintain an erection. Antihypertensive agents (in particular, beta blockers), antidepressants and antipsychotic agents have a significant impact. Recreational drugs with a deleterious erectile effect include cannabis and nicotine, the opiate group, and stimulants. Stimulants such as cocaine and amphetamine derivatives (speed, ice) plunder reserves of es-

BOX 58.2 KEY DIAGNOSTIC POINTS

- erectile dysfunction in otherwise reasonably well individuals is most likely early blood stasis
- during periods of emotional stress, usually qi constraint
- loss of libido with erectile dysfunction is most likely yang deficiency
- intact sexual desire with loss of ability is most likely yang blockage by blood stasis or damp-heat
- frequent need to have sex (not like true lust, more like an irritation or itch that needs to be scratched) without the ability to achieve or maintain erection – yin deficiency with heat
- with genital sweating or rashes – damp-heat
- associated with some type of sexual or dysmorphic anxiety, most likely qi and blood deficiency or Heart Kidney axis disruption
- erectile dysfunction in patient with diabetes – most likely blood stasis, and/or damp-heat

sence and yin to release a short burst of yang that temporarily increases desire, but ultimately leads to profound erectile problems and fertility issues. Repeatedly dipping into this finite reserve has a dire effect on both Kidney yin and yang.

Excessive or inappropriate use of yang tonic herbs in an attempt to achieve a sort of super potency or ultra health can cause problems in a similar way to the stimulant drugs above. Men (young and relatively robust men in particular) who consume large quantities of hot-natured yang tonic herbs such as red ginseng and deer horn in order to increase sexual potency deplete Kidney yin by tapping excessively and inappropriately into their yang and essence reserve.

Overwork, age, Kidney deficiency

An important cause of erectile dysfunction, loss of libido and male infertility, Kidney deficiency can involve either essence, yang, yin or a combination of these factors. It can be congenital or develop from overwork, age, chronic illness or excessive ejaculation and masturbation.

Kidney yang qi is particularly affected by prolonged exposure to cold conditions, as well as excessive lifting or standing. In some cases, particularly in younger men, Kidney qi may be weakened while Kidney yang remains intact, in which case the cold symptoms are not seen.

Kidney yin is damaged through overwork, especially while under stress, late nights, shift work, insufficient sleep, febrile disease, insufficient hydration and the use of some drugs and medications.

Ejaculation – how much is too much?

The issue of potential damage done by excessive sexual activity (ejaculation in males, pregnancies and terminations in females) is a question that has preoccupied the Chinese for centuries, and one that remains controversial among those involved in Chinese medicine today. Sperm is a manifestation of essence, thus essence is lost with ejaculation. From a Chinese medicine perspective, essence should be jealously preserved and unnecessary loss avoided as it diminishes one's potential life span and health. A number of elaborate exercises and techniques have been developed by the Chinese to enable sex while inhibiting ejaculation, or to somehow redirect and reabsorb it. There is no question that sexual intercourse without ejaculation has significant benefit for both partners, and is a skill that is easily learned, albeit requiring some initial discipline. While the concept runs counter to the prevailing trend in the West, containing the essence in such circumstances increases energy and mental clarity, desire for one's partner and fosters harmonious bonding.

On the other hand, clinical experience (among a limited population of predominantly Caucasian patients) suggests that ejaculation from time to time is essential to keep the prostate gland from becoming congested and disordered. The prostate is a gland with one exit point (Fig. 57.1, p. 960). Prostatic secretions can thicken and congeal if the gland is not emptied from time to time. Almost all men, if they live long enough, will experience some trouble with prostatic hypertrophy and possibly prostate cancer, so keeping the qi and blood flowing through the prostate and preventing congestion is increasingly important in an aging population.

Finding the sweet spot between the need to preserve the essence and exercise the prostate is fraught with cultural preconceptions about sex and the baggage of machismo identity. Suggesting that men should not ejaculate (as frequently) is met with disbelief; similarly, recommending it to those who feel beyond it or who are not in a relationship is also beyond the pale for some. Clinical dexterity is called for.

Once the topic is raised, the question revolves around how frequent ejaculation should be to keep the prostate gland in trim, without unnecessarily diminishing the precious and finite reserves of essence. The answer depends on the age, health and constitution of the individual concerned, as what may be considered excessive for one will not be for another.

Some general guidelines are helpful, however, and as a rule of thumb we suggest an ejaculatory frequency based on age. For relatively healthy men in their 20s and 30s, ejaculation twice weekly is generally acceptable. From 40–50 years

of age, ejaculation once a week seems about right; for men 50–60, once every two weeks, 60+ once every two weeks if possible or every three weeks if not. Signs of Kidney deficiency should be checked for, the most common being increasing premature ejaculation and erectile dysfunction, tiredness, backache and urinary frequency. When evident, recommended frequency of ejaculation should be reduced.

■ 1 LIVER QI CONSTRAINT

肝郁不舒

- traditional approach
- modern strategy

Erectile dysfunction and loss of libido of a Liver qi constraint type is typically found in men stressed by overwork and the daily demands of life. Most common in younger men (20–40 years old); less often during middle age when the ability to cope with stress and Kidney qi are both declining. Often complicated by Kidney deficiency, heat from constraint, damp-heat from the diet and alcohol, and/or blood stasis.

Clinical features

- Loss of libido, disinterest in sex, and inability to get or maintain an erection. There may, however, be nocturnal and early morning erections. An emotional component is clearly evident, with increase in stress levels impacting libido, erections and mood. These patients are worried and depressed, easy to anger, irritated and impatient.
 - chest and hypochondriac distention and pain
 - poor appetite, frequent sighing
- T darkish or mauve and a thin, white coat, or with red edges and thin, yellow coat if there is heat

P wiry

Treatment principle

Dredge the Liver and relieve constraint
Warm the Kidneys and activate yang

Prescription

XIAO YAO SAN 逍遥散

Rambling Powder, modified

The traditional approach focuses on regulating qi systemically, with gradual return of service as qi is distributed more reliably to the periphery.

chai hu (Bupleuri Radix) 柴胡 9–12g
bai shao (Paeoniae Radix alba) 白芍 12–18g
dang gui (Angelicae sinensis Radix) 当归 9–12g
fu ling (Poria) 茯苓 12–15g

chao bai zhu (stir-fried *Atractylodes macrocephalae* Rhizoma) 炒白术 9–12g
zhi gan cao (*Glycyrrhizae Radix preparata*) 炙甘草 3–6g
yu jin (*Curcumae Radix*) 郁金 9–12g
zhi ke (*Aurantii Fructus*) 枳壳 6–9g
qing pi (*Citri reticulatae viride Pericarpium*) 青皮 6–9g
chen pi (*Citri reticulatae Pericarpium*) 陈皮 6–9g
xiang fu (*Cyperii Rhizoma*) 香附 9–12g
chuan lian zi (*Toosendan Fructus*) 川楝子 6–9g

METHOD: Decoction, one packet per day. **Chai hu** dredges the Liver, regulates qi and clears heat. **Bai shao** softens the Liver, and with **dang gui**, nourishes Liver blood. **Fu ling**, **chao bai zhu** and **zhi gan cao** strengthen the Spleen; **fu ling** also promotes urination and drains dampness, while **chao bai zhu** dries dampness. **Yu jin**, **zhi ke**, **qing pi**, **chen pi**, **xiang fu** and **chuan lian zi** support the main herbs in dredging the Liver, regulating qi, and restoring the qi dynamic. (Source: *Zhong Yi Nei Ke Xue / He Ji Ju Fang*)

