

HENRY C. LU (TRANS.) SU WEN: BOOK 2 ORIENTAL HERITAGE  
**A COMPLETE TRANSLATION OF YELLOW  
EMPEROR'S CLASSICS OF INTERNAL MEDICINE  
(NEI-JING AND NAN-JING) #301 Volume One [su-wen]**  
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## **BOOK TWO**

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### **Chapter 10: Growth of Five Viscera**

#### **The Key Concepts in this Chapter**

There are three essential aspects of this chapter, namely, first, it outlines the connections between the five viscera and various parts of the human body, second, it outlines the relationships or correspondence between the five viscera on the one hand and the five flavours and the five colors on the other, third, it relates that rheumatism is caused by vicious energy of wind.

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The heart is in tune with the blood vessels, its prosperity is manifest in the complexion, its master is the kidneys (because the kidneys subdue the heart in the theory of five elements). The lungs are in tune with the skin, their prosperity is manifest in the hair, their master is the heart. The liver is in tune with the tendons, its prosperity is manifest in the nails, its master is the lungs. The spleen is in tune with muscles, its prosperity is manifest in the lips, its master is the liver. The kidneys are in tune with the bones, their prosperity is manifest in the hair of the head, their master is the spleen.

Therefore, an excessive consumption of salted foods will cause the blood vessels to become stiffened with change in color; an excessive consumption of bitter foods will cause withering of skin and falling of hair; an excessive consumption of acrid foods will cause cramps of tendons and withering of nails; an excessive consumption of sour foods will cause a shrinking of muscles and lifting up of lips; an excessive consumption of sweet foods will cause pain in the bones and falling of hair on the head. Such are the ways in which the five flavours may cause harm to the human body (The reader should refer to the second law governing the relationships among the five elements; for example, an excessive consumption of sour foods is beneficial to the liver, and the liver subdues the spleen which controls the muscles and lips, and this accounts for the fact that an excessive consumption of sour foods will cause a shrinking of muscles and lifting up of lips).

Therefore, the heart is fond of bitter foods, the lungs are fond of acrid foods, the liver is fond of sour foods, the spleen is fond of sweet foods, the kidneys are fond of salted foods; this represents the correspondence between the five viscera and the five flavours, they are in tune with each other. The energies of the five viscera may be seen from one's complexion. Thus, a green complexion like the colour of young grass is symptomatic of death; and yellow complexion like citrus trifoliata (green-yellow) is symptomatic of death; a black complexion like soot is symptomatic of death; a red complexion like blood clot (red-black) is symptomatic of death; a white complexion like dried bone is symptomatic of death. The above colors of complexion are symptomatic of death, because they are the colors of decayed viscera.

A green complexion like the blue feathers of the kingfisher is symptomatic of life; a red complexion like a cock's comb is symptomatic of life; a yellow complexion like the belly of a crab is symptomatic

of life; a white complexion like lard is symptomatic of life; a black complexion like the wings of a crow is symptomatic of life. The above colors are symptomatic of life, because they are the colors of healthy viscera.

When the heart is full of life, the skin will appear deep-red covered with plain white silk; when the lungs are full of life, the skin will appear light white-red covered with plain white silk; when the liver is full of life, the skin will appear blue-red covered with plain white silk; when the spleen is full of life, the skin will appear like the seed of bryony (semen tricosanthis, red-yellow) covered with plain white silk; when the kidneys are full of life, the skin will appear purple covered with plain white silk. The above five colors are expressive of the prosperity of the five viscera.

The five viscera are in tune with five colors and five flavours as follows: the lungs are in tune with white and acrid; the heart is in tune with red and bitter; the liver is in tune with azure and sour; the spleen is in tune with yellow and sweet; the kidneys are in tune with black and salted. Therefore, white is in tune with the skin, red is in tune with the blood vessels, azure is in tune with the tendons, yellow is in tune with the muscles, black is in tune with the bones.

Blood vessels belong to the eyes (because the blood vessels are full of blood stream; if the eyes look at things for a prolonged period of time, it will cause harm to the blood); marrow belongs to the brain; tendons belong to the joints; blood belongs to the heart; energy belongs to the lungs. The blood vessels, marrow, tendons, blood are acting through the four limbs and the eight meeting-points of muscles (armpit, elbow, wrist, back of knee) from morning throughout evening. When a person is at sleep, his blood will return to the liver (and when he is awake, his blood will circulate throughout the body), and when the liver receives the blood, it gives rise to vision (because the eyes are officials of the liver, and the liver is the king of the sea of blood); when the feet receive blood, they are capable of walking; when the palms receive blood, they are capable of holding; when the fingers receive blood, they are capable of grasping.

When a person exposes himself to the wind while at sleep, the blood may get coagulated in the skin which will cause numbness, or the blood may get coagulated in the blood vessels which will cause poor blood circulation, or the blood may get coagulated in the feet which will cause cold sensations in the feet. When the above three types of blood coagulation occur, the blood will be unable to circulate through the normal channels, and instead, it will flow into the joints to cause rheumatism and cold sensations in the feet. There are twelve great meeting-points of muscles in the human body, and there are three hundred fifty four names of the small meeting-points of muscles, excluding the names of the twelve great meeting-points of muscles. Such points are the places where defense energy resides and where vicious energies attack the body as guests. Needling such points will send the vicious energies away accordingly.

To diagnose the beginning of disease, one must take the five deciding factors as the guiding principle; and in order to identify the beginning of disease, one must establish its mother\*. The so-called five deciding factors refer to the five pulses of viscera. Therefore, headache and other symptoms involving the top of head are due to deficiency in the lower region and excess in the upper region, and the disordered meridians include the little Yin meridian of the foot (the kidneys meridian) and the great Yang (the bladder meridian); The symptoms will affect the kidneys in severe cases. Dizziness, shaking

of head, blurred vision, and deafness are due to excess in the lower region and deficiency in the upper region, and the disordered meridians include the little Yang of foot (the gall bladder meridian) and the decreasing Yin meridian (the liver meridian); the symptoms will affect the liver in severe cases.

**[Henry Lu's Commentary:** \*When the text says that to identify the beginning of disease, one must establish its mother, the word 'mother' here is subject to interpretations. One interpretation relates that the mother refers to the element that attacks another element which means that when the spleen is diseased, one should trace back to the liver, because the liver attacks the spleen. The second interpretation relates that the mother refers to the ruling element at a given time which means that in the year 1978 (which is ruled by Fire), the mother element here is Fire. The translator feels that the mother could also be interpreted as referring to the source of the disease in a given case which means that the disease of liver, for example, may be traced back to its mother element, namely, the element that generates the liver, or it may be traced back to the liver meridian being under attack, or it may be traced back to the gall bladder, because the gall bladder and the liver form a deep-superficial relationship with each other.]

Abdominal fullness and distention, swelling of diaphragm and ribs, are due to the upsurging energy from below that disturbs the eyes, and the disordered meridians include the great Yin of foot (the spleen meridian) and the bright Yang meridian (the stomach meridian). Cough and upsurging energy are due to cold energy in the chest, and the disordered meridians include the bright Yang of hand (large intestine meridian) and the great Yin (lung meridian). Depressed feeling and headache are due to disease of the diaphragm, and the disordered meridians include the great Yang of hand (small intestine meridian) and the little Yin (the heart meridian). Small pulse, big pulse, sliding pulse, retarded pulse, superficial pulse, deep pulse, can be distinguished from each other by the fingers; the conditions of the five viscera may be inferred from their external manifestations; the five viscera correspond to five sounds which can be recognized; the five viscera correspond to five colours which can be detected by eyes. Completely accurate diagnosis is possible by checking the pulses against the colors.

The red pulse (the pulse of the heart) appears quick and hard which is symptomatic of congested chest causing digestive disorders occasionally and it is called rheumatism of the heart. This is a disease caused by external vicious energies that attack the body when the person is exercising too much thought and suffers from deficiency of the heart.

The white pulse (the pulse of lungs) appears quick and superficial which is symptomatic of deficiency in the upper region and excess in the lower region with convulsion, congested chest, panting and deficiency, and it is called rheumatism of lungs, displaying shivering and fever. The disease is caused by sexual intercourse while intoxicated.

The azure pulse (the pulse of the liver) appears long and elastic slowly which is symptomatic of congested energy below the heart and in the ribs region, and the disease is called rheumatism of liver which is caused by cold and dampness, just like hernia, with lumbago, cold feet, and headache.

The yellow pulse (the pulse of the spleen) appears big and deficient which is symptomatic of congested energy in the abdomen with upsurging energy, and the disease is called upsurging hernia

and has the same cause in man and woman. The disease is caused by an excessive use of the four limbs and exposure to wind while perspiring.

The black pulse (the pulse of the kidneys) appears superficial, hard, and big which is symptomatic of congested energy in the lower abdomen and sex organs, and it is called rheumatism of kidneys. The disease is caused by lying down after taking a cold bath (because the kidneys are under attack from cold and dampness).

In diagnosing the pulses that do not correspond to the five colors, the methods are as follows: death will not strike if the patient's complexion appears yellow with azure eyes or yellow with red eyes or yellow with white eyes or yellow with black eyes; death will strike if the patient's complexion appears azure with red eyes or red with white eyes or azure with black eyes or black with white eyes (because yellowish complexion indicates the existence of stomach energy).

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## **Chapter 11: A Further Treatise on Five Viscera**

### **The Key Concepts in this Chapter**

The differences between the odd and constant organs and the bowels are discussed in detail in this chapter; and also, it explains why the mouth of energy should be used for taking the pulse, namely, that the stomach is the sea of foods, and pure energies of the five viscera and six bowels are all derived from the stomach whose energy is reflected at the wrist which is also called the mouth of energy.

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The Yellow Emperor asked: I have heard from some physicians that the brain and marrow are sometimes regarded as viscera, that the intestine and the stomach are also regarded as viscera or bowels. When they are confronted with opposite views, they all insist that their own view is right. I am rather confused by their different views. Could you explain to me in this matter?

Chi-Po replied: The brain, marrow, bones, blood vessels, gall bladder, and womb are the six organs generated by the energy of the Earth; they are stored in Yin and function like the Earth in putting things in storage. Thus, they store up things without draining it off, and they are called odd and constant organs.

The stomach, large intestine, small intestine, triple burning space, bladder, are the five organs generated by the energy of the Heaven, and their energies bear a resemblance to the energy of the Heaven. Thus, they drain off things without storing them up; they receive muddy energies from the five viscera, and they are called transmitting bowels. As they cannot store things up for long, they have to drain things off in due course. The door of physical strength (anus) also acts as the messenger for the five viscera and drains off water and grains without storing them up for long. The so-called five viscera are such that they store up pure energy without draining it off, and for that reason, they can be filled to capacity but cannot be oversupplied. The six bowels are such that they transmit things without storing them up, and for that reason, they may be oversupplied but can not be filled to capacity. The reason is that after foods enter through the mouth, the stomach will be full and the intestine will still be empty; after foods enter the intestine, the intestine will be full and the stomach empty. Therefore, it is said that the bowels may be oversupplied but cannot be filled to capacity and that the viscera may be filled to capacity but can not be oversupplied.

