



KATIE BRINDLE

Asthma Health Guide

Treatment techniques based in Chinese medicine



# Overview

In Chinese Medicine, Asthma is often referred to as "Xiao Chuan," which translates to wheezing and shortness of breath. Unlike Western medicine, which characterises Asthma primarily as a chronic inflammatory disease of the airways, Chinese Medicine considers the condition to be a manifestation of imbalances within the body – a complex interplay between various organs and pathogenic factors.

## Causes and Implicated Organs

- Lungs: The Lungs are considered the primary organs involved in Asthma. The Lungs govern qi and respiration and are responsible for strong Wei Qi, or defensive energy, which runs over the surface of the body helping to protect against pathogens entering the system. If the Lungs are weak, or out of balance and unable to perform these functions efficiently, it can leave the body susceptible to external factors such as heat or cold, or internal issues such as the accumulation of phlegm.
  - Wind-Cold: The invasion of wind-cold can obstruct the flow of Lung qi, leading to coughing and acute episodes of wheezing, often related to the initial stages of asthma or exacerbating chronic symptoms.
  - Wind-Heat: This external pathogen can lead to inflammation and swelling in the airways.
  - Phlegm-Dampness: Obstruction of the Lungs, presenting as Asthma symptoms, results from phlegm and dampness. This is primarily due to disharmony of the Spleen, though overeating, improper diet and a sedentary lifestyle can also play a part.

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- Spleen: The Spleen is responsible for transforming and transporting nutrients and fluids throughout the body. Deficiency or imbalances can lead to excess phlegm, which may accumulate in the Lungs causing or intensifying Asthma symptoms. Additionally, weak Spleen energy may also fail to provide adequate nourishment to the Lungs, resulting in inefficient Wei Qi and increased vulnerability to external pathogenic factors.
- Kidney: The Kidneys provide additional reserves of energy to all other organs of the body, so they assist the Lungs in the inhalation process and the receiving of qi. If Kidney energy is deficient, particular Kidney Yang qi, it can fail to anchor the qi descending from the Lungs, leading to chronic Asthma symptoms, such as shortness of breath, particularly during exertion.
- Liver: The Liver ensures the smooth flow of qi throughout the body. Emotional disturbances can cause Liver qi stagnation, inflammation (heat) and impaired circulation which may, in turn, disturb Lung qi.

## Emotions

Chronic emotional stress can severely disrupt the flow of qi in the body. Each organ has specific negative emotions attached to it which, if left unresolved, can manifest as physical problems:

- Sadness and grief are emotions that are specifically linked to the Lungs. If these emotions are left unprocessed they can deplete Lung qi, leading to a weakening of the organ's function, exacerbating susceptibility to Lung related conditions such as Asthma.
- Fear is closely connected to the Kidneys. If we feel fearful for a prolonged period of time our Kidneys will become imbalanced which can result in them failing to assist the Lungs in holding qi, worsening Asthma symptoms.

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- Worry and Overthinking is caused by imbalances in the Spleen which, over time, can lead to dysfunction and the resultant production of phlegm which can obstruct the Lung's efficient function.
- Anger and Frustration results from an unhappy Liver which can cause Liver qi stagnation.

## Acupressure Points for Asthma

Acupressure is a technique that can easily be performed as part of your self-care practices. Gentle pressure is applied to specific points on the body with fingers or an acupressure tool to help clear blockages in the meridians, the pathways of the body through which qi flows.

### REN-17 (Shānzhōng)

Location: This point is located in the centre of the chest, between the breasts.

Why: Stimulating this point can help to open up and relax the chest, regulating and helping to descend Lung qi to ease breathing and reduce anxiety, which can be particularly beneficial during an Asthma attack.

### KID-27 (Shūfǔ)

Location: In the depression just below the collarbone, two fingers' width from the centre of the chest towards the shoulder.

Why: Stimulation of this point can help to unbind the chest and release phlegm. It is used to help ease chest congestion, coughing and difficulties in breathing.

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### LU-7 (Lièquē)

Location: Situated above the wrist on the inner side of the arm, the point is on the thumb side, just above the wrist crease, below the index finger.

Why: It is a key point for releasing the exterior and expelling wind. It can help to alleviate symptoms such as coughing, wheezing and tightness of the chest.

### Extra Point (Dìngchuān)

Location: At the top of the back, at the level of the shoulders and about 1 inch to the side of the spine.

Why: This point is an extra-meridian, specifically used for respiratory conditions, including Asthma. It is especially effective in relieving wheezing, tightness in the chest and shortage of breath.

### ST-36 (Zúsānlǐ)

Location: This point is found on the leg, four finger widths down from the bottom of the kneecap, one finger width outside of the shinbone.

Why: This point known for strengthening the overall energy and vitality of the body, also for supporting the Spleen and Stomach which can be beneficial in transforming phlegm.