Modifications

- Kidney qi deficiency, add **tu si zi** (*Cuscutae Semen*) 菟丝子 9–12g, **gou qi zi** (*Lycii Fructus*) 枸杞子 9–12g and **bu gu zhi** (*Psoraleae Fructus*) 补骨脂 9–12g.
 - Heat, with a red face, flushing, red eyes, a tongue with red edges and a yellow coat, add **mu dan pi** (*Moutan Cortex*) 牡丹皮 9–12g and **shan zhi zi** (*Gardeniae Fructus*) 山栀子 9–12g.
 - Damp-heat, add **bi xie** (*Dioscoreae hypoglaucae Rhizoma*) 萹薹 9–12g, **cang zhu** (*Atractylodis Rhizoma*) 苍术 9–12g and **huang bai** (*Phellodendri Cortex*) 黄柏 6–9g.
- Blood stasis, use **dang gui wei** (*Angelicae sinensis radialis Cauda*) 当归尾 instead of **dang gui**, and add **wang bu liu xing** (*Vaccariae Semen*) 王不留行 9–12g and **chuan xiong** (*Chuanxiong Rhizoma*) 川芎 6–12g.
 - Depression or anxiety, add **he huan pi** (*Albiziae Cortex*) 合欢皮 12–15g and **ye jiao teng** (*Polygoni multiflori Caulis*) 夜交藤 15–30g.
 - Constipation and abdominal bloating, use **zhi shi** (*Aurantii Fructus immaturus*) 枳实 9–12g rather than **zhi ke**, and add **hou po** (*Magnoliae officinalis Cortex*) 厚朴 9–12g.
 - If the patient is robust, with marked irritability, restlessness, insomnia and palpitations, consider **CHAI HU JIA LONG GU MU LI TANG** (*Bupleurum plus Dragon Bone and Oyster Shell Decoction* 柴胡加龙骨牡蛎汤, p. 1168) as the guiding prescription.

Variations and additional prescriptions

Modern strategy to dredge the Liver and open the collaterals

Aimed at regulating the Liver, quickly dredging and opening up the channels and collaterals of the penis, while nourishing and harmonizing Liver blood, **KANG WEI LING** (*Marvelous Pills to Combat Impotence* 抗痿灵) has a swift, albeit temporary effect on improving qi and blood flow to the penis. It is used in short courses of 15 days at a time as an adjunct to other systemic treatment to assist Liver function.

Acupuncture for erectile dysfunction from Liver qi constraint (select from)

| | | |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| CV-6 (<i>qi hai</i>) | these points regulate and activate lower burner qi and strengthen Kidneys qi; most effective when needle sensation (<i>de qi</i>) can be felt in the penis | : + tonifying : - reducing ▲ moxa Ω cupping ↓ bleeding |
| CV-7 (<i>yin jiao</i>) | | |
| ST-30 (<i>qi chong</i>) | point of the Penetrating vessel on the Stomach channel; especially useful when there is penile or testicular pain | |
| LR-3 (<i>tai chong</i> –) | the ‘four gates’, together these points have a strong sedative and calming effect, and mobilize qi and blood | |
| LI-4 (<i>he gu</i> –) | | |
| GB-34 (<i>yang ling quan</i>) | sea point of the Gallbladder, regulates qi and benefits the sinews | |
| LR-5 (<i>li gou</i>) | connecting point of the Liver, spreads Liver qi and relieves constraint, clears the channels and clears damp-heat from the genitals | |
| SP-6 (<i>sān yin jiao</i>) | regulates Liver qi, strengthens the Spleen and Kidneys and tonifies qi, and restores circulation in the lower burner | |
| PC-6 (<i>nei guan</i>) | regulates the Liver and alleviates constrained qi, calms the Heart and <i>shén</i> and settles the <i>hún</i> | |
| BL-18 (<i>gan shu</i> –) | transport point of the Liver, alleviates qi constraint | |

- Heat, add LR-2 (*xing jian* –) and PC-7 (*da ling*)
- Marked Kidney deficiency, add GV-4 (*ming men* +) and moxa when there is no heat
- Blood deficiency, add CV-12 (*zhong wan* +)
- Phlegm, add PC-5 (*jian shi*), ST-40 (*feng long*), ST-41 (*jié xi*) and CV-12 (*zhong wan* +)
- Insomnia, use GB-39 (*xuan zhong*) and TB-5 (*wai guan*) instead of LR-3 and LI-4.
- Ear points: liver, kidney, external genitals, testis, prostate, endocrine, *shén mén*

| | |
|--|-----|
| wu gong (Scolopendra) 蜈蚣..... | 18g |
| bai shao (Paeoniae Radix alba) 白芍..... | 60g |
| dang gui (Angelicae sinensis Radix) 当归..... | 60g |
| gan cao (Glycyrrhizae Radix) 甘草..... | 60g |

METHOD: Capsules. Grind all substances into a fine powder, sift carefully, and divide into 40 portions. Pack each portion into gelatin capsules. The dose is 1 portion, morning and evening, taken with 30ml of yellow wine or neutral alcohol to further enhance peripheral vasodilation. The 15 day course can be repeated once more after a break of a few days. **Wu gong** enters the Liver channel and powerfully promotes qi and blood flow to the periphery. **Dang gui** and **bai shao** nourish and regulate Liver blood. **Gan cao** strengthens the Spleen, augments qi and protects against the toxicity of **wu gong**. (Source: *Nei Fen Mi Ji Bing Bian Bing Zhuang Fang Zhi Liao*)

Prepared medicines

Concentrated powders

Xiao Yao San (Bupleurum and Tangkuei Formula)

Chai Hu Shu Gan San (Bupleurum and Cyperus Combination)

Chai Hu Jia Long Gu Mu Li Tang (Bupleurum and Dragon Bone Combination)

Pills

Xiao Yao Wan (Free and Easy Wanderer Teapills, Hsiao Yao Wan)

Chai Hu Shu Gan Wan (Bupleurum Soothe Liver Teapills)

Chai Hu Long Gu Mu Li Tang (Bupleurum, Dragon Bone and Oyster Shell Teapills)

Kang Wei Ling (Marvellous Pills to Combat Impotence)

Clinical notes

- Erectile dysfunction of a qi constraint type responds to treatment. For long-term resolution, the source of the stress must be addressed and measures (such as regular exercise, below) taken to minimize its effects on the system.
- Regular exercise is an essential part of short and long-term management. Aerobic activities such as walking and swimming are ideal. Patients should aim to do a minimum of 30–60 minutes of sustained aerobics at least 2–3 times per week. Activities such as *qì gōng*, *tài jí quán*, and yoga are also helpful. See p. 346 for more on exercise specific to qi constraint.
- A regular daily meal time and sleep routine is helpful, as is avoidance of alcohol, nonprescription drugs, tobacco and cannabis.
- In severe or persistent cases, cognitive behavioral therapy can be helpful in conjunction with Chinese medical treatment.
- Hot spot therapy is helpful, especially in the mid-thoracic and lower lumbar regions.
- A Liver qi-mobilizing diet is recommended, see p. 434.