The Yellow Emperor asked: How is it that the mouth of energy (the pulse at the wrist) controls the five viscera ?

Chi-Po replied: The stomach is the sea of water and grains, it is the grand source of nutrition for the six bowels. The five flavours enter through the mouth to be stored in the stomach for nourishing the energies of the five viscera, and the mouth of energy is also the great Yin\*. And thus, the energies and favours of the five viscera and the six bowels are all derived from the stomach and then transformed to become visible at the mouth of energy. Therefore, the five energies enter through the nose to be stored in the heart and the lungs, and consequently, when the heart and the lungs are diseased, it will cause nasal congestion. In treating disease, it is necessary to observe the patient's urine and bowel movements, to take the pulse to watch the patient's will and sentiment as well as the conditions of disease. The patient who believes solely in ghost and divine Being for recovery should not be treated; the patient who dislikes being treated by acupuncture should not be treated by acupuncture; the patient who refuses to be treated by the physician should not be treated.

**[Henry Lu's Commentary:** \*After foods and water enter through the mouth to be stored in the stomach for digestion the nutrition generated by the stomach can only be distributed by the spleen which is the great Yin of foot; on the other hand the lungs are the great Yin of hand, and thus, the spleen and the lungs have the same Yin-Yang classification. Since the spleen and the lungs play an important role in the distribution of stomach energy to other organs, and since the mouth of energy is a prime indication of the conditions of stomach energy, the mouth of energy is also called the great Yin.]

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## **Chapter 12: On the Different Methods of Treatment for People from Different Geographical Regions**

### **The Key Concepts in this Chapter**

In this chapter, it is pointed out that people from different geographical regions should be treated by different methods. It is for this reason that various methods of therapy had been developed in different regions, such as acupuncture by the use of stone-needle developed in the East, herb therapy developed in the West, moxibustion developed in the North, nine needles invented in the South, and physical therapy and manipulative therapy developed in the central region of China.

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The Yellow Emperor asked: The same disease may be treated by physicians with different methods, and all different methods are equally effective in curing the disease. Why is that ?

Chi-Po replied: This is due to the geographical conditions of different regions. Therefore, the region of the East is the place where Heaven, and the Earth generate energy (spring), it is the place full of fish and salt, and it is the place with plenty of beaches and water; people in the East can fish and love salt, they live in security and enjoy delicious foods. But fish generates heat in the body and salt wins victory over the blood, for that reason, the people have black skin (dark) and relaxed muscles, and they are more frequently suffering from carbuncle which should be treated by stone-needle. Hence, stone-needle was originally invented in the East.

The West is the region of gold and jade, it is the place full of sand and stones and corresponds to the pulling and constricting energy (the autumn) of the Heaven and the Earth. People in the West build their houses on mounds with wind constantly blowing, and their surroundings are hard and strong (due to climate); they wear clothes made of wool and fine straw, not made of cotton, they eat delicious foods and become fat. For this reason, people in the West are sick mostly due to internal causes (such as five emotions, foods, and sex), and their bodies are strong enough to resist the attack of external vicious energies. Their diseases should be treated by herbs, and for that reason, herb therapy was originally developed in the West.

The North is the closing and storing region of the Heaven and the Earth, the people live on high hills and mounds with cold wind and freezing ice. The people love outdoor living and consumption of milk (nomads) and they mostly suffer from distention in the internal region due to accumulation of cold which should be treated by moxibustion and it is for this reason, that moxibustion therapy was originally developed in the North.

The South is the long nourishing region of the Heaven and the Earth (long summer) with an abundance of Yang energy. The water and earth, underground are weak where fog and dew gather together. People love sour foods and eat preserved foods, so they have tight muscles and red skin. The people in this region mostly suffer from cramps of tendons and rheumatism (caused by heat and dampness) which should be treated by fine needles, and for that reason nine needles were originally invented in the South.

The center is a damp plain where the Heaven and the Earth generate a large number of things and where people eat a wide variety of foods and refrain from, working hard. Therefore they mostly suffer from weakness, upsurging energy, and cold-hot sensations which should be treated by physical exercises, manipulative therapy and remedial exercises all of which were originally developed in the central region.

Therefore, the Sages make use of different methods in treating disease by reference to different geographical regions. The reason that different methods are equally effective for the treatment of the same disease consists in the conditions of the patient and a knowledge of the treatment principles.

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## **Chapter 13: On Diverting Patient's Attention and Thought**

### **The Key Concepts in this Chapter**

The theme of this chapter consists in the contention that the patient's attention and thought play an essential role in the treatment of disease and this is consistent with the theory of Chinese medicine regarding the internal causes of disease namely patient's emotions foods and sex particularly the five emotions --- anger, joy, contemplation, grief and fear.

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The Yellow Emperor asked: I have heard that in ancient times, diseases were cured by prayers alone which served to divert the patient's attention and thought. But nowadays, physicians treat disease with herbs internally and with acupuncture externally, and the disease is sometimes cured and sometimes not cured. Why ?

Chi-Po replied: The ancient people lived among animals, they laboured to avoid cold, lived in cool places to flee from summer heat, with neither internal burden of wishes and envies nor external burden of chasing after fame and profit; it was a life of tranquility which made them immune from deep intrusion of vicious energies. Consequently, they could not be treated by herbs internally or by acupuncture externally, and their disease could be treated by prayers alone which diverted their attention and thought. However, nowadays, people are different. They worry a great deal psychologically, and physically, they work too hard; on top of that, they fail to follow the climates of four seasons, disobey the energies of cold and summer heat, frequently under the attack of stealing wind, threatened by deficiency vicious energies from morning through evening, which direct their attack on the five viscera and bones and narrow internally, and externally, on the openings and muscles and skin. Therefore, a minor disease will become a major one and a major disease will cause death. This is the reason that prayers alone will not cure the disease.

The Yellow Emperor asked: Good. In clinical diagnosis I wish to be able to predict life and death from the patient's conditions and the prediction should be an accurate one and also, I wish to know the theory underlying the prediction and the theory itself should be as clear and as bright as sunlight and moonlight. May I have your opinion on this matter ?

Chi-Po replied: Color and pulse are valued by God and they were taught by the teachers of former times. In ancient times, a teacher by the name of Chiu Tai Chi was entrusted with the task of systematizing colors and pulses and researching into the secrets of the Divine Being (nature); He then discovered the five elements which include metal, wood, water, fire, earth, the four seasons, the eight winds and the six directions which follow a regular pattern and to which, colors and pulses correspond. By observing change and movements, one can detect the secrets of nature in order to know the essential aspects of diagnosis (which are Yin and Yang) but to know the essential aspects of diagnosis one should start with colors and pulses. Colors correspond to the sun, pulses correspond to the moon and the essential aspects which should always be kept in mind consist in pulses which are Yin and colors which are Yang. Change of colors corresponds to pulses of the four seasons which is valued by God because it is in tune with the Divine Being and which enables us to flee from death and stay close to life. The Sages of ancient times could apply Tao of life and teach it to the people so that they could enjoy longevity.

The medieval people treated disease when they became sick and they treated it by cereal soups to be drunk for ten days in order to get rid of the eight winds and rheumatism of five viscera; when the disease was not cured in ten days, main stalks and roots and branches of herbs were used, taking advantage of the primary parts of plants (roots) and the secondary parts of plants (branches) to treat the primary and secondary conditions of disease, so that the disease could be overcome.

The present people are treating differently. Their methods of treatment are not based upon the four seasons with neither knowledge of the sun (colors) and the moon (pulse) nor examination of direct and inverse energies or primary and secondary conditions. And after the disease has been formed they try to treat it with fine needle externally, and internally they try to treat it with cereal soups, with all the earmarks of quackery, thinking that they could cure disease in a way which finally results in old disease remaining uncured and the attack of new disease.

The Yellow Emperor asked: May I ask you concerning the essential methods of treatment ?

Chi-Po replied: The ultimate principle of treatment consists in holding on to colors and pulses and putting them to use in diagnosis, and this is the greatest principle. To run counter to such principle and to ignore the primary and secondary conditions of disease mean to lose your patient 's spirits (death) and the territorial integrity of your country (when the same principle is not applied to rule the nation). To leave behind the old ways (the wrong ways) of treatment like an old disease and to obey the new ones (the right ways) is a necessary condition of becoming a true man.

The Yellow Emperor asked: You have told me concerning the essentials of treatment, but you have insisted on the importance of colors and pulses all along. Is there any other aspect of treatment ?

Chi-Po replied: There is only one principle of treatment.

The Yellow Emperor asked: What is that principle ?

Chi-Po replied: In making diagnosis, keep the door and windows closed so that the patient's attention will not be diverted, and then inquire about the cause and conditions of his illness and examine his sentiment. When the patient display vivid spirits, he will live; if his spirits have already been lost, he will die.

The Yellow Emperor said: Good.

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## **Chapter 14: On Cooking Cereal Soups and Manufacturing Wine Delicacies**

### **The Key Concepts in this Chapter**

There are three essential aspects in this chapter which include: first manufacturing and applications of cereal soups and wine delicacies which, though they can treat disease should be applied in the proper manner; second the patient's confidence in physicians should be established; third the cause of edema and treatment by causing perspiration and promoting urination.

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The Yellow Emperor asked: How to cook cereal soups and manufacture wine delicacies ?

Chi-Po replied: One should cook rice by using the stalks of rice plants as firewood because rice is endowed with complete energies and stalks of rice plants are endowed with hard energy.

The Yellow Emperor asked: Why is that ?

Chi-Po replied: Rice is in possession of the harmony of the Heaven and the Earth (because rice is planted in spring, grows in summer, is harvested in autumn, and stored in winter which is in perfect harmony with the four seasons), it is grown in the right place neither too high nor too low (on the plains) which is the reason why it is endowed with complete energies; and the stalks of rice plants are harvested in the right season (autumn) which is the reason why they are endowed with hard energy (because autumn corresponds to Metal which is hard).

The Yellow Emperor asked: The Sages of ancient times cooked cereal soups and manufactured wine delicacies, but they did not use them. Why ?

Chi-Po replied: The Sages of ancient times cooked cereal soups and manufactured wine delicacies, and they did this just to be prepared which is the reason why they cooked cereal soups and manufactured wine delicacies without using them. (This is because the ancient people always managed to stay in good health). The medieval people had lowered their moral standards with the result that

they were under the attack of vicious energies frequently; nevertheless, they managed to retain their spirits so that they could recover from their illnesses by drinking cereal soups and wine delicacies.

The Yellow Emperor asked: Why is it that people today cannot always recover from their illnesses by drinking cereal soups and wine delicacies ?

Chi-Po replied: People today can only recover from their illnesses by internal treatment of herbs and external treatment of sharp stone-needle and moxibustion.

