



KATIE BRINDLE

Ménière's Disease Guide

Treatment techniques based in Chinese medicine



# What is Ménière's Disease?

Ménière's disease is an unpleasant and debilitating disorder of the inner ear caused by an abnormal accumulation of fluid, which disrupts the delicate balance mechanism. Unlike other conditions of the inner ear, which might be constant, Meniere's episodes are usually sporadic, often intense, and typically occur without warning. The condition usually affects only one ear at a time and an attack can last from around half an hour to several hours, although generally no longer than 24 hours. After an attack, symptoms will usually disappear completely until the next sudden episode – it is this unpredictability that can leave sufferers feeling vulnerable and anxious, sometimes losing confidence.

Ménière's will most commonly affect people between the ages of around 20 - 50, although older people can also suffer, particularly if their condition is chronic. Flare-ups can often be more regular during allergy seasons due to pollen irritating the already compromised Eustachian tubes.

The main symptoms of a Ménière's attack include:

- Vertigo and loss of balance – The illusion of motion, the unpleasant feeling of spinning that starts and stops without warning, you may stumble or feel unsteady when walking, sometimes actually falling. In extreme attacks, this can cause nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea.
- Congestion – A feeling of fullness or pressure in the affected ear.
- Tinnitus – Ringing, buzzing, or whistling sounds in the ear during an attack. Often people who suffer with permanent Tinnitus will also be prone to Ménière's disease.
- Hearing loss or sensitivity to sounds – This may come and go initially but over time permanent hearing loss, even deafness, can occur.
- Anxiety, panic and fatigue.
- Headaches – Sometimes with blurred vision or problems focusing.

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# What can you do to help yourself?

- Nurture and strengthen the Kidneys, Liver and Spleen – Ménière's is generally considered to be a result of imbalances within these organs. Look at why there may be imbalances and work towards rectifying them. Download my Organ Guides for advice.
- Nutrition – Phlegm can impede the flow of qi to the head, a key cause of Ménière's, so have a nourishing and balanced diet and avoid foods that are damp forming. Avoid the "4 whites" - flour, dairy, salt and sugar – to reduce inflammation in the body and try to eat warm and easily digested foods such as miso soup, bone broth and congee. Keep sufficiently hydrated but avoid cold or iced drinks as this will aggravate the problem.
- Gua sha and acupressure – Use the Jade Comb around the torso every day and tap down the sides and the backs of the legs to support the meridians. If you suffer with nausea there is a very useful acupressure point on the wrist that can alleviate the feeling of sickness; with one palm facing up, place the index finger of your other hand between the two tendons on the wrist, about two inches below the base of the wrist, and press firmly for a minute or two.
- Meditation, breathwork and rest – remaining calm, with the stress response under control, will be the best way to conserve and build Kidney qi so try and have a nap or meditate in the afternoon as this is the time when the Kidneys will benefit the most. Meditation will also help to balance Liver and Spleen & Stomach emotions.
- Qigong – Regular, gentle qigong practice, which works with the energetic pathways and corresponding organs, will help to bring the whole body back into balance. 12 Rivers Qigong will teach you specific moves for each organ. Or join me for my Qigong Healing and Meditation classes.

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# The Yang Sheng perspective

'Yang Sheng' means 'nurture life'. It is the 'self-care' part of Chinese medicine: the part you can do for yourself, as a complement to any other treatment you may be undertaking.

In addition to physical (visible) symptoms, in Chinese medicine we also consider what is happening with the body at an energetic (invisible) level. 'Qi' (pronounced 'tchee') is the energy that runs through all of us. Even when you sit completely still, there will be some movement happening inside you: your heart is beating, your fluids moving – every cell is constantly in motion. All of these different types of energy, combined with your breath, is what makes up your 'qi'.

Qi isn't the same as circulation, but they are linked. When you stimulate your blood flow or move your lymphatic fluid, your qi is also stimulated. Everything flows together. The channels in which qi flows are called meridians. According to Chinese medicine, the quality and movement of qi through the body determines your health. The ideal state is one of smooth flow with no imbalances or blockages, which are called 'stagnation' or stagnant qi. If you have stagnation, whether physical, emotional or spiritual, this will eventually manifest as disease.

The immune system has three main functions: 1) to defend the body from harmful substances, 2) to monitor damaged, aged and mutated cells and clear them away, and 3) to recognize what is a non-threat so it does not destroy the body's own healthy tissue.

In people with autoimmune issues, their monitor and self-tolerance functions are in disorder. Western treatments for autoimmune diseases generally focus on reducing symptoms and therefore further reducing the immune system's natural activity. However, Chinese medicine thinks rebalancing the immune system is key in this instance.

To understand autoimmune disease, we must try to understand why the immune system is attacking the body's own tissues instead of fighting infections. This, according to Chinese medicine, is due to a lack of Zheng qi. This type of qi is derived from eating healthy foods. Since the stomach and spleen are responsible for the digestion and intake process, taking more care of our digestive system will help our body will protect itself more efficiently.

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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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