■ 2 BLOOD STASIS

瘀血内阻

- systemic, mild to moderate
- severe, with marked stasis in lower burner
- alternative strategies

One of the most common types of erectile dysfunction from early middle age onwards, this acts as a sort of ‘canary in the coal mine’ for systemic blood stasis (see Clinical notes). Depending on the extent of the blood stasis, few of the classic features of blood stasis may be evident and diagnosis is made by default. Invigorating blood is the next strategy tried when standard approaches to strengthen Kidney yang have produced no result.

Blood stasis can be the result of prolonged Liver qi constraint, yang qi, blood or yin deficiency, accumulation of phlegm or damp-heat from the diet, or localized trauma and surgery.

Clinical features

- Inability to achieve or maintain erection, or only partial erection. There may or may not be loss of libido. Nocturnal and early morning erections are infrequent or absent. The classic features of blood stasis, such as poor peripheral circulation, vascular abnormalities around the medial knee and ankle, purple or brown skin discoloration of the legs, left iliac fossa pressure pain and fixed focal pains may be evident, but not always. Concurrent illness to be aware of that can contribute to blood stasis type erectile dysfunction include diabetes, cardiovascular disease, or previous prostate surgery.

T may be unremarkable in the early stages; purple or with brown or purple stasis spots and dark, distended sublingual veins when advanced

P choppy, wiry

Treatment principle

Invigorate blood and disperse blood stasis

Open up the channels and collaterals, and support yang

Prescription

SHAOFUZHUYUTANG 少腹逐瘀汤

Drive Out Stasis from the Lower Abdomen Decoction, modified

Used for mild to moderate systemic blood stasis.

| | |
|--|-------|
| dang gui (Angelicae sinensis Radix) 当归..... | 9–12g |
| chi shao (Paeoniae Radix rubra) 赤芍..... | 9–12g |
| pu huang (Typhae Pollen) 蒲黄..... | 9–12g |
| chao wu ling zhi (stir-fried Troglodyteror Feces) 炒五灵脂..... | 9–12g |

yan hu suo (Corydalis Rhizoma) 延胡索 9–12g
chuan xiong (Chuanxiong Rhizoma) 川芎 6–9g
xiao hui xiang (Foeniculi Fructus) 小茴香 9–12g
mo yao (Myrrha) 没药 6–9g
rou gui (Cinnamomi Cortex) 肉桂 3–6g
pao jiang (Zingiberis Rhizoma preparatum) 炮姜 3–6g
xian ling pi (Epimedii Herba) 仙灵脾 12–15g
hu lu ba (Trigonellae Semen) 胡芦巴 6–9g

METHOD: Decoction, 1e packet per day. **Dang gui, chi shao, pu huang, chao wu ling zhi, chuan xiong** and **mo yao** invigorate blood and dispel blood stasis. **Chuan xiong, xiao hui xiang** and **yan hu suo** regulate qi, invigorate blood and stop pain. **Rou gui** and **pao jiang** warm yang and stimulate the circulation of qi and blood. **Rou gui** warms cold and promotes generation of new blood. **Xian ling pi** and **hu lu ba** strengthen the Kidneys and warm the yang. (Source: *Zhong Yi Wai Ke Xue [Yi Lin Gai Cuo]*)

Modifications

- Marked cold, add **xian mao** (Curculiginis Rhizoma) 仙茅 12g.
- Swelling of the prostate, add **e zhu** (Curcumae Rhizoma) 莪术 9–12g, **jiu san leng** (wine-fried Sparganii Rhizoma) 酒三棱 9–12g and **bie jia** (Trionycis Carapax) 鳖甲 12–15g.
- Erectile dysfunction following traumatic injury or surgical procedure, add **wang bu liu xing** (Vaccariae Semen) 王不留行 9–12g and **san qi fen** (powdered Notoginseng Radix) 三七粉 3–9g [taken separately].
- Qi deficiency, add **huang qi** (Astragali Radix) 黄芪 15–30g, **dang shen** (Codonopsis Radix) 党参 15–30g and **chao bai zhu** (stir-fried Atractylodis macrocephalae Rhizoma) 炒白朮 12–15g.

- Blood deficiency, add **huang qi** (Astragali Radix) 黄芪 15–30g and **shu di** (Rehmanniae Radix preparata) 熟地 18–24g.
- Damp-heat, remove **xian ling pi, hu lu ba, pao jiang** and **rou gui** and add **cang zhu** (Atractylodis Rhizoma) 苍朮 9–12g, **huang bai** (Phellodendri Cortex) 黄柏 6–9g and **yi yi ren** (Coicis Semen) 薏苡仁 15–30g.

Variations and additional prescriptions

Severe, with marked stasis in the lower burner

When blood stasis in the pelvic basin and lower burner is chronic and marked, there will generally be features of blood stasis in the lower burner and legs such as urinary dysfunction or discomfort, left iliac fossa pressure pain, vascular abnormalities and skin discoloration. On occasion, it may be that surgery has left local scarring and stagnation. A strong and dedicated prescription to target the genitals, invigorate blood and support yang, such as **HUA YU QI WEI TANG** (Decoction to Transform Blood Stasis and Elevate the Wilted 化瘀起痿汤), should be used.

shui zhi (Hirudo) 水蛭 3–5g
zi shao hua (Spongilla) 紫梢花 5g
tao ren (Persicae Semen) 桃仁 10g
hong hua (Carthami Flos) 红花 10g
dang gui (Angelicae sinensis Radix) 当归 20g
shu di (Rehmanniae Radix preparata) 熟地 40g
she chuang zi (Cnidii Fructus) 蛇床子 15g
xian ling pi (Epimedii Herba) 仙灵脾 10g
xu duan (Dipsaci Radix) 续断 15g
huai niu xi (Achyranthis bidentatae Radix) 怀牛膝 15g

Acupuncture for erectile dysfunction from blood stasis (select from)

| | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| CV-6 (<i>qi hǎi</i>) | these points regulate and activate lower burner qi and | : + tonifying : - reducing : ▲ moxa : Ω cupping : ↓ bleeding |
| CV-7 (<i>yin jiāo</i>) | strengthen Kidney qi; most effective when needle sensation | |
| ST-29 (<i>guī lái -</i>) | (<i>dé qi</i>) can be felt in the penis | |
| ST-30 (<i>qi chōng</i>) | point of the Penetrating vessel on the Stomach channel; especially useful when there is penile or testicular pain | |
| SP-8 (<i>dì jī -</i>) | cleft point of the Spleen, invigorates qi and blood in the lower burner | |
| SP-6 (<i>sān yīn jiāo -</i>) | these points invigorate blood and disperse stagnant blood from the lower | |
| SP-10 (<i>xuè hǎi -</i>) | burner | |
| LI-4 (<i>hé gǔ -</i>) | | |
| LR-3 (<i>tài chōng -</i>) | source point of the Liver, regulates qi and invigorates blood, tonifies Liver yin and blood, frees the channels and collaterals | |
| BL-17 (<i>gé shū -</i>) | meeting point for blood, disperses stagnant blood | |

- Non-scarring moxa cones burnt over the Conception vessel points of the lower abdomen are helpful in invigorating local blood circulation, as long as there is no heat.
- Bleeding *ā shì* points or congested veins on the sacral foramina, popliteal fossa and medial knee, followed by strong cupping, can invigorate blood in the lower burner and reproductive system.
- Ear points: liver, kidney, external genitals, testis, prostate, endocrine, *shén mén*

METHOD: Decoction, one packet for two days. Grind **shui zhi** and **zhi shao hua** to a fine powder and pack in gelatine capsules. Decoct the remaining herbs and take one quarter of the powder with each dose of decoction. **Shui zhi**, **tao ren** and **hong hua** invigorate blood and break up blood stasis. **Zi shao hua** tonifies the Kidneys, supports yang and assists erection. **Dang gui** and **shu di** nourish blood. **She chuang zi**, **xian ling pi** and **xu duan** tonify and warm Kidney yang. **Huai niu xi** leads the action of the other herbs downward, tonifies the Kidneys and invigorates blood. (Source: *Zhong Yi Wai Ke Xue*)

Alternative strategies

Different blood-invigorating prescriptions can be utilized depending on specific circumstances.