The Yellow Emperor asked: Sometimes the needle has been inserted up to the skin or the muscles or the tendons or even the bones, almost exhausting the patient's physical shape, and blood circulation has also been fully regulated, but the treatment still fails to take effect. Why is that ?

Chi-Po replied: Because the spirits are not served.\*

**[Henry Lu's Commentary:** \*The expression 'the spirits are not served' is a very important one in Chinese medicine in general and acupuncture in particular. Herbs and needling can treat disease only when the patient's spirits are there to be served which means that the patient's spirits can be moved upward and downward as the physician sees fit. The spirits in this context (not necessarily in other contexts though) refer to the energy of meridians and the energies of five viscera. If the patient is treated by herbs internally but his energies of viscera are not there to be served; if the patient is treated externally by acupuncture or moxibustion but his energy of meridians is not there to be served, then the treatment will fail miserably.]

The Yellow Emperor asked: What is meant by 'the spirits are not served'?

Chi-Po replied: This is the Way of applying stone-needle. When the patient's mental states are not positive and when his will and sentiments are not stable, the disease cannot recover. When the patient's mental states are impaired and his spirits are gone, his nutritive and defence energies are so dispersing that they can not be gathered together. How do these happen ? It is because the patient is preoccupied with unlimited desires and incessant worries, and consequently, his pure energy is weak and decaying, his nutritive energy coagulated and defence energy removed. The is why the patient's spirits are gone and the disease cannot be recovered.

The Yellow Emperor asked: The beginning of a disease may be subtle, but vicious energies normally attack the body through the skin. When the disease does not recover within ten days, good physicians nowadays all claim that the disease is called 'upsurging energy' which cannot be cured by stone-needle nor by good medicine. Now, a good physician knows how to make diagnosis and how to give treatment according to standard procedures, and the patients are his relatives and brothers so that he can hear their voices everyday and observe the five colors everyday, but he still cannot cure the disease. Can one claim that the good physician fails to treat the disease on time ?

Chi-Po replied: The disease is primary, and the good physician is secondary, and when the treatment given by the physician is not directed at the disease, vicious energies will not be overcome, and this applies to the present example.

The Yellow Emperor asked: Some diseases do not begin in the hair on the skin, but rather, they are caused by exhaustion of Yang energies in the five viscera so that fluids get spread in the skin (absence

of perspiration due to Yang deficiency), and Yin energy resides within in isolation (leading to Yin without Yang), and Yang energy is wasted externally; and consequently, swelling becomes so severe that the old clothes do not fit the patient any more. The four limbs are attacked by cramps and panting occurs within as a result of water getting dammed up within what becomes manifest externally. How do we treat such cases ?

Chi-Po replied: The treatment should start with taking the pulse to determine if it is a deep pulse or a superficial pulse, and then treatment should be directed at removing accumulated stuff like rotten grass, and then one should slightly vibrate the patient's four limbs and make the patient warm with clothes, and then apply the reverse technique of needling to the swollen regions in order to recover the patient's physical shape. The physician then should open up the patient's pores by causing perspiration in case of a superficial pulse and promote urination in case of a deep pulse, in order to recover the patient's pure energy of five viscera, and to spread the Yang energies of five viscera; and then, the physician should regulate the five viscera so that they can generate pure energy automatically which will increase the patient's weight and make the bones and muscles protect each other, leading to a recovery of great Yang (namely, the energy of great Yang which refers to the bladder).

The Yellow Emperor said: Good.

[**Henry Lu's Commentary:** Three treatment principles have been put forward in this chapter: first of all, the treatment principle to the effect that in order to treat the patient, his spirits must be there to be served; secondly, to be effective, the treatment which is secondary should be directed at the disease which is primary; thirdly, treatment should be aimed at regulating the patient's internal energy in case it is caused by the disorder of the five viscera.]

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## **Chapter 15: Inscriptions on Bamboo Slabs Concerning the Most Important Principles**

### **The Key Concepts in this Chapter**

The basic principle of diagnosis consists in drawing a distinction between normal colors and pulses and abnormal colors and pulses. In case of colors, diagnosis focuses on the regions in which they occur, and in case of pulses, diagnosis focuses on the pulses taken at the wrist.

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The Yellow Emperor asked: I have heard the expression 'taking the pulse to determine the region of extraordinary disease', but it seems to have different meanings. How is it to be applied ?

Chi-Po replied: Taking the pulse to determine the regions of extraordinary disease means to determine how deep the disease lies in the body, and extraordinary disease refers to strange disease. Let me illustrate the ultimate principles in this respect. Change in the colors and pulses of five viscera as well as taking the pulse to determine the regions of extraordinary disease consists only in one single thing (which is the spirits).

The spirits keep circulating without returning, and when they return, they are not circulating and as a result, the mechanism of energy circulation will cease to function properly. The essentials of the ultimate principle (governing change in five colors and five pulses of viscera) are sufficiently close to

regular patterns and yet still subtle. And thus, they are described on bamboo slabs to be called 'tuning jade astronomical instrument' (compared to the astronomical instrument of ancient times, but used to study the human body). The colors appearing in different regions of the face are indicative of different diseases of the five viscera. When superficial colors show up, the patient may be treated by cereal soups and recover in ten days; when deep colors show up, the patient may be treated by herbs and recover in twenty-one days; when the deeper colors show up, the patient may be treated by wine delicacies (medicated wine) and recover in one hundred days. The patient with withering complexion and showing no signs of spirits cannot be cured and will die in one hundred days when his energies of five viscera are exhausted. Short pulse (which indicates deficiency) with an exhaustion of energy spells death, warn disease with extreme deficiency spells death.

The colors appearing in different regions of the face are symptomatic of upstream and downstream energies in man and woman. Thus, color appearing in the upper region is symptomatic of upstream energy; color appearing in the lower region is symptomatic of downstream energy; and in woman, color appearing in the right is symptomatic of upstream energy (because woman is Yin and right is Yin also); in man, color appearing in the left is symptomatic of upstream energy (because man is Yang and left is Yang) and in the right is symptomatic of downstream energy. A reversal of normal patterns means a double Yang in man and double Yin in woman which will cause death (namely, color in the left in man and in the right in woman.) When Yin and Yang reverse their normal energy streams and cause upsurging energy, it should be treated by adjusting the pulse (because pulse generates color and when pulse is adjusted, color will become normal) from the left in case of man and from the right in case of woman. This is what is meant by the expression 'taking the pulse to determine the regions of extraordinary disease'. Forceful pulse with rheumatism of hands and feet causing an inability to walk results from simultaneous attack of cold and heat (not by deficiency or excess of energies). Isolated pulse refers to the pulse of Yin without Yang or pulse of Yang without Yin; the pulse of Yin without Yang is symptomatic of a decline in yang energy (defense energy), and the pulse of Yang without Yin is symptomatic of a decline in Yin energy (nutritive energy); the deficiency pulse along with the symptom of diarrhea means deprivation of the blood (although diarrhea may not contain blood, yet the blood which is Yin will be weakened by diarrhea). Isolated pulse is symptomatic of upstream energy, deficiency pulse is symptomatic of downstream-energy. To diagnose extraordinary disease by taking the pulse, one should begin with great Yin (namely, taking the pulse at the wrist which is governed by the great Yin meridian of hand). Appearance of the pulse of a subduing element is symptomatic of upstream energy, and when upstream energy occurs, it will cause death (as an example, upstream energy is indicated when the pulse of metal occurs in the wood region, because metal subdues wood according to the theory of five elements). On the other hand, when the pulse of a subdued element appears, it is symptomatic of downstream energy and the patient will live with the occurrence of downstream energy (such as appearance of liver pulse in the lungs region or kidneys pulse in the spleen region, etc.) The eight Winds continue to blow and the four seasons continue to operate according to the law of subduing (namely, spring subdues prolonged summer, etc.) without stop. When the subduing element is under attack from wind after such attack has completed a full cycle, the

patient will die and the circulation of the five elements can no longer be counted. This is the peak of the theory under consideration.

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## **Chapter 16: On the Principle of Pulse Diagnosis and Exhaustion of Energy of Meridians**

### **The Key Concepts in this Chapter**

In acupuncture therapy, superficial needle-insertion should be done in spring and summer, because in those two seasons, energy in the human body flows in the superficial region; on the other hand, deep needle-insertion should be administered in autumn and winter, because in those two seasons, energy in the human body flows in the deep region. In addition, special precaution should be taken in needling the abdominal region in order not to cause harm to the internal organs. Finally, there are symptoms which indicate the exhaustion of the energy of meridians which every acupuncturist should become familiar with in making diagnosis.

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The Yellow Emperor asked: What is the essential method of diagnosis ?

Chi-Po replied: In January and February, the Heaven begins to spread Yang energy, the Earth begins to generate Yin energy, and the energy of the human body focusses on the liver (because the liver corresponds to spring). In March and April, Yang energy of the Heaven continues to increase, Yin energy of the Earth begins to take shape, and the energy of the human body focusses on the spleen (because March is the month of stomach, and stomach and spleen form a superficial-deep relationship).

In May and June, Yang energy of the Heaven becomes in abundance, Yin energy of the Earth moves higher up, and the energy of the human body focusses on the head (due to the nature of Fire moving upward to reach the head). In July and August, Yin energy begins to generate killing effects, and energy of the human body focusses on the lungs (July and August are months of metal and metal corresponds to the lungs, and metal corresponds to autumn which has killing effects). In September and October, Yin energy begins to freeze, energy of the earth begins to close, and energy of the human body focusses on the heart (because when Yin energy is freezing, Yang energy begins to rush to the central region where the heart is located). In November and December, ice begins to pile up and the energy of the Earth is completely shut up, and the energy of the human body focuses on the kidneys (because the kidneys correspond to winter).

In spring, one should needle dispersing points\* and superficial dividing muscles, and needling should stop as soon as bleeding occurs; in severe cases, withdrawal of needle may be suspended until energy of one organ is passed on to another organ (according to the law of five elements), in light cases, needle may be withdrawn as soon as energy of meridian begins to circulate. In summer, one should needle points of reticular meridians, and needling should stop as soon as blood becomes visible; pain will be relieved as vicious energies are completely removed. In autumn, one should needle the skin and dividing muscles and apply the same method to the upper and lower regions alike, and needling should stop as soon as change in spirits (energy of meridians) occurs. In winter, one should needle deep dividing muscles attached to the bones; in severe cases, needle should be inserted even deeper by

perpendicular insertion; in light cases, needle should be inserted only superficially by slanting insertion.

**[Henry Lu's Commentary:** \*The points to be needled in the four seasons are subject to interpretations. One influential interpretation is as follows: In spring, points on the liver and gall meridians should be needled because, according to this interpretation, the liver and the gall bladder correspond to the spring, and the points to be needled include Chungfeng (middle mound {LIV-4 zhong feng} Liver 4) and Yangfu (Yang assistant or Gall 38, {GB-38 yang fu}); in summer, points on the heart and small intestine should be needled, and the points to be needled include Tungli {HT-5 tong li}, Chien shih {PC-5 jian shi}, (Chih-cheng {SI-7 zhi zheng}); in autumn, the points on the lungs and large intestine meridians should be needled and the points to be needled include Taiyuan {LU-9 tai yuan} and Ho-Ku {LI-4 he gu}; in winter, the points on the kidneys and bladder meridians should be needled and the points to be needled are not given.]