### KD3 (Tàixī):

Location: On the inner aspect of the foot, level with the ankle joint, this point is in the dip between the ankle and the Achilles tendon.

Why: Strengthens Kidney Qi, which in turn supports the Lungs, helping to alleviate symptoms of Asthma by encouraging proper flow of energy.

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# Yang Sheng Practices for Asthma:

There are many practices, lifestyle choices, self-care tools and supplements that can be used to help manage the symptoms and the root cause of Asthma, including:

- Qigong – Gentle qigong, practiced regularly, will work with the energetic pathways and corresponding organs, helping to bring the whole body back into balance. It is ideal to help strengthen Lung qi without overwhelming the body. 12 Rivers, practiced as early as possible in the morning to coincide with the optimal time for the Lungs, will be especially helpful.
- Meditation and Breathwork – Managing emotions and stress will help to ensure that imbalances and qi stagnation is kept under control.
- Diet – Consuming a balanced diet which supports Spleen health and prevents phlegm production is key to keeping Asthma symptoms under control. This includes eating warm, cooked and easily digested foods whilst limiting cold, greasy or raw foods. It is also advisable to restrict foods from the “4 whites” group – which include, dairy, salt, flour, sugar and salt – as these can lead to the formation of phlegm and dampness in the body, potentially worsening Asthma. Additionally, drink plenty of soothing liquids throughout the day to keep the airways moist. Cooked pears are especially moistening for the body – simply poach, then eat with a little honey if liked, drinking the cooking water too.
- Gua Sha – Use the rounded edge of a gua sha tool on the front of the chest, from the sternum out to the underarm area on each side – this will help to clear the Lung channel. Repeat on the upper back and middle back, from the spine out to each side. This simple practice will help to open the chest and facilitate the movement of Lung qi.

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- Drumming and Tapping – One of the key pillars of good health is the free flow of qi and blood around the body, which will help to ensure toxic, negative energetic blockages do not cause stagnation or deficiency in the channels of the body. Keep a Hayo'u Tapper to hand and use all over the body regularly throughout the day, or for a stronger approach, use the Hayo'u Drummer to target the upper back and shoulders. Alternatively, you can also use a loosely cupped hand, or a clenched fist.

Other useful self-care tools include:

- A castor oil compress can help to reduce inflammation, detoxify the Liver and support the digestion.
- A hot water bottle wrap will support the Kidneys and Liver as well as relieving tension in the body.
- A salt inhaler will help to improve breathing, enhance oxygen intake and soothe the airways.

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# Useful Supplements

There are many helpful supplements that can be taken as both preventative self-care and to alleviate symptoms of Asthma, these include:

- Medicinal mushrooms – Turkey tail is especially helpful for Lung health and respiratory conditions, whereas Reishi will benefit the immune system, helping to support Lungs, Liver and Kidneys.
- Herbal remedies, particularly with thyme, elderberry and marshmallow, will help to build immunity, relieve tight chests and ease coughing.
- Immune boosting supplements, ideally with lactoferrin as its main ingredient, will be powerfully anti-viral, anti-bacterial and anti-inflammatory, which will support gut health.

## Conclusion

Chinese Medicine's approach to Asthma involves a holistic view, taking into account the interplay between the body's organs, emotions, and quality of qi. The goal of Yang Sheng practice is to restore balance, strengthen the body's defences and alleviate the symptoms through a combination of specific techniques, acupuncture, supplements and lifestyle modifications.

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# Want to know more?

We will be delighted to support you as you continue along your Yang Sheng journey.

The following will get you started:

'Yang Sheng: The Art of Chinese Self-Healing' available on Amazon, Waterstone and [www.hayoumethod.com](http://www.hayoumethod.com)

Buy Yang Sheng Book

Healing Movement classes (3 x each week) and live meditations for a more in-depth and healing practice – full details [here](#)

Free Masterclass "[Master Your Health](#)" – understand the 3- step plan for preventative health. Find more Healing Masterclasses [here](#).

Free self-care weekly content [@katiebrindle](#) on Instagram, Facebook and YouTube.

Free regular gua sha demonstrations on [@thehayoumethod](#) Instagram & the opportunity to purchase the accompanying tools from [www.hayoumethod.com](http://www.hayoumethod.com)

## DISCLAIMER:

Please note that any of these Yang Sheng techniques are designed to support your overall self-care and wellbeing and should not be used as a substitute for any Western medical advice or treatment that you may be receiving. You should not use the information in this Guide or on our website for diagnosing or treating a health problem or disease and must always consult your doctor if you have any health concerns. Additionally, please note that there are a few contraindications to Yang Sheng techniques, so please visit [www.hayoumethod.com](http://www.hayoumethod.com) to view our comprehensive FAQs.

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