- Blood stasis with qi constraint, affecting the Heart, use **XUE FU ZHU YU TANG** (Drive Out Stasis from the Mansion of Blood Decoction 血府逐瘀汤, p. 1118)
- Blood stasis with masses in the prostate or Liver, use **GE XIA ZHU YU TANG** (Drive Out Stasis Below the Diaphragm Decoction 隔下逐瘀汤, p. 1180) or **TAO HE CHENG QI TANG** (Peach Pit Decoction to Order the Qi 桃核承气汤, p. 304)
- Blood stasis with blood deficiency, use **TAO HONG SI WU TANG** (Four-Substance Decoction with Safflower and Peach Pit 桃红四物汤, p. 1018)
- Blood stasis with qi deficiency, use **BU YANG HUAN WU TANG** (Tonify the Yang to Restore Five [-Tenths] Decoction 补阳还五汤, p. 1102)

Prepared medicines

Concentrated powders

Shao Fu Zhu Yu Tang (Fennel Seed and Corydalis Combination)

Xue Fu Zhu Yu Tang (Persica and Carthamus Combination)
– systemic qi and blood stasis

Pills

Shao Fu Zhu Yu Wan (Stasis in the Lower Palace Teapills)

Xue Fu Zhu Yu Wan (Stasis in the Mansion of Blood Teapills)

Kang Wei Ling (Marvellous Pills to Combat Impotence)

Da Huang Zhe Chong Wan (Beijing Tong Ren Tang Brand)
– marked blood stasis and masses

Quan Lie Xian Wan (Prostate Gland Pills, Kai Kit Wan)
– with prostate swelling

Clinical notes

- Blood stasis erectile dysfunction often complicates diabetes mellitus, cardiovascular disease, atherosclerosis, arteriosclerosis or testicular/prostatic surgery.
- This type of erectile dysfunction responds to treatment. Depending on the extent of the stasis, patients may see improved performance within a few weeks. For a sustained result, treatment should continue for several months or more.

- Increased aerobic exercise is essential for invigorating blood circulation to the periphery, *see* p. 346.
- Erectile dysfunction is an early warning sign of blood stasis. Being so dependent on adequate blood to function, the penis is especially sensitive to reduction in blood flow. Erectile dysfunction in men who otherwise display few or no signs of Kidney weakness or other obvious pathology is most likely the beginnings of blood stasis, and presages more serious cardiovascular problems in the future.
- A blood-mobilizing diet is recommended, *see* p. 438.

■ 3 DAMP-HEAT

湿热下注

- chronic, dampness greater than heat
- with yin deficiency

Prolonged stagnation of damp-heat in the lower burner weakens and softens the sinews (including the 'ancestral sinew' of the Liver, the penis), leading to erectile dysfunction. Because this is most commonly a chronic problem, the heat component is typically muted and dampness pronounced. Sporadic increase in heat intensity does occur, however, in response to dietary changes, activity and escalating stress levels. *See* p. 893 for variations in symptom picture with heat or dampness predominance.

Damp-heat is introduced with the diet, seeping down into the lower burner to block qi and blood movement, gradually damaging the yin and fluids or congealing blood. Chronic damp-heat can also result from a persistent or unresolved external pathogenic invasion into the lower burner. Regardless of the source, chronic damp-heat in the lower burner is typically complicated by varying degrees of yin deficiency and/or blood stasis.

Clinical features

- Inability to get or maintain a full erection. There may be sweating, itching, distending pain or rashes around the scrotum and groin, or sporadic mucopurulent discharge from the urethra. In some patients the heat may give rise to premature ejaculation, if and when erection is achieved.
 - irritability, stifling sensation in the chest
 - heaviness and aching in the lower limbs
 - lethargy, afternoon fatigue; sweaty in the afternoon or after eating
 - loose stools or alternating constipation and diarrhea
 - concentrated urine
 - may be overweight
- T** greasy, yellow coat, especially over the root
P slippery and rapid

Treatment principle

Clear damp-heat from the lower burner

Prescription

BI XIE SHENG SHI TANG 萹薹胜湿汤
Tokoro Decoction to Overcome Dampness

For chronic damp-heat patterns in which dampness is more prominent than heat. Can be used for several months without risk of yin damage.

yi yi ren (Coicis Semen) 薏苡仁 24–30g
fu ling (Poria) 茯苓 12–15g
bi xie (Dioscoreae hypoglaucae Rhizoma) 萹薹 9–12g
huang bai (Phellodendri Cortex) 黄柏 6–12g
bai xian pi (Dictamni Cortex) 白藓皮 6–12g
ze xie (Alismatis Rhizoma) 泽泻 9–12g
cang zhu (Atractylodis Rhizoma) 苍术 9–12g
mu dan pi (Moutan Cortex) 牡丹皮 9–12g
shan zhi zi (Gardeniae Fructus) 山梔子 6–12g
tong cao (Tetrapanacis Medulla) 通草 3–6g

METHOD: Decoction, one packet per day. **Yi yi ren** and **bi xie** clear damp-heat from the lower burner and promote urination. **Huang bai** and **shan zhi zi** clear damp-heat from the lower burner. **Bai xian pi** clears damp-heat and stops itching. **Fu ling**, **ze xie** and **tong cao** promote urination and drain dampness. **Cang zhu** parches dampness, and with **huang bai**, clears damp-heat from the lower body. **Mu dan pi** cools and invigorates blood. (Source: *Zhong Yi Wai Ke Xue* [Yang Ke Xin De Ji])

Modifications

- Marked heat, add **long dan cao** (Gentianae Radix) 龙胆草 6–9g and **chai hu** (Bupleuri Radix) 柴胡 9–12g, or use **LONG DAN XIE GAN TANG** (Gentian Decoction to Drain the Liver 龙胆泻肝汤, p. 1004) for a few weeks as the guiding prescription.
- Dysuria, add **hua shi** (Talcum) 滑石 12–15g [cooked in a cloth bag] and **dan zhu ye** (Lophatheri Herba) 淡竹叶 9–12g.
- Perineal or penile pain and blood stasis, add **dan shen** (Salviae miltiorrhizae Radix) 丹参 12–15g, **tao ren** (Persicae Semen) 桃仁 9–12g or **hong hua** (Carthami Flos) 红花 6–9g.
- Mild yin deficiency, add **zhi mu** (Anemarrhenae Rhizoma) 知母 9–12g and **sheng di** (Rehmanniae Radix) 生地 9–12g.
- Prostatic swelling, add two or three herbs to soften hardness and disperse swelling, such as **xia ku cao** (Prunellae Spica) 夏枯草 12–15g, **zhe bei mu** (Fritillariae thunbergii Bulbus) 浙贝母 9–12g, **xuan shen** (Scrophulariae Radix) 玄参 12–15g, **wang bu liu xing** (Vaccariae Semen) 王不留行 6–9g, **wa leng zi** (Arcae Concha) 瓦楞子 12–15g and **mu li** (Ostreae Concha) 牡蛎 15–30g [the last two cooked first].