Thus, the four seasons --- spring, summer, autumn, winter --- have their respective techniques and regions of needling. Needling the summer points (namely, the points which should be needled in summer) in spring will cause a disturbance of the blood vessels (because the heart is in control of the blood vessels) and scanty energy, attack of vicious energy of the marrow and bones, failure to heal the disease, lack of appetite, and shortage of energy.

Needling the autumn points in spring will cause tendons cramps, circulation of upsurging energy that causes cough, failure to heal the disease, frequent shock, and crying. Needling winter points in spring will cause vicious energies to move into deeper region which, in turn, causes swelling, and failure to heal the disease, love of talking.\*

**[Henry Lu's Commentary:** \*The symptoms displayed have a great deal to do with the organ that should be needled in spring and the organ that has been needled by mistake. As an example, the symptoms caused by needling summer points in spring have a great deal to do with the liver which should be needled in spring and the heart which is needled in spring by mistake. Again, the symptoms caused by needling autumn points in spring have a great deal to do with the liver which should be needled in spring and the lungs which should be needled in autumn but are needled in spring by mistake. The symptoms caused by needling winter points in spring have a great deal to do with the liver which should be needled in spring and the kidneys which should be needled in winter but are needled in spring by mistake.]

Needling spring points in summer will fail to heal disease, and it will also cause laziness. Needling autumn points in summer will fail to heal disease, and it will also cause dislike of talking and fear as if being tracked down. Needling winter points in summer will fail to heal disease and it will also cause scanty energy and the tendency to lose temper.

Needling spring points in autumn will fail to heal disease, and it will also cause nervousness as if in shock, and wanting to do something only to forget it on getting up from the sitting position (due to

liver deficiency). Needling summer points in autumn will fail to heal disease, and it will also cause fear of cold and shivering (due to damage of the kidneys). Needling spring points in winter will fail to heal disease, and it will also cause love of lying down with an inability to sleep, and sleeping with phantom vision (due to deficiency of liver). Needling summer points in winter will fail to heal disease, and it will cause floating of energy and rheumatic pain of various kinds (due to the fact that in winter, energy should be put in storage, but in needling summer points, energy becomes floating to cause pain). Needling autumn points in winter will fail to heal disease, and it will also cause thirst (deficiency of lungs energy).

In needling the chest and abdomen regions, one should avoid the five viscera. An insertion into the heart will cause death within one circulation of energy (one day and one night), insertion into the spleen will cause death in five days (because the spleen corresponds to Earth, and Earth's generating numeral is 5), insertion into the kidney will cause death in seven days, insertion into the lungs will cause death in five days, insertion into the diaphragm will cause internal injuries, and the patient will die in one year, although the disease may temporarily recover. To avoid the five viscera in needling means to avoid the place where the energies of five viscera flow outward which is called to obey the energy stream of five viscera, and to run counter to the energy stream of five viscera is called to disobey the energy stream of five viscera. To obey the energy stream of five viscera means to refrain from inserting into the region where the diaphragm, the spleen, and the kidneys are located. To disobey means to do just the opposite. In needling the chest and abdomen regions, one should place a layer of thin cloth on the point to be needled and then insert the needle through the cloth (superficial insertion), and if the disease is not healed, insertion may take place again. In administering needle insertion, one should remain quiet and alert to await the arrival of energy stream; in inserting into the swollen region, one should shake the needle in order to remove excess of energy; in inserting into the meridian, one should not shake the needle (in order to prevent the escape of righteous energy). This is the right way of needling.

The Yellow Emperor asked: What would happen if the energy of the twelve meridians were cut off (exhausted)?

Chi-Po replied: (the remaining portion of this chapter also appears toward the end of Chapter 9 of Ling-Shu) When the energy of the great Yang meridians is cut off, the patient will display the symptoms of eyes looking upward and paralysis of eyes, episthotos, tics involving four extremities, pallor, deadly skin, and hyperhidrosis. When hyperhidrosis occurs, the patient is bound to die. When the energy of the little Yang meridians is cut off, the patient will display the symptoms of deafness, a weakening of each and every articulation, and a severance of eyes connectives. When severance of eyes connectives comes about, the patient is bound to die. Immediately before the death occurs, the patient's face will turn green-blue, and then, it will change into whiteness at which moment, he will die instantly.

When the energy of bright Yang meridians is cut off, the patient will display the symptoms of twitching and flickering of eyelids and mouth, frequent nervousness, confused talk, yellow complexion. When the two meridians in the upper and lower limbs respectively are blocked up and displaying a full pulse, patient is bound to die.

When the energy of the little Yin meridians is cut off, the patient will display the symptoms of black complexion, stretched and soiled teeth, abdominal swelling and a blockage in the flow of energy; in addition, the channels connecting the upper part of the body with its lower part are blocked up. When this happens, the patient will die.

When the energy of the great Yin meridians is cut off, the patient will display the symptoms of abdominal swelling, a blockage in the flow of energy, breathing difficulty, belching, frequent vomiting which causes an inverse flow of energy, which in turn causes reddening of the face. When the inverse flow of energy does not occur the channels collecting the upper part of the body with its lower part will be blocked up which gives rise to a black face and a withering of the skin and hair. The patient is bound to die.

When the energy of the decreasing Yin meridians is cut off, the patient will display the symptoms of burning sensations in the chest, dry throat, frequent urination, depressed chest, the tongue being curled up and ascent of testicle at advanced stage. When this happens, the patient is bound to die.

The above is a description of what would happen if the energy of the twelve meridians were decayed.

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## **Chapter 17: On the Delicate and Refined Fundamental Principles of Pulse Diagnosis**

### **The Key concepts in this Chapter**

Pulse diagnosis can be useful only when it is made along with the five sounds, the five colors, Yin and Yang, and the four seasons. The conditions of the patient and the outcome of disease may be known from an analysis of the patient's pulse and the five colours, etc. And also, it is pointed out that different diseases may be manifest in different pulses.

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The Yellow Emperor asked: How to take the pulse ?

Chi-Po replied: Normally, the pulse should be taken in the morning when Yin energy is not yet disturbed, Yang energy is not yet dispersed, the patient has not yet eaten breakfast, the meridians are not yet full of energy, the reticular meridians are regulated evenly, and the energy and blood streams are not yet disordered. This is the time when the pulse of disease may be taken.

The pulse should be taken to determine its degrees of throbbing, the eyes should be observed (to determine the patient's spirits), the five colors of complexion should be examined, the five viscera should be diagnosed to determine their excess or deficiency, the six bowels should be diagnosed to determine their strength and weakness, physical shape should be looked at to determine if it is strong or weak. Such factors are to be taken into consideration in order to make prediction of the course of disease.

The blood vessels are the gathering places of the blood (and the blood is led by the energy); a long pulse indicates normal energy, a short pulse indicates diseased energy, a rapid pulse indicates depressed feelings (due to heat), a big pulse indicates a progressing disease, an energetic upper pulse (pulse taken in the wrist region closer to the hand, namely, distal pulse) indicates an upward movement of energy, an energetic lower pulse (proximal pulse of the wrist, namely, closer to the elbow) indicates energy swelling (abdominal distention caused by energy congestion), a slowing pulse indicates energy

decline, a fine pulse indicates shortage of energy, a retarded pulse indicates heart pain, a drumming pulse that comes on like a bubbling fountain indicates a deteriorating disease and a withering complexion, a wiry pulse that comes on soft and weak like exhausting indicates death. The eyes and the five colors of complexion are manifestations of the energy. A heartily red complexion should look like vermillion covered with white, not like ochre; a healthy white complexion should look like feathers of a goose, not like the color of salt; a healthy azure complexion should look like moistened grayish jade, not like indigo; a healthy yellowish complexion should look like realgar covered with gauze, not like loess; a healthy black complexion should look like dark varnish, not like greyish charcoal. When the five delicate colors of complexion are visible, the patient will not live long. The eyes can see ten thousand things, distinguish black from white, examine long and short objects, but when they take long for short, white for black, their energies are in decline. The five viscera are the guardians of the internal region, and when the kidneys are unable to store the energies of five viscera, the middle region will become full (due to dampness) and it will give rise to fear and voice as if spoken in between the walls which is due to the dampness in the middle energy (energy of the spleen).

If a person speaks in a feeble voice, and with intermittent speech, his energy is being deprived. If a person's clothes are not neat and with illogical speech, failing to distinguish a relative from a stranger, his spirits are disordered. Failure of the warehouse of foods to store foods (the spleen) is due to the inability of the door of strength (anus) to exercise control; incontinence of urine is due to the inability of the bladder to store (water). When the viscera act like effective guardians, the person will live; when they act to the contrary, the person will die.

The five viscera are basically responsible for the good health of the human body; the head is the residence of the eyes, a slanting head with depressed eyes is a manifestation of the spirits being deprived. The back is the residence of the chest, and curvature of back and shoulders is a manifestation of the residence in the process of collapse. The loins are the residence of the kidneys, and when the loins become unable to turn, the kidneys will be exhausted. The knees are the residence of the tendons and when the knees become unable to extend and bend, the person has to walk with a hunched back and with the aid of a cane which causes the tendons to become exhausted. The bones are the residence of the marrow, and when a person cannot stand for a period of time, he will walk in shaky steps which will cause exhaustion to the bones. Therefore, when the internal organs of a person are strong, the person will live; and when the internal organs of a person are weak, the person will die. Chi-Po said: The pulses may appear in disharmony with the four seasons in which case, a big pulse indicates excess of vicious energy, a small pulse indicates deficiency of righteous energy, a deficiency pulse when it should be in excess under normal circumstances, such as Yang should be in excess in summer, etc. indicates an excess of vicious energy, an excess pulse when it should be in deficiency indicates deficiency of righteous energy. When Yin and Yang fail to respond to each other, the disease is called 'Yin and Yang being locked up in isolation'.

The Yellow Emperor asked: How does the pulse correspond to the four seasons ? How do we know where the disease is located ? How do we know about the change of disease by reference to pulse ? How do we know about the internal disease by reference to pulse ? How do we know about the external disease by reference to pulse ? Could you answer the above five questions?

Chi-Po replied: Let me illustrate how the coming and going of Yin and Yang in the human body correspond to the circulation of the Heaven and the Earth. The energy of the Heaven embraces ten thousand things, it circulates within the six directions; change in the Heaven, and the Earth in response to Yin and Yang takes place in such a manner that warmth of spring gives rise to summer heat of summer, and that bitterness of autumn (namely, cool) gives rise to anger of winter (cold). The pulse moves upward and downward (floating and sinking, superficial and deep) along with change of Yin and Yang in four seasons. Thus, spring corresponds to the round and smooth pulse; summer corresponds to square and forceful pulse; autumn corresponds to balancing (light and floating) pulse, winter corresponds to the falling pulse (heavy and sinking).

