

Trouble with middle burner: Liver and Spleen Disharmony

Three Jiao (Burners) in animal body:

1. Upper Jiao:
 - Lungs/Large Intestine—distribute Chi
 - Heart/Small Intestine and Triple Heater/Pericardium—distribute Blood
2. Middle Jiao:
 - Liver/Gallbladder—regulate smooth flow of Chi
 - Spleen/Stomach—generate Chi and Blood
3. Lower Jiao:
 - Kidneys/Bladder: distribute Yin and Yang, store Jing (essence)

Liver/Gallbladder

- controlled by Wood element: (likes: fresh, green, sour taste; dislikes: wind/dryness, heat, dampness)
- major detoxification and elimination organs (+/- 1500 enzymatic processes daily)
- deactivation of internal toxins: hormones, neuropeptides, inflammatory mediators (including histamine), metabolic waste; processing of nutrients as they enter through gut lining (major site of immune recognition)
- production of bile containing both metabolic waste products, and bile salts which are necessary for proper fat digestion
- regulation of smooth flow of energy throughout the body/control of emotions
- storage of