Acupuncture for erectile dysfunction from damp-heat (select from)

| | | |
|---------------------------------|--|---------------|
| CV-3 (<i>zhōng jì</i>) | clears damp-heat from the lower burner | · + tonifying |
| ST-30 (<i>qì chōng</i>) | point of the Penetrating vessel on the Stomach channel; especially useful when there is penile or testicular pain | · - reducing |
| LR-5 (<i>lí gōu -</i>) | connecting point of the Liver, clears damp-heat from the lower burner and genitals, and clears the channels | ▲ moxa |
| SP-9 (<i>yīn líng quán -</i>) | sea point of the Spleen, clears damp-heat from the lower burner | Ω cupping |
| GB-41 (<i>zú lín qì</i>) | master and couple points of the Girdle vessel, clear damp-heat from the lower burner, regulate qi and drain fire from the Liver and Gallbladder | ↓ bleeding |
| TB-5 (<i>wài guān</i>) | | |
| BL-18 (<i>gān shū -</i>) | transport points of the Liver and Spleen, these points dredge the Liver and regulate qi, strengthen the Spleen and clear and transform damp-heat | |
| BL-20 (<i>pí shū</i>) | | |
| BL-32 (<i>cì liáo -</i>) | regulates lower burner qi and clears damp-heat | |
| BL-33 (<i>zhōng liáo -</i>) | | |
| BL-35 (<i>huì yáng -</i>) | local point for male genital disorders | |

- Marked urethral discharge and irritation, add LR-2 (*xíng jiān -*) and KI-2 (*rán gǔ -*)
- Fever, add LI-11 (*qū chí -*)
- Abdominal distention, add CV-12 (*zhōng wǎn -*) and ST-25 (*tiān shū -*)
- Constipation or sluggish stools, add ST-25 (*tiān shū -*) and TB-6 (*zhī gōu -*)
- Nausea, add PC-6 (*nèi guān -*)
- Yin deficiency, add BL-23 (*shèn shū +*) and CV-4 (*guān yuán +*)
- Ear points: zero point, liver, kidney, external genitals, testis, prostate, endocrine, *shén mén*

Variations and additional prescriptions

With yin deficiency

In chronic damp-heat patterns where the heat aspect is severe, or those inappropriately treated with bitter and drying herbs, yin can be damaged, becoming increasingly deficient until the features of damp-heat eventually become secondary to those of yin deficiency. Erectile dysfunction with genital irritation and discharge gives way to erectile dysfunction with nocturnal emissions, night sweats, weakness and aching of the low back and legs, and a thinning or patchy tongue coat. Treatment is to nourish yin and clear remaining damp-heat with a prescription such as **ZHI BAI DI HUANG WAN** (Anemarrhena, Phellodendron, and Rehmannia Pill 知柏地黄丸, p. 1423) or **DA BU YIN WAN** (Great Tonify the Yin Pill 大补阴丸, p. 655).

Prepared medicines

Concentrated powders

Zhi Zhuo Gu Ben Wan (Poria and Polyporous Formula)
plus San Miao San (Atractylodes and Phellodendron Formula)

– dampness greater than heat

Long Dan Xie Gan Tang (Gentiana Combination)

– heat greater than dampness

Zhi Bai Di Huang Wan (Anemarrhena, Phellodendron and Rehmannia Formula)

Da Bu Yin Wan (Rehmannia and Testudinis Combination)

Pills

Bi Xie Sheng Shi Wan (Subdue the Dampness Teapills)

Long Dan Xie Gan Wan (Snake and Dragon Teapills)

Zhi Bai Ba Wei Wan (Eight Flavor Rehmannia Teapills)

Da Bu Yin Wan (Abundant Yin Teapills)

Quan Lie Xian Wan (Prostate Gland Pills, Kai Kit Wan)

– with prostate swelling

Clinical notes

- Damp-heat type erectile dysfunction can be a complication of diabetes mellitus, chronic prostatitis, excessive alcohol consumption and other genital infection.
- This pattern is amenable to treatment, however treatment in conjunction with appropriate changes in diet and habits should continue for a least a few months in most cases. Patients who respond can expect to see some improvement in erectile function and other symptoms of damp-heat within a few weeks, and gradual restoration thereafter. Caution when heat is strong to not overuse bitter, cold or drying herbs, to avoid yin damage.
- If the prostate is swollen, the quickest way to reduce swelling and empty the gland is by prostatic massage, a procedure performed by a qualified physician. For patients

with damp-heat pathology, this can be quite uncomfortable, however it usually has an immediate and sometimes dramatic effect on genitourinary function, improving the effect of subsequent herbal and acupuncture therapy to prevent recurrence.

- Kidney tonic herbs should be avoided until the damp-heat is cleared. In most cases, simply clearing damp-heat will be enough to restore normal erectile function. In older patients with underlying Kidney deficiency or with yin damage from the damp-heat, Kidney tonics can be phased in as the tongue coat clears.
- In some cases, antibiotic or antifungal drug therapy may be needed in addition to damp-heat dispersing Chinese medical treatment.
- A damp-heat clearing diet is essential, *see* p. 437.

■ 4 QI AND BLOOD DEFICIENCY

气血两虚

- Heart blood and Spleen qi deficiency
- fear damaging Kidney qi
- Heart and Kidney axis disruption

Qi and blood deficiency contributes to erectile dysfunction in two ways. The first is simple hydraulics—insufficient qi and blood to fill the penis. The second hinges on the role of qi and blood in stabilizing the *shén*, and the role of the *shén* in leading the qi to perform action. In Chinese this relationship is described by the phrase well known to martial artists: intention leads the qi to action (*yì qì lì* 意气力). When the *shén* and the various anima associated with specific organ systems are unanchored or rendered vulnerable by deficiency, the weakened or scattered *shén* and anima cannot maintain control of their respective domains. What this means in practice is that a *shén* or *zhì* enfeebled by deficiency and therefore subject to anxiety or fearfulness may lead to an inability to rise to the occasion, or if an erection occurs, it cannot be maintained.