There are forty-five days between the winter solstice and the beginning of spring during which Yang energy moves slightly upward and Yin energy moves slightly downward; there are forty-five days between the summer solstice and the beginning of autumn, during which Yin energy moves slightly upward and Yang energy moves slightly downward. Therefore, Yin and Yang move upward and downward, move inward and outward, meet each other and part company according to a fixed schedule to which the pulse responds. When a pulse fails to show up on schedule, it means that it has gone astray which may be traced back to its organic source in order to figure out the time of death. The phenomena of pulse are fine and delicate which should be examined according to established standards which begin in Yin and Yang of established patterns, are derived from the five elements of established circulation according to the four seasons. That man displays excess which should be sedated and deficiency which should be toned up is in line with excess and deficiency that exist in the Heaven and the Earth, and when one fully understands the detail of this correspondence (between man and nature), one can predict life and death. Therefore, voices are in tune with five sounds, colors are in tune with the five elements, and pulses are in tune with Yin and Yang.

Therefore, one would encounter floods and become fearful in dreams when Yin energy is in excess (because Yin is water), and one would encounter fire burning in dreams (because Yang is fire) when Yang energy is in excess, and one would encounter killing and destruction in dreams when both Yin and Yang are in excess (because Yin and Yang are in conflict), one would dream about flying when the upper region is in excess, one would dream about falling when the lower region is in excess, one would dream about giving away something when one is extremely full, one would dream about receiving something when one is extremely hungry, one would become angry in dreams when the energy of the liver is in excess, one would cry in dreams when the energy of lungs is in excess, one would dream about gathering together when there are plenty of short parasites in the body, one would dream about mutual attack and destruction when there are plenty of long parasites in the body.

In taking the pulse, the important thing to keep in mind is to be careful and to remain quiet. The pulse in spring should be floating like fish gliding through the waves (without surfacing); in summer, the pulse should appear in the skin and as full as the excess of ten thousand things; in autumn, the pulse should appear below the skin not unlike the torpid insects about to be gone; in winter, the pulse should be as deep as the bones, not unlike the torpid insects hidden in a secret hide-out or a king residing in his tightly guarded palace. Therefore, it is said: the internal region may be diagnosed by taking the pulse and recording it; the external change of Yin and Yang during the four seasons may be

understood by reference to their circulation without stop (and checking the pulse taken against such change to see if they are in harmony with each other). The above four aspects are the grand methods of taking the pulse.

When the pulse of the heart appears striking and hard and long, it is symptomatic of the tongue curled up with an inability to talk; when it appears soft and dispersing, it is symptomatic of dispersed blood which will recover by itself as the energy of the heart circulates (blood deficiency). When the pulse of the lungs appears striking, hard and long, it is symptomatic of spitting of blood; when it appears soft and dispersing, it is symptomatic of perspiration that is stopped by washing with cold water (and when the patient is treated by the method of causing perspiration, he will recover). When the pulse of the liver appears striking, hard, and long, it is symptomatic of injuries of falling or striking if the corresponding color of liver which is azure does not appear, and as the blood gets coagulated below the ribs, it gives rise to panting and cough; when the pulse appears soft and dispersing with a shining color, it is symptomatic of excessive drinking of water that causes the water to overflow into the regions outside the skin, the stomach, and the intestine. When the pulse of the stomach appears striking, hard, and long, with a red color, it is symptomatic of pain trochanter as if about to break up; when the pulse appears soft and dispersing, it is symptomatic of pain on eating causing an inability to swallow.

When the pulse of the spleen appears striking, hard, and long, with a yellow color, it is symptomatic of scanty energy (due to spleen deficiency causing a shortage of lungs energy); when the pulse appears soft and dispersing with a non-shining color, it is symptomatic of swelling in the tibia region like water. When the pulse of the kidneys appears striking, hard, and long, with a yellow-red color, it is symptomatic of lumbago as if about to break up (due to attack of kidneys by heart and spleen); when the pulse appears soft and dispersing, it is symptomatic of scanty blood that does not recover easily. The Yellow Emperor asked: When the pulse of the heart felt to be acute, what disease is indicated ? Chi-Po replied: The disease indicated is called hernia of the heart and shaped objects may be found in the lower abdomen.

The Yellow Emperor asked: What do you mean by that ?

Chi-Po replied: The heart is a Yang organ (little Yang within Yang), and when it is diseased its energy will act coagulated in the small intestine which is the servant of the heart (the heart and the small intestine form a deep-superficial relationship with each other and the superficial organ is the servant of the deep organ just like the defence energy is the servant of the nutritive energy or husband is the servant of wife) and that is the reason why shaped objects will be found in the lower abdomen.

The Yellow Emperor asked: What does the pulse of stomach indicate ?

Chi-Po replied: A solid pulse of the stomach indicates swelling and a hollow pulse of the stomach indicates diarrhea.

The Yellow Emperor asked: What is meant by one disease changing into another disease ?

Chi-Po replied: A disease caused by wind may change into a cold-hot disease; a damp-hot disease may change into morbid hunger; upsurging energy may change into a disease of the top of head; a prolonged wind disease may change into diarrhea; a wind disease of meridians may change into leprosy. Thus, there can be a countless number of changes in disease.

The Yellow Emperor asked: What causes swelling of carbuncles, cramps of tendons and pain in the bones ?

Chi-Po replied: They are swelling caused by cold and disorders caused by the eight winds (swelling of carbuncles caused by south-east wind and south-west wind, cramps of tendons and pain in the bones caused by east wind and north wind).

The Yellow Emperor asked: How are they to be treated ?

Chi-Po replied: Such are the diseases of the four seasons which should be treated through the victorious elements (for example, a cold disease may be treated by sweet and heat, and a disease caused by the wind of the East which corresponds to wood or liver may be treated by assisting the element of Metal or lungs because Metal subdues and attacks Wood ).

The Yellow Emperor asked: Sometimes, the old disease of five viscera may recur causing a change in pulse and color, but how do we know whether it is an old disease or a new one ?

Chi-Po replied: That is a complete question. When the pulse appears small with the color remaining unchanged, it is a new disease; when the pulse remains unchanged but the color has been changed, it is an old disease; when both the pulse and the color have been changed, it is an old disease; when neither the pulse nor the color has been changed, it is a new disease. When the pulse of the liver (wiry) and that of the kidneys (deep) both appear, and with azure and red colors, it is symptomatic of injuries to the tendons and bones with no visible bleeding, but if bleeding and discharge of blood do occur, there will be dampness and water in the abdomen.\*

**[Henry Lu's Commentary:** \*This is a puzzling sentence, and the puzzle lies in the fact that if both the pulse of the liver and that of the kidneys appear then the color of the liver which is azure and the color of the kidneys which is black should also appear. But now we have the pulse of the liver and that of the kidneys with the color of the liver and the color of the heart which is red. What happens then ? Since the pulse of the liver & that of the kidneys both appear there seems no question concerning the liver. There are however the following questions which need some explanation: First what does the pulse of the kidney indicate? second what does the color of the heart indicate? third why does the color of the kidneys fail to appear? fourth why does the pulse of the heart fail to appear?

To the first question the answer is that the bones to which the kidneys correspond have been injured; to the second question the answer is that bleeding or discharge of blood should occur; to the third question no apparent answer is given; and to the fourth question the answer is that perhaps the blood is not harmed and the heart is in good shape which would make the appearance of the color of the heart become in vain.]

The pulse in the arm (namely, a point on the lungs meridian called Chih-tse at the elbow, {LU-5 chi ze}) and both sides are in control of the ribs region, with the lateral side (closer to the thumb) symptomatic of the kidneys, and the medial side (closer to the little finger) symptomatic of the abdomen. In the middle section between Chih-tse (LU-5) and Yuchi (a point on the lungs meridian, {LU-10 yu ji}), the lateral side of this section is symptomatic of the liver, and its medial side is symptomatic of the diaphragm on the left arm; and on the right arm, the lateral side of this section is

symptomatic of the stomach and its medial side is symptomatic of the spleen. In the upper section (namely, the section closer to the hand when the distance between Chih-tse LU-5 point and Yuchi LU-10 point is divided into three sections), the lateral side of the right arm is symptomatic of the lungs, and its medial side is symptomatic of the chest; and on the left arm, the lateral side is symptomatic of the heart, and its medial side is symptomatic of the middle region between nipples. Thus, lower section is symptomatic of the front of the body, and the upper section is symptomatic of the back of the body. The uppermost region (namely, the Yuchi LU-10 point) is symptomatic of the chest and throat, and the lowermost region (namely the Chih-tse LU-5 point) is symptomatic of the lower abdomen, loins, thigh, knees, tibia, and feet.

A big pulse is symptomatic of Yin deficiency and Yang excess which gives rise to internal heat; a pulse that arrives quickly and departs slowly is symptomatic of excess in the upper region and deficiency in the lower region which gives rise to symptoms of the head; a pulse that arrives slowly and departs quickly is symptomatic of deficiency in the upper region and excess in the lower region which gives rise to fear of cold. Thus, which one develops fear of cold (under the attack of vicious cold energy), his Yang energy is under attack. When the pulse in the arm (namely, the Chih-tse LU-5 point) appears deep, fine, and rapid on both arms, it is symptomatic of upsurging energy of little Yin (kidneys); when the pulse appears deep, fine, rapid, and dispersing, it is symptomatic of cold and hot; when the pulse appears superficial and dispersing, it is symptomatic of dizziness and fainting. A superficial pulse which is not hasty is a Yang pulse and it is symptomatic of heat; and when it is a hasty pulse, it is symptomatic of the disease of three Yang meridians of hand (when it is not hasty, it is symptomatic of the disease of three Yang meridians of foot). A fine and deep pulse is symptomatic of Yin disease which gives rise to pain in the bones; when it is also a quiet pulse, it is symptomatic of the disease of the Yin meridians of foot (and when it is a hasty pulse, it is symptomatic of the disease of the Yin meridians of hand). A pulse that shakes a few times and then stops once is symptomatic of the disease of Yang meridians which gives rise to diarrhea and discharge of blood from anus containing pus.

Vicious energies may cause faulty pulses. A retarded pulse is symptomatic of Yang excess, and a sliding pulse is symptomatic of Yin excess. Yang excess (excess of Yang energy) causes hot sensations in the body without perspiration; excess of Yin energy causes abundant perspiration with cold sensations in the body; excess of both Yang energy and Yin energy causes shivering without perspiration (because excess of Yin energy causes shivering and excess of Yang causes lack of perspiration).

In taking the pulse, use fingers to push outward which should bring out the pulse, but when the pulse does not appear superficial, but instead, it is felt to be a deep pulse, then, it means that the patient has accumulations in the heart and abdomen; use fingers to push inward which should make the pulse go deep, and when the pulse does not appear deep, but instead, it is felt to be a superficial pulse, it means that there is heat in the body; use three fingers to push upward and if the pulse moves upward without coming downward, it means that the patient is suffering from cold loins and feet; use three fingers to push downward, and if the pulse moves downward without moving upward, it means that the patient is suffering from headache and pain in the back of neck; press hard to reach the bones, and if there is

shortage of energy of meridians, it means that the patient is suffering from pain across the loins with rheumatism in the body (due to extreme deficiency of Yin energy).

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## **Chapter 18: On Manifestations of Pulse in Normal Person**

### **The Key Concepts in this Chapter**

Pulse rate has something to do with respiration, and it is pointed out in this chapter that normal pulse rate of adult is four beats per respiration, and it becomes abnormal when its rate runs below or in excess of this number. In addition, pulse rate also has something to do with climate of the four seasons, and there are pulses that indicate life, and there are pulses that spell death.

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The Yellow Emperor asked: What is the pulse of a normal person?

Chi-Po replied: There are two pulse beats to one exhalation, and there are two pulse beats to one inhalation, and there are five pulse beats to one respiration because there is one extra beat between exhalation and inhalation. This is the manifestation of pulse in normal person. A normal person will not display the pulse of disease. As a normal person, the physician should use his own respiration to correct the patient's respiration in counting the latter's pulse rate.

When there is only one pulse beat to one exhalation and one pulse beat to one inhalation, it is symptomatic of scanty energy; when there are three pulse beats to one exhalation and three pulse beats to one inhalation, and hasty, it is symptomatic of a warm disease provided hot sensations are left in the Chih-tse point (LU-5 chi ze) but in the absence of hot sensations in the Chih-tse point and also the pulse appears sliding it is symptomatic of a wind disease, and when the pulse appears retarded, it is symptomatic of rheumatism.

The appearance of four pulse beats to one exhalation or over spells death; absence of pulse beat which is due to pulse exhaustion spells death; pulse that appears slow and fast all of a sudden spells death; the righteous energy of a normal person is derived from the stomach which means that the stomach is the regular source of a person's righteous energy and when a person runs out of stomach energy, it is called upsurging which causes death.

If liver pulse appears slightly wiry in spring with nourishment of stomach energy, then it is a normal pulse (because the spring corresponds to the liver which displays a wiry pulse to be mixed with the pulse of stomach which appears harmonious); if liver pulse in spring appears more wiry than harmonious (pulse of stomach), then it is symptomatic of liver disease, but a wiry pulse of liver without being harmonious spells death; if the pulse is both harmonious and hairy, then it is symptomatic of the disease of autumn (because hairy pulse is an autumn pulse); if the pulse is extremely hairy then it is symptomatic of existing disease. In spring, the true energy of liver begins to spread, and since the liver is in control of tendons, it follows that the liver is in store of the energy of tendons.

If heart pulse appears slightly hooky in summer with nourishment of stomach energy, then it is a normal pulse; if it appears more hooky than harmonious (the pulse of stomach) then it is symptomatic of heart disease; a hooky pulse without the pulse of stomach spells death; a heart pulse with a stony appearance is symptomatic of winter disease; an extremely stony pulse is symptomatic of existing

disease. In summer, the true organic energy of the heart begins to communicate with the heart which is in control of the energy of blood vessels.

If spleen pulse appears disappearing, soft, and weak with nourishment of stomach energy, then it is a normal pulse in prolonged summer; if spleen pulse appears more weak than harmonious, then it is symptomatic of spleen disease; and if spleen pulse appears slowing without pulse of stomach, it is symptomatic of death; if the pulse is soft, weak, and stony, then it is symptomatic of existing disease; if it is extremely weak, then it is symptomatic of existing disease. The true organic energy of spleen gets nourished in the spleen in prolonged summer, and the spleen is in store of the energy of muscles and flesh.

If lungs pulse appears disappearing and hairy with nourishment of stomach energy, then it is a normal pulse in autumn; if it appears more hairy than harmonious (pulse of stomach) in autumn, then it is symptomatic of lungs disease; a hairy pulse of lungs without pulse of stomach spells death; a hairy pulse mixed with a wiry pulse is symptomatic of spring disease; an extremely wiry pulse is symptomatic of existing disease. The true organic energy of lungs reaches the level of lungs and it travels through nutritive level, defence level, and Yin and Yang regions.

If kidneys pulse appears slightly stony with nourishment of stomach energy, then it is a normal pulse in winter; if kidneys pulse appears more stony than harmonious in winter then it is symptomatic of kidneys disease; if it is stony without pulse of stomach, then it is symptomatic of death; a stony pulse mixed with a hooky pulse is symptomatic of summer disease; an extremely hooky pulse is symptomatic of existing disease. The true organic energy of kidneys flows downward to the kidneys in winter, and the kidneys are in store of the energy of bones and marrow.

The great linking point of the stomach is called Shu-Li (which means deficiency village, located near the Fenglung point, {ST-40 feng long}, and may be considered as the 16th linking point), and it cuts across the diaphragm to be linked with the lungs, travelling outward through the region below the left nipple, and its beats are in touch with clothes which display the movements of the prime energy of the twelve meridians. When the pulse below the nipple stops frequently and with severe panting, it is symptomatic of internal disease of abdomen; when the pulse appears slow and stops occasionally, it is symptomatic of accumulations in the stomach; when the pulse does not appear at all which is an exhaustion, it spells death. The pulse beats below the nipple in touch with the clothes are manifestations of overflowing prime energy of meridians.

Excess and deficiency of pulse at the wrist may be used to make diagnosis of disease. A short pulse at the wrist is symptomatic of headache (because it is a Yang pulse that appears only at the distal region); a long pulse at the wrist is symptomatic of pain in tibia (because the pulse extends all the way to the proximal section); a pulse at the wrist that is felt to be striking the fingers that take it is symptomatic of pain in shoulders and back (because it is a Yang pulse in the middle); a pulse at the wrist that appears deep and hard is symptomatic of internal disease; a pulse at the wrist that appears superficial and strong is symptomatic of external disease; a pulse at the wrist that appears deep and weak is symptomatic of cold and hot disease and abdominal obstructions and pain in lower abdomen; a pulse at the wrist that appears deep and transversal is symptomatic of accumulations below the ribs and

transversal accumulations and pain in the abdomen; a pulse at the wrist that appears deep with panting is symptomatic of cold and hot diseases.

When the pulse (at the wrist) appears strong, sliding, and hard, it is symptomatic of external disease (because it is a Yang pulse); when the pulse appears small, solid, and hard, it is symptomatic of internal disease; when the pulse appears weak and retarded, it is symptomatic of chronic disease (old disease due to energy and blood deficiency); when the pulse appears sliding, superficial, and hurried, it is symptomatic of new disease; an acute pulse indicates abnormal obstructions of heat with pain in lower abdomen; a sliding pulse indicates a wind disease; a retarded pulse indicates rheumatism; a relaxed and sliding pulse indicates internal heat; a strong and tight pulse indicates swelling.

When the pulse corresponds to the disease of Yin and that of Yang (namely, Yang disease with Yang pulse and Yin disease with Yin pulse), the disease can be treated easily; when the pulse does not correspond to the disease, the disease can be difficult to treat. When pulse corresponds to the sequence of the four seasons (namely, wiry pulse in spring, hooky pulse in summer, hairy pulse in autumn, relaxed pulse in prolonged summer, and stony pulse in winter), the disease is easy to control; when pulse runs counter to the sequence of the four seasons and the diseased organ does not pass on the disease to another organ according to the law of subduing (such as the disease of liver passes on to spleen) but it passes on according to the law of generating (such as the disease of liver passes on to its child organ, heart), then the disease is difficult to treat.

When the azure reticular meridians appear in the superficial regions of arm, it is symptomatic of prolapse of blood (scanty blood); a relaxed and retarded pulse at the proximal section of the wrist (namely, the proximal pulse) is symptomatic of powerless limbs (due to energy and blood deficiency); to remain in a lying position unable to rise and with a strong pulse is called prolapse of blood; a retarded and sliding pulse at the proximal section of the wrist is called abundant perspiration; a cold sensation in the proximal section with a fine proximal pulse is called diarrhea that is not over yet; a rough proximal pulse at the wrist with frequent hot sensations is called internal heat.

When the pulse of the true organic energy of liver is felt (which means that the liver is completely cut out of stomach energy), the patient will die on the Geng and Shin days (because the Geng and Shin days are Metal and Metal subdues Wood which corresponds to the liver); when the pulse of the true organic energy of heart is felt, the patient will die on the Ren and Gui days; when the pulse of the true organic energy of the spleen is felt, the patient will die on the Chia and Yee days; when the pulse of the true organic energy of lungs is felt, the patient will die on the Ping and Ding days; when the pulse of the true organic energy of kidneys is felt, the patient will die on the Wo and Ji days. Thus, the patient will die whenever the pulse of the true organic energy is felt. When the neck pulse (namely, pulse at the Jenying point, {ST-9 ren ying}) is hurried with pausing and cough, it is called overflowing of water toward the upward region; and overflowing of water toward the upward region will give rise to light swelling at the lower edge of eyes like the sleeping silkworm about to rise. Yellowish urine with love of lying down is an indication of jaundice; feeling of hunger after a full meal is an indication of disease of the stomach; swelling of the face is a wind disease; swelling in the tibia region of foot is a water disease; yellowish eyes is an indication of jaundice; a strong pulse at the little Yin of hand in woman is an indication of pregnancy\*.

**[Henry Lu's Commentary:** \*The passage, 'a strong pulse at the little Yin of hand in woman is an indication of pregnancy' is subject to interpretations. The interpretations focus on the region in which the pulse in question is taken. One interpreter holds the view that the pulse at the little Yin of hand refers to the pulse on the heart meridian, because the little Yin of hand is the heart meridian, and thus, the pulse in question should be taken in the region below the wrist and on the side of the little finger, namely, on the heart meridian. However, from this translator's point of view, the difficulty of this interpretation is that the region in question is normally not used for taking the pulse. Now we come to the second interpretation of the same passage; according to this interpretation, pulse at the little Yin of hand means the hand pulse of the little Yin which refers to the left proximal pulse at the wrist that belongs to the kidneys. Thus, the original passage should mean that a strong pulse in the proximal section of the wrist in woman is an indication of pregnancy.]

The pulses may obey or run counter to the sequence of the four seasons without displaying the pulse of true organic energy, such as skinny pulse in spring and summer (namely, deep and fine pulse, but in spring and summer, the pulse should be superficial and big respectively), and superficial and big (the pulse should be deep and fine in autumn and winter respectively) pulse in autumn and winter which are called the pulses against the sequence of the four seasons. The following diseases are difficult to treat: a wind-hot disease with a quiet pulse (because a wind-hot disease should have a superficial-big pulse, but a quiet pulse is deep and small pulse which means that the pulse and the disease are not in line with each other, making the disease difficult to treat); diarrhea and prolapse of blood with a solid pulse (because it should be a deep and fine pulse); internal disease with a deficiency pulse (it should have a solid pulse), external disease with a retarded and hard pulse (it should have a superficial pulse); they are called in opposition to the four seasons.