Clinical features

- Inability to achieve or maintain an erection, or only partial erection; exacerbated by fatigue and associated with performance anxiety. These patients may have nocturnal erections when recumbent.
- pale complexion, lips, nails and conjunctivae
- fatigue, low energy reserves
- insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep; forgetfulness; postural dizziness
- palpitations; nervousness, anxiety or even panic attacks; clammy palms

- loss of appetite; abdominal distention; loose stools

T pale with a thin, white coat

P fine and weak

Treatment principle

Strengthen and nourish the Heart and Spleen, tonify qi and blood

Warm the Kidneys and support yang

Prescription

GUI PI TANG 归脾汤

Restore the Spleen Decoction, modified

zhi huang qi (honey-fried Astragali Radix) 炙黄芪... 9–12g

ren shen (Ginseng Radix) 人參..... 6–9g

bai zhu (Atractylodes macrocephalae Rhizoma)

白朮..... 9–12g

fu ling (Poria) 茯苓..... 9–12g

zhi gan cao (Glycyrrhizae Radix preparata) 炙甘草.... 3–6g

long yan rou (Longan Arillus) 龙眼肉 3–12g

dang gui (Angelicae sinensis Radix) 当归 3–9g

suan zao ren (Zizyphi spinosae Semen) 酸枣仁..... 9–12g

shu di (Rehmanniae Radix preparata) 熟地..... 6–9g

hu lu ba (Trigonellae Semen) 胡芦巴 6–9g

gou qi zi (Lycii Fructus) 枸杞子 12–15g

METHOD: Decoction, one packet every day or other day. **Zhi huang qi**, **ren shen**, **bai zhu** and **zhi gan cao** strengthen the Spleen and tonify qi. **Dang gui** and **shu di** tonify blood and yin. **Suan zao ren** and **long yan rou** nourish the Heart and calm the *shén*. **Fu ling** strengthens the Spleen and calms the *shén*. **Hu lu ba** and **gou qi zi** tonify the Kidneys and augment the essence. (Source: *Zhong Yi Nei Ke Xue* [Ji Sheng Fang])

Modifications

- Marked blood deficiency, add **he shou wu** (Polygoni multiflori Radix) 何首乌 9–12g and **lu jiao jiao** (Cervi Cornus Colla) 鹿角胶 3–6g and **gui ban jiao** (Testudinis Plastris Colla) 龟板胶 3–6g. The last two are available mixed together in a resinous block as **lu gui jiao** (鹿龟胶) that can be melted in the strained decoction.
- Kidney deficiency, add **tu si zi** (Cuscutae Semen) 菟丝子 9–12g, **bu gu zhi** (Psoraleae Fructus) 补骨脂 9–12g and **xian ling pi** (Epimedii Herba) 仙灵脾 12–15g.

Variations and additional prescriptions

Fear damaging Kidney qi

This is considered a type of Heart-Gallbladder qi deficiency, that is to say, a form of congenital instability of the *shén* and *zhì*. In this case, however, the constitution is not necessarily weak, and the main feature is an anxious, timid, shy disposition. Herbs and acupuncture can be helpful, at least while treatment is maintained, but some form of cognitive behavioral therapy or similar is usually required to equip the patient with tools for self management. Treatment is to calm the Heart, *shén* and mind with a prescription such as **AN SHEN DING ZHI WAN** (Calm the *Shén* and Settle the Emotions Pill 安神定志丸, p. 149). This prescription can be used long term.

Heart-Kidney axis disruption

Erectile dysfunction may occur following a major shock or trauma, which disrupts the Heart-Kidney axis and disperses qi. In addition to the loss of libido and difficulty with erec-

Acupuncture for erectile dysfunction from qi and blood deficiency (select from)

| | | |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| M-HN-3 (<i>yìn táng</i>) | calms the <i>shén</i> | : + tonifying : - reducing : ▲ moxa : Ω cupping : ↓ bleeding |
| CV-4 (<i>guān yuán</i>) | these points tonify source qi and strengthen the Kidneys; | |
| CV-6 (<i>qì hǎi</i>) | most effective when a mild needle sensation (<i>dé qì</i>) can be felt in the penis | |
| CV-12 (<i>zhōng wǎn</i> + ▲) | alarm point of the Stomach, strengthens the Spleen and Stomach to tonify blood | |
| HT-7 (<i>shén mén</i> +) | source point of the Heart and meeting point of the three leg yin respectively, | |
| SP-6 (<i>sān yīn jiāo</i> +) | these points have the particular effect of strengthening the Heart and Spleen, tonifying qi and blood, and calming the <i>shén</i> | |
| ST-36 (<i>zú sān lǐ</i> + ▲) | sea point of the Stomach, strengthens the Spleen and Stomach, tonifies qi and blood | |
| BL-15 (<i>xīn shū</i> +) | transport points of the Heart, Spleen and Kidneys, these points strengthen | |
| BL-20 (<i>pí shū</i> + ▲) | and regulate qi and blood, and calm the <i>shén</i> and <i>zhì</i> | |
| BL-23 (<i>shèn shū</i> + ▲) | | |

- Qi constraint, add LR-3 (*tài chōng* +) and PC-6 (*nèi guān*)
- Marked postural dizziness, add GV-20 (*bǎi huì* ▲)
- Palpitations, add HT-5 (*tōng lǐ*)
- Insomnia or dream-disturbed sleep, add N-HN-54 (*ān mián*) and BL-42 (*pò hù*)
- Ear points: *shén mén*, zero point, heart, spleen, kidney, external genitals, testis, endocrine, adrenal

tions, these patients suffer anxiety and palpitations, have trouble sleeping or sleep is disturbed by intense dreams or nightmares, increased sweating, night sweats or cold sweats, urinary frequency and cold intolerance. The tongue is pale and the pulse is weak. Treatment is to reconnect the Heart and Kidneys, support qi and blood, and calm the *shén* with **GUI ZHI JIA LONG GU MU LI TANG** (Cinnamon Twig Decoction plus Dragon Bone and Oyster Shell 桂枝加龙骨牡蛎汤, p. 1157).

Prepared medicines

Concentrated powders

Gui Pi Tang (Ginseng and Longan Combination)

Yang Xin Tang (Astragalus and Zizyphus Combination)

Gui Zhi Jia Long Gu Mu Li Tang (Cinnamon and Dragon Bone Combination)

Pills

Gui Pi Wan (Kwei Be Wan, Gui Pi Teapills)

An Shen Ding Zhi Wan (An Shen Ding Zhi Wan)

Ding Zhi Wan (Settle the Emotions Teapill)

Clinical notes

- Qi and blood deficiency type of erectile dysfunction may be diagnosed as erectile dysfunction subsequent to neurasthenia, chronic fatigue syndrome, convalescent stage of severe illness, anemia, benign prostatic hyperplasia, post-traumatic stress disorder or anxiety neurosis.
- If the psychological component is not exceedingly complex, this type of erectile dysfunction generally responds to treatment, which will usually need to continue for a minimum of several months until the reserves of qi and blood are adequately and sustainably restored. Men who respond will often find their ability and desire return as their energy is replenished, starting within several weeks of commencing treatment, with incremental improvement thereafter. Patients should be advised to avoid sexual relationships during the early stages of treatment.
- Fear damaging the Kidneys in particular represents erectile dysfunction of psychogenic origin. Because the root of the *shén* disturbance is usually very deep, therapeutic results are less certain. While erectile dysfunction and the anxiety around intimacy and sex can be ameliorated with acupuncture and herbs, the relationship and sexual dysfunction of this pattern may need to be addressed more directly in consultation with a sex therapist or counselor.
- A graded, mild to moderate exercise program is helpful in strengthening the Spleen and Lungs and building qi and blood. Activities such as *tài jí quán*, *qì gōng* and yoga are particularly recommended.
- A Spleen-strengthening diet (p. 430), with appropriate amounts of blood nourishing (p. 432) and adequate protein, is essential.

■ 5 KIDNEY DEFICIENCY

In Chinese medicine, Kidney yang is the basis of sexual desire, and plays a pivotal role in the mechanics of getting and sustaining an erection. Erectile dysfunction and fertility issues are, along with blood stasis, the most common pathology of men in middle age and beyond, although younger men with congenital Kidney weakness or hectic lifestyles may also be affected. Kidney yin and yang naturally decline with age, so all men will eventually suffer some degree of Kidney dysfunction. The aim of treatment is not only to restore sexual ability, but to replenish Kidney energy as the basis of all health and longevity.