Water and grains are the roots of human life and thus, a person will die when water and grains are exhausted or when the meridians run out of stomach energy. To run out of stomach energy means the appearance of the pulse of the true organic energy without nourishment of stomach energy. To say that a meridian runs out of stomach energy means that the pulse of the liver is not wiry or that the pulse of kidneys is not stony (the pulse of the liver cannot appear wiry unless there is stomach energy to nourish it, and the same applies to other viscera).

When the pulse of great Yang arrives, it should appear big and forceful and long; when the pulse of little Yang arrives, it should appear suddenly rapid and suddenly slow, suddenly short and suddenly long; when the pulse of bright Yang arrives, it should appear superficial, big, and short.

When the normal pulse of the heart arrives, it should appear as sliding as a string of pearls and as smooth as jade stones which is the normal pulse of the heart (the hooky pulse); stomach energy is the root of the summer (which is the heart).

When the diseased pulse of the heart arrives, it should appear as acute as panting, and slightly bent in between, which is symptomatic of the disease of the heart. When the dead pulse of the heart arrives, it should appear bent first to be followed by still, like holding a leather belt that has hooks on it, which spells the death of the heart.

When the normal pulse of the lungs arrives, it should appear as peaceful and as light as elm-seeds (which are light but not hollow) which is the normal pulse of the lungs (hairy pulse); stomach energy is the root of the autumn (the lungs). When the diseased pulse of the lungs arrives, it should appear neither moving upward nor moving downward like the wings of a chicken, which is symptomatic of lungs disease (because the pulse is more hairy than harmonious). When the dead pulse of lungs arrives, it should appear like a floating object or like a hair blown by the wind, which spells the death of the lungs.

When the normal pulse of the liver arrives, it should appear as gentle as a waving hand, and as soft as the tip of a long bamboo being lifted up, which is symptomatic of a peaceful (healthy) liver; stomach energy is the root of the spring (the liver). When the diseased pulse of the liver arrives, it should appear fully solid and sliding, like moving along a long bamboo, which is symptomatic of liver disease (because the pulse is more wiry than harmonious). When the dead pulse of the liver arrives, it should appear acute and unyielding, like a bow about to be launched, which spells the death of the liver.

When the normal pulse of the spleen arrives, it should appear peaceful, soft, and remaining apart, like the chicken treading the earth (slowly and spreading in four directions), which is symptomatic of a peaceful (healthy) spleen; stomach energy is the root of prolonged summer (the spleen). When the diseased pulse of spleen arrives, it should appear solid and fully rapid, like a chicken lifting its feet (retracting and constricting), which is symptomatic of spleen disease. When the dead pulse of the spleen arrives, it should appear as sharp and as hard as the beak of a bird, as quick as the bird's spur, as intermittent as the leakage of a house, and as insufficient as the stream of water, which spells the death of the spleen.

When the normal pulse of the kidneys arrives, it should appear deep and rapid and somewhat hooky (superficial and hollow, indicating presence of heart energy which has a hooky pulse), and hard on pressure, which is symptomatic of normal kidneys; stomach energy is the root of the winter (the kidneys). When the diseased pulse of kidneys arrives it should appear as intricately as pulling arrow-roots and harder on pressure, which is symptomatic of kidneys disease. When the dead pulse of kidneys arrives it should appear as long and unyielding as pulling a cord and as deadly hard as snapping a stone with fingers, which spells death of kidneys.

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## **Chapter 19: On Life Principles and Pulse Manifestations of True Energy**

### **The Key Concepts in this Chapter**

This chapter presents three essential aspects: first of all, a contrast between normal pulse and abnormal pulse of the five viscera and the abnormal pulse further divided into excess pulse and deficiency pulse; secondly, it is pointed out that the five viscera must receive stomach energy in order that their pulses can reach the wrist where pulse is taken; thirdly, the symptoms of five excess and five deficiency diseases are outlined with prediction about their subsequent developments.

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The Yellow Emperor asked: The pulse of spring is like the string of a musical instrument, but what is this type of pulse (wiry pulse) ?

Chi-Po replied: The pulse of spring corresponds to the liver, the East (which corresponds to the liver) corresponds to Wood, and it is the birth of everything; thus, when the energy of spring arrives, it should appear soft, weak, light, deficient, and sliding, and it should appear straight and long which is the reason why it is called the string of a musical instrument. Any pulse of spring which appears contrary to the pulse just described is a diseased pulse.

The Yellow Emperor asked: What type of pulse is contrary to pulse just described ?

Chi-Po replied: When the arrival of energy appears solid and strong, it is in excess, and the disease indicated is external; when the arrival of energy appears not solid but disappearing, it is in deficiency, and the disease indicated is internal.

The Yellow Emperor asked: What symptoms are displayed when the pulse of spring is in excess or in deficiency ?

Chi-Po replied: When the pulse of spring is in excess, it gives rise to jumpiness, discomfort, dizziness, disorder in the top of head; when the pulse of spring is in deficiency, it gives rise to chest pain affecting the back, fullness in the regions below the armpits.

The Yellow Emperor asked: The pulse of summer appears hooky, but what is a hooky pulse ?

Chi-Po replied: The pulse of summer corresponds to the heart, it corresponds to the South and the fire, and it is the growth of everything; therefore, its energy appears strong on arrival, and in decline on departure, which is the reason that it is called hooky pulse. Any pulse of summer that appears contrary to the pulse just described is a diseased pulse.

The Yellow Emperor asked: What type of pulse is contrary to the pulse just described ?

Chi-Po replied: When the energy is strong on arrival and also strong on departure, it is in excess which is symptomatic of external disease, when the energy is not strong on arrival but appears strong on departure, it is in deficiency which is symptomatic of internal disease.

The Yellow Emperor asked: What symptoms are displayed when the pulse of summer is in excess or in deficiency ?

Chi-Po replied: When the pulse of summer is in excess, it gives rise to hot sensations in the body and pain in the skin which is due to the fire of heart in excess manifested in the superficial region; when the pulse of summer is in deficiency, it gives rise to depression, cough and spitting in the upper region and escape of wind in the lower region.

The Yellow Emperor asked: Good. The pulse of autumn appears superficial, but what is a superficial pulse ?

Chi-Po replied: The pulse of autumn corresponds to the lungs, and to the West which is metal, and it is the harvest of everything; therefore, its energy appears light, deficient, and floating (superficial), and it arrives quickly and becomes dispersed on departure which is the reason why it is called floating pulse (translated as superficial pulse as opposed to deep pulse which is called sinking pulse). Any pulse of autumn which is contrary to the pulse just described is a diseased pulse.

The Yellow Emperor asked: What type of pulse is contrary to the pulse just described ?

Chi-Po replied: When the arrival of energy appears hairy with hardness in the center and hollowness on both sides, it is in excess which is symptomatic of external disease; when the arrival of energy appears hairy and disappearing, it is in deficiency which is symptomatic of internal disease.

The Yellow Emperor asked: What symptoms are displayed when the pulse of autumn is in excess or in deficiency ?

Chi-Po replied: When the pulse of autumn is in excess, it gives rise to upsurging energy causing backache and feeling miserable and worried; when the pulse of autumn is in deficiency, it gives rise to panting, weak breathing and cough, and discharge of blood induced by upsurging energy and panting noise from the lungs.

The Yellow Emperor asked: Good. The pulse of winter appears like camping, but what is a camping pulse ?

Chi-Po replied: The pulse of winter corresponds to the kidneys, and the North corresponds to water, and it is the storage of everything; therefore, when its energy arrives, it appears deep and striking which is the reason that it is called camping. Any pulse that is contrary to the pulse just described is a diseased pulse.

The Yellow Emperor asked: What type of pulse is contrary to the pulse just described ?

Chi-Po replied: When the energy appears like snapping a stone on arrival, it is a pulse in excess which is symptomatic of external disease; when the energy appears rapid on departure, it is a pulse in deficiency which is symptomatic of internal disease

The Yellow Emperor asked: What symptoms are displayed when the pulse of winter is in excess or in deficiency ?

Chi-Po replied: When the pulse of winter is in excess, it will give rise to laziness, pain in the spine and scanty energy with no desire to talk; when the pulse of winter is in deficiency, it will give rise to empty stomach like morbid hunger, cold sensations in the regions of costal cartilage, pain inside the spine, fullness in the lower abdomen, change in the color of urine.

The Yellow Emperor said: Good.

The Yellow Emperor asked: The sequence of the four seasons corresponds to different pulses of the viscera which may appear contrary to the four seasons and give rise to diseases, but the pulse of the spleen has not been mentioned. What is the pulse of the spleen in relation to the four seasons ?

Chi-Po replied: The pulse of the spleen corresponds to Earth, it is a lone viscus that irrigates the four viscera on its sides (namely, the spleen transforms water and grains to irrigate the liver, the heart, the lungs, and the kidneys, and for that reason, it does not correspond to any of the four seasons).

The Yellow Emperor asked: Are the functions and malfunctions of spleen visible ?

Chi-Po replied: The functions of the spleen cannot be seen, but its malfunctions are visible.

The Yellow Emperor asked: What are the malfunctions of the spleen that can be seen ?

Chi-Po replied: When the energy of the spleen arrives like flowing water (which means running downward), it is in excess which is symptomatic of external disease; when the energy of the spleen arrives like the pecking of the beak of a bird, it is in deficiency which is symptomatic of internal disease.

The Yellow Emperor asked: You have mentioned that the spleen is a lone viscus, it resides in the center of earth to irrigate the viscera on four sides, but what symptoms are displayed when the pulse of the spleen is in excess or in deficiency ?

Chi-Po replied: When the pulse of the spleen is in excess, it will give rise to inability to lift up the four limbs; when the pulse of the spleen is in deficiency, it will give rise to a blockage of the nine openings which is called double disorder of energy (when the spleen is in deficiency, the stomach will be in excess, leading to a double disorder).

The Yellow Emperor rose quickly and bowed: Good. I have come to understand the essentials of pulse and the ultimate principles below the Heaven; change in colors and pulses of five viscera as well as taking the pulse to determine the regions of extraordinary disease consists in only one single thing (which is the spirits, same passage also occurring in chapter 15). The spirits keep circulating without returning, and when, they return, they are not circulating and as a result, the mechanism of energy circulation will cease to function properly. The essentials of the ultimate principle are sufficiently close to regular patterns and yet still subtle. And thus, they are inscribed on bamboo slabs to be called 'tuning jade astronomical instrument'.

The sequences of upsurging energy among the five viscera are such that a given organ may receive its disorder from its child organ it may pass the disorder to its subduing organ (such as liver passes to spleen), and the disorder may come to reside in its mother organ (such as disorder of liver residing in the kidneys), and finally, the disorder of the subdued organ will cause death (namely, the subdued organ of the liver is the lungs which will cause death in this chain reaction). Such are the patterns of upsurging energy that cause death.