■ 5.1 KIDNEY YANG DEFICIENCY

肾阳虚衰

- diminished *mìng mén* fire
- with enlarged prostate and poor fluid metabolism

Kidney yang deficiency is the most common type of Kidney weakness involved in erectile dysfunction, as yang is the basis of 'fire of desire' and the physical ability to get and maintain an erection. Yang qi also plays a role in securing the 'lower yin' orifices, to prevent premature ejaculation.

Clinical features

- Low or absent libido; inability to achieve erection, or only partial erection. If an erection is achieved, premature ejaculation may occur. Ejaculate is thin and watery and the penis feels cold. There may be low sperm motility and low sperm count.
- feels cold below the navel on palpation
- low back and knees cold, weak and aching
- cold intolerance, cold extremities
- listlessness, fatigue, somnolence
- frequent urination, nocturia

T pale, wet, swollen and scalloped with a white coat

P deep and fine or slow and weak, particularly in the proximal positions

Treatment principle

Warm the Kidneys and tonify yang

Augment the essence and replenish marrow

Prescription

YOU GUI WAN 右归丸

Restore the Right [Kidney] Pill

shu di (Rehmanniae Radix preparata) 熟地 24g

shan yao (Dioscoreae Rhizoma) 山药 12g

Acupuncture for erectile dysfunction from Kidney yang deficiency (select from)

| | | |
|-------------------------------|---|--|
| CV-4 (<i>guān yuán</i> ▲) | these points tonify source qi and strengthen the Kidneys | · + tonifying · - reducing · ▲ moxa · Ω cupping · ↓ bleeding |
| CV-6 (<i>qì hǎi</i> ▲) | most effective when a mild needle sensation (<i>dé qì</i>) can be felt in the penis | |
| CV-1 (<i>huì yīn</i> ▲) | warms the Conception and Governing vessels; treat with sparrow pecking moxa | |
| GV-4 (<i>mìng mén</i> +▲) | these points warm and tonify Kidney yang | |
| BL-23 (<i>shèn shū</i> +▲) | | |
| BL-31:34 (<i>bā liáo</i> ▲) | these points regulate, strengthen and activate lower burner qi; select according to tenderness and use warm needle moxa | |
| SP-6 (<i>sān yīn jiāo</i> +) | tonifies the Kidneys and benefits qi circulation in the lower burner | |
| KI-3 (<i>tài xī</i> +▲) | source point of the Kidneys, warms and tonifies Kidney yang | |
| SI-3 (<i>hòu xī</i>) | these points strengthen and consolidate the Kidneys and Governing vessel | |
| BL-62 (<i>shēn mài</i>) | | |

- Sinking qi or somnolence, add GV-20 (*bǎi huì* ▲) and ST-36 (*zú sān lǐ* +▲)
- Edema, add SP-9 (*yīn líng quán* -) and ST-28 (*shuǐ dào* -)
- Spleen deficiency, add BL-20 (*pí shū* +▲) and ST-36 (*zú sān lǐ* +▲)
- Ear points: kidney, adrenal, external genitals, testis, prostate, endocrine, *shén mén*

| | |
|--|-------|
| gou qi zi (Lycii Fructus) 枸杞子 | 12g |
| tu si zi (Cuscutae Semen) 菟丝子 | 12g |
| du zhong (Eucommiae Cortex) 杜仲 | 12g |
| lu jiao jiao (Cervi Cornus Colla) 鹿角胶 | 12g |
| shan zhu yu (Corni Fructus) 山茱萸 | 9g |
| dang gui (Angelicae sinensis Radix) 当归 | 9g |
| zhi fu zi (Aconiti Radix lateralis preparata) 制附子.... | 6–12g |
| rou gui (Cinnamomi Cortex) 肉桂..... | 6–12g |

METHOD: Pills. Grind the herbs to a fine powder and form into 9g pills with honey. The dose is one pill, twice daily. Can be decocted, one packet every day or second day, in which case **zhi fu zi** is cooked for 30 minutes first and **lu jiao jiao** melted into the strained decoction. **Shu di**, **gou qi zi** and **dang gui** nourish Kidney yin and blood. **Shan zhu yu** tonifies the Liver. **Shan yao** strengthens the Spleen and Kidneys. **Tu si zi** and **du zhong** tonify Kidney yang. **Zhi fu zi** and **rou gui** warm yang. **Lu jiao jiao** benefits yang and essence. (Source: *Zhong Yi Nei Ke Xue* ([*Jing Yue Quan Shu*])

Variations and additional prescriptions**Weak fluid metabolism with enlarged prostate**

Kidney yang deficiency is a common cause of prostatic enlargement and the ensuing difficulties, including erectile dysfunction and urinary problems. The mechanism involves failure of fluid metabolism and lack of yang qi movement in the lower burner—unprocessed fluids sink down to the lowest point of the pelvic basin, the prostate, causing it to swell. The swelling, in conjunction with the lack of yang movement and cold, constricts movement of qi and blood to the penis. Treatment is to warm yang and promote fluid metabolism with a prescription such as **JIN GUI SHEN QI WAN** (Kidney Qi Pill from the Golden Cabinet 金匱腎氣丸, p. 1336). When there is significant edema as well, usually in the ankles or even the scrotum, a prescription aimed at improving fluid metabolism and actively draining fluids, such

as **Ji SHENG SHEN QI WAN** (Kidney Qi Pill from Formulas that Aid the Living 济生腎氣丸, p. 1007), should be used.

Prepared medicines**Concentrated powders**

You Gui Wan (Eucommia and Rehmannia Formula)
 Ba Wei Di Huang Wan (Rehmannia Eight Formula)
 Ji Sheng Shen Qi Wan (Cyathula and Plantago Formula)

Pills

You Gui Wan (Right Side Replenishing Teapills)
 Jin Kui Shen Qi Wan (Fu Gui Ba Wei Wan, Golden Book Teapills)

Clinical notes

- Kidney yang deficiency erectile dysfunction may complicate conditions such as hypothyroidism, benign prostatic hyperplasia, general debility and aging.
- Can respond to persistent treatment. During the first 2-3 months of treatment the patient should be advised to minimize or avoid ejaculation altogether. Patients who respond should expect some improvement in their general well-being, followed by improved erectile performance within 6–8 weeks. A minimum of 6–9 months and occasionally ongoing treatment is usually necessary to maintain the result and continue to support Kidney yang. Modern drug therapy can be used in these patients to achieve erection, but an increase in fertility or return of libido will only be achieved by strengthening Kidney yang.
- Prostatic massage can be helpful if the prostate is swollen, see p. 1007.
- A yang-warming diet is essential, see p. 431.

■ 5.2 KIDNEY YIN DEFICIENCY

肾阴亏耗

Deficiency of Kidney yin generates heat. This false heat can simulate sexual desire (in fact, a type of irritation), but because the Kidneys are actually weak, the ability to sustain sexual activity is reduced.

Often a complication of chronic heat or damp-heat, it may develop in men who work long hours under significant pressure, or have a history of excessive sexual activity or drug abuse. Marijuana, cocaine and amphetamines are particularly dangerous to Kidney yin. Increasingly, depletion of Kidney yin is becoming a major cause of reproductive problems, and is afflicting a younger age group as the pace of life increases.

Clinical features

- Erectile dysfunction or premature ejaculation, exacerbated when the patient is stressed and fatigued. There may be frequent or increased desire for sex (more like an irritation or itch that needs to be scratched than true lust) but an inability to initiate or maintain an erection, or erotic dreams with spontaneous emission. There will be low sperm count and/or increased numbers of abnormal sperm, and scanty ejaculate.
 - soreness or weakness of the lower back and knees (exacerbated by sex), heel pain
 - generalized dryness: mouth and throat, skin and mucous membranes, dry stools or constipation
 - insomnia or restless, dream-disturbed sleep
 - facial flushing, malar flush; night sweats; sensation of heat in the palms and soles
 - dizziness and tinnitus, more noticeable after sex
- T red and dry with little or no coat
P fine and rapid

Treatment principle

Nourish and strengthen Kidney yin
Augment the essence and replenish marrow

Prescription

ZUO GUI WAN 左归丸

Restore the Left [Kidney] Pill

| | |
|---|--------|
| shu di (Rehmanniae Radix preparata) 熟地..... | 12-24g |
| shan yao (Dioscoreae Radix) 山药..... | 12-15g |
| shan zhu yu (Corni Fructus) 山茱萸..... | 12-15g |
| gou qi zi (Lycii Fructus) 枸杞子..... | 9-12g |
| tu si zi (Cuscutae Semen) 菟丝子..... | 9-12g |
| lu jiao jiao (Cervi Cornus Colla) 鹿角胶..... | 9-12g |
| gui ban jiao (Testudinis Plastris Colla) 龟板胶..... | 9-12g |
| huai niu xi (Achyranthis bidentatae Radix) 怀牛膝..... | 6-9g |

METHOD: Pills. Grind the herbs to a powder and form into 9g pills with honey. The dose is one pill, 2-3 times daily. May be decocted, one packet every day or other day, with dosage as shown. When decocted, **lu jiao jiao** and **gui ban jiao** are melted before being added to the strained decoction. **Shu di**, **shan yao** and **shan zhu yu** tonify Kidney yin. **Gui ban jiao** and **lu jiao jiao** have a rich 'meatiness' that is especially enriching to yin, yang, blood and essence. **Gou qi zi**, **tu si zi** and **huai niu xi** tonify the Kidneys and support essence. (Source: *Zhong Yi Wai Ke Xue [Jing Yue Quan Shu]*)

Modifications

- Anti-sperm antibodies or following vasectomy reversal, add **dan shen** (Salviae miltiorrhizae Radix) 丹参 12-15g and **chi shao** (Paeoniae Radix rubra) 赤芍 9-12g.
- Low sperm count, add **gou qi zi** (Lycii Fructus) 枸杞子 12-15g, **nu zhen zi** (Ligustri Fructus) 女贞子 9-12g, **wu wei zi** (Schisandrae Fructus) 五味子 6-9g, **zhi he shou wu** (Polygoni multiflori Radix preparata) 制何首乌 12-15g and **dang gui** (Angelicae sinensis Radix) 当归 9-12g, or combine with **WU ZI YAN ZONG WAN** (Five-Seed Pills to Bring Forth Offspring 五子衍宗丸, p. 991).
- Seminal hyper-viscosity, add **he shou wu** (Polygoni multiflori Radix) 何首乌 12-15g and **xuan shen** (Scrophulariae Radix) 玄参 12-15g.
- Overheating and facial flushing, add **huang bai** (Phellodendri Cortex) 黄柏 6-9g and **zhi mu** (Anemarrhenae Rhizoma) 知母 9-12g.
- Afternoon fever or bone steaming, add **qing hao** (Artemisiae annuae Herba) 青蒿 9-12g, **bie jia** (Trionycis Carapax) 鳖甲 9-15g and **yin chai hu** (Stellariae Radix) 银柴胡 9-12g.
- Marked insomnia, add **suan zao ren** (Zizyphi spinosae Semen) 酸枣仁 12-15g, **ye jiao teng** (Polygoni multiflori Caulis) 夜交藤 15-30g and **he huan pi** (Albiziae Cortex) 合欢皮 12-15g.
- Residual damp-heat, use **ZHI BAI DI HUANG WAN** (Anemarrhena, Phellodendron, and Rehmannia Pill 知柏地黄丸, p. 1423).
- Elements of yang deficiency with pink, flabby tongue, aversion to cold, skin and extremities warm but feels cold inside, add **xian ling pi** (Epimedii Herba) 仙灵脾 9-12g and **ba ji tian** (Morindae officinalis Radix) 巴戟天 9-12g.

Prepared medicines

Concentrated powders

Zuo Gui Wan (Cyathula and Rehmannia Formula)
Hu Qian Wan (Phellodendron and Testudinis Formula)
Da Bu Yin Wan (Rehmannia and Testudinis Combination)
Zhi Bai Di Huang Wan (Anemarrhena, Phellodendron and Rehmannia Formula)

Pills

Zuo Gui Wan (Left Side Replenishing Teapills)
Da Bu Yin Wan (Abundant Yin Teapills)
Zhi Bai Ba Wei Wan (Eight Flavor Rehmannia Teapills)

Acupuncture for erectile dysfunction from Kidney yin deficiency (select from)

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| CV-4 (<i>guān yuán</i> +) | these points tonify source qi and strengthen the Kidneys; |
| CV-6 (<i>qì hǎi</i> +) | most effective when a mild needle sensation (<i>dé qì</i>) can be felt in the penis |
| BL-23 (<i>shèn shū</i> +) | transport point of the Kidneys, tonifies Kidney yin |
| LU-7 (<i>liè quē</i>) | these points strengthen and consolidate Kidney yin and open up the Conception vessel |
| KI-6 (<i>zhào hǎi</i>) | |
| SP-6 (<i>sān yīn jiāo</i> +) | tonifies Kidney yin |
| KI-3 (<i>tài xī</i> +) | source point of the Kidneys, tonifies Kidney yin |

· + tonifying
 · - reducing
 · ▲ moxa
 · Ω cupping
 · ↓ bleeding

- Night sweats, add SI-3 (*hòu xī*)
- Heat, add KI-2 (*rán gǔ* -)
- Ear points: kidney, adrenal, external genitals, testis, prostate, endocrine, *shén mén*

Wu Zi Yan Zong Wan (Five Ancestors Teapills)

- can be added to any of the above when sperm disorders are part of the picture

Clinical notes

- Kidney yin deficiency type erectile dysfunction may be associated with general burnout from overwork or drug abuse, benign prostatic hyperplasia, hyperthyroidism, general debility and aging.
- In general, Kidney yin can be replenished and associated erectile dysfunction and fertility issues improved. As with all yin deficiency patterns, treatment is gradual and needs to continue for some months, but patients should expect to see some result within 4–6 weeks. Sexual activity, including masturbation, should be avoided or limited in the early stages of treatment.
- Prostatic massage can sometimes be helpful, but in some patients with yin deficiency it may make things worse. Worth a gentle go to test, but if there is any aggravation, massage should be avoided.
- Drugs that enable impotent men to have erections can prove counterproductive for men in this category. The excessive sexual desire they experience, combined with the drug-assisted ability to have frequent sexual intercourse, can lead to further exhaustion of yin.
- A yin-nourishing diet is essential, see p. 433.