The liver receives its disorder from the heart, and it passes on to the spleen, and the disordered energy of liver comes to reside in the kidneys, and which the disorder arrives at the lungs, the patient will die. The heart receives its disorder from the spleen, and it passes on to the lungs, and the disordered energy of the heart comes to reside in the liver, and when the disorder arrives at the kidneys, the patient will die. The spleen receives its disorder from the lungs, and it passes on to the kidneys, and the disordered energy of the spleen comes to reside at the heart, and when the disorder arrives at the liver, the patient will die. The lungs receive their disorder from the kidneys, and pass on to the liver, and the disordered energy of lungs comes to reside in the spleen, and when the disorder arrives at the heart, the patient will die. The kidneys receive their disorder from the liver, and they pass on to the heart, and the disordered energy of the kidneys comes to reside in the lungs, and when the disorder arrives at the spleen, the patient will die. Such are the patterns in which upsurging energy causes death. One day and one night may be divided into five parts (corresponding to five viscera) which will enable us to know about the time of death in relation to each viscus (such as the disorder of the liver leading to the death to occur in the evening).

The Yellow Emperor said: The five viscera are in communication with one another, so that the transmissions of diseases among the five viscera follow an established pattern; thus, the disease of five viscera will be passed on to the subdued organ of the respective viscus. When a disease is not treated on time, the patient will die in three months or in six months in three days or in six days, when the transmission of the disease is completed according to the established pattern. Therefore, it is said that by distinguishing among the Yang organs, one is able to trace back to the source of disease, and by distinguishing the Yin organs, one is able to know the time of death. This is due to the fact that when the disease is transmitted to the subdued organ, the patient will die.

Therefore, the wind is the cause of one hundred diseases. When wind and cold come to reside in the human body as guests, they may cause the hair to stand straight and the skin to shut up, leading to fever in which case, the method of causing perspiration should be used to treat it; or, if the patient is experiencing numbness (due to attack of skin by vicious energies) and swelling and pain (attack of meridians) moxibustion and acupuncture may be used to treat swelling and pain, and massage with hot water may be used to treat numbness. If the disease is not treated on time, it will be transmitted to the lungs causing rheumatism of lungs with cough and panting. If the disease is not treated on time, the lungs will pass it on to the liver and cause rheumatism of the liver which is also called upsurging, with the symptoms of ribs pain and vomiting which should be treated by massage and acupuncture. If the disease is not treated on time, the liver will transmit it to the spleen and cause wind of spleen displaying the symptoms of a hot disease of spleen including hot sensations in the abdomen, feeling depressed, and jaundice, which may be treated by manipulative therapy or by herbs, or by both. If the disease is not treated on time, the spleen will transmit it to the kidneys and cause abdominal obstructions of heat with such symptoms as hot pain in the lower abdomen, whitish discharge on urination, and the disease is also called 'the most vicious Yin energy in the lower region' which may be treated by manipulative therapy or by herbs. If the disease is not treated on time, the kidneys will transmit it to the heart and cause such symptoms as cramps of tendons pulling each other which is called tics which may be treated by moxibustion or by herbs. If the disease is not treated, the patient will die in ten days (completion of ten celestial stems). If the kidneys transmit the disease to the heart, but the heart is immune from the disease (because the heart, being the monarch, is able to resist the attack of disease more easily than other organs) and passes on to the lungs, causing cold and fever then the patient will die in three years (because it takes one year from the lungs to the kidneys, another year from the kidneys to the liver and another year from the liver to the heart, and then the fire will be attacking the lungs again). This is the sequence of transmission of disease.

However, acute disease may not be treated according to the established pattern of disease transmission, and sometimes, such disease does not transmit according to the established pattern, and it is caused by the five emotions --- grief, fear, worry, joy, anger --- which bring about severe disease. Therefore, joy that moves the energy to the lungs so that the heart will be in deficiency will make the heart susceptible to the attack of kidneys energy; anger will make the spleen susceptible to the attack of liver energy; grief will make the liver susceptible to the attack of lungs energy; fear will make the kidneys susceptible to the attack of the spleen energy; worry will make the spleen susceptible to the attack of heart energy. This is the disease caused by the five emotions in relation to the subdued organs. Therefore, there are five kinds of disease and there are five viscera which bring about a total of twenty-five changes, including their transmissions which refer to the law of attack in the theory of five elements.

When the great bones (bones of both arms and both thighs) become withered and the great muscles (muscles of both arms and both thighs) become depressed when congested chest and panting occur causing inconvenience and shoulder movements to catch the breath the patient will die in six months (from the heart to the lungs to the liver to the spleen, and finally to the kidneys) and when the pulse of the true organic energy (of the lungs) appears, the patient will die on the days of the subduing organ

(such as on the heart days namely, Ping and Ding days when the true organic energy refers to the lungs in this case); when the great bones become withered and the great muscles become depressed, when congested chest and panting occur causing inconvenience, causing internal pain affecting the shoulders and back of neck, the patient will die in one month, and when the pulse of the true organic energy (of the heart) appears the patient will die on the days of subduing organ (namely the Ren and Gui days); when the great bones become withered and the great muscles become depressed, when congested chest and panting occur causing inconvenience and internal pain affecting the shoulders and back of neck and when the patient experiences hot sensations in the body, poor muscles conditions, and when the pulse of the true organic energy (of the spleen) occurs the patient will die in ten months. When the great bones become withered and the great muscles become depressed, when the shoulders and marrow become internally exhausted with a further decline in movements, the patient will die in one year if the pulse of the true organic energy (of the kidneys) does not appear, but the patient will die on the days of subduing organ if the pulse of the true organic energy does appear. When the great bones become withered and the great muscles become depressed, when congested chest and internal pain of the abdomen occur, when the patient experiences hot sensations in the shoulder and back of neck and the body as well as poor muscles conditions, with depressed eyes, and when the pulse of the true organic energy (of the liver) occurs, the patient will die instantly if he can see nothing, otherwise, he will die on the days of subduing organ.

Acute deficiency with external attack from vicious energies, causing the energies of the five viscera to shut up completely and a blockage of the passage of meridians in which no energy stream travels back and forth is comparable to drowning and the time of death cannot be predicted in this case; if the patient's pulse is absent or if there are five or six pulse beats to one exhalation, it is a pulse of death, even though the patient displays no poor muscles nor pulse of true organic energy.

When the pulse of true organic energy of the liver appears acute both at superficial and deep levels, as fearful as moving the finger along the edge of a sharp knife, and as acute as plucking the string of a guitar with azure mixed with white and no glossy moisture, hair breaking up, it is symptomatic of death (due to metal subduing wood or lungs subduing liver).

When the pulse of true organic energy of the heart appears hard and striking, as hard and as small as the seeds of coicis, with red and black without glossy moisture, hair breaking up, it is symptomatic of death.

When the pulse of true organic energy of the lungs appears big and deficient, like feathers touching the human skin, with white and red but no glossy moisture, hair breaking up, it is symptomatic of death.

When the pulse of true organic energy of the kidneys appears striking and exhausting, as hard as snapping at the stone with fingers, with black and yellow but no glossy moisture, hair breaking up, it is symptomatic of death.

When the pulse of true organic energy of the spleen appears weak and suddenly rapid and suddenly slow, with yellow and azure, but no glossy moisture, hair breaking up, it is symptomatic of death.

When the pulse of true organic energy occurs the disease is incurable and the patient will die.

The Yellow Emperor asked: The pulse of true organic energy is symptomatic of death. Why is that ?

Chi-Po replied: The five viscera all receive energy from the stomach and thus the stomach is the root of the five viscera. The energy of the viscera cannot reach the great Yin of hand unless it is nourished by stomach energy. Therefore the five viscera will reach the great Yin of hand (namely the mouth of energy at the wrist) at their respective time and in terms of their respective pulse (namely, wiry pulse of liver, hooky pulse of heart, relaxed pulse of spleen, hairy pulse of lungs and stony pulse of kidneys). When vicious energies are victorious, however, the pure energy will be in decline, and for that reason stomach energy becomes incapable of travelling to the great Yin of hand along with the true organic energy in case of severe diseases with the result that the pulse of true organic energy alone appears at the mouth of energy which means that the disease wins victory over the viscera and it is symptomatic of death.

The Yellow Emperor said: Good.

The Yellow Emperor said: In treating disease one should examine the patient's physical shape, energy conditions, appearance of colors and glossy moisture, strong or weak pulse, new or old disease, and then treat it on time. If the patient's physical shape appears in harmony with (in correspondence with) his energy conditions, then the disease can be cured; if colors and glossy moisture appear superficial, then the disease is easy to recover; when the pulse follows the four seasons then the disease can be cured; if the pulse is weak and sliding, which means there is stomach energy, then the disease may be cured easily and it should be treated by different points according to the four seasons (namely dispersing points in spring, reticular points in summer, treatment at the skin in autumn, and deeper points in winter). When the patient's physical shape is not in correspondence with energy conditions, the disease is difficult to cure; when the colors are withering with no glossy moisture, the disease is not easy to recover; when the pulse appears solid and hard it is called double severity (which means excess of vicious energy); when the pulse appears contrary to the four seasons, the disease is incurable. Thus, the four difficult areas of diagnosis should be resolved in order to pass a judgment on the disease.

The pulses against the four seasons are such that the pulse of lungs appears in spring, the pulse of kidneys appears in summer, the pulse of heart appears in autumn, the pulse of spleen appears in winter, all of which are suspending, exhausting, deep and retarded (an indication of absence of stomach energy) and they are called the pulses against the four seasons.

When the pulse of the five viscera has not taken shape but the pulse appears deep and retarded in spring and summer, and it appears superficial and big in autumn and winter, it is the pulse against the four seasons.

A hot disease with a quiet pulse, diarrhea with a big pulse, prolapse of blood with a solid pulse, an internal disease with a solid and hard pulse, an external disease with a pulse that is neither solid nor hard, all such diseases are difficult to cure.

The Yellow Emperor asked: I have heard about excess diseases and deficiency diseases that spell death. Could you tell me something about such diseases ?

Chi-Po replied: They refer to five excess diseases that spell death, and five deficiency diseases that spell death.

The Yellow Emperor asked: Could you tell me about the five excess diseases and the five deficiency diseases ?

Chi-Po replied: The five excess diseases (vicious energies in excess) refer to strong pulse (heart), hot skin (lungs) abdominal swelling (spleen), constipation and anuria (kidneys), dizziness and blurred vision (liver); the five deficiency diseases (righteous energies in deficiency) refer to fine pulse (heart) cold skin (lungs) scanty energy (liver) diarrhea and incontinence of urination (kidneys), inability to eat (spleen).

The Yellow Emperor asked: Sometimes, the patient suffering from the diseases listed above can live, why is that ?

Chi-Po replied: A person suffering from deficiency diseases will live if his stomach can digest pulpy foods and rice soup to stop diarrhea; a person suffering from excess diseases will live if he is treated by the method of causing perspiration and the method of inducing diarrhea. Such are the general outlooks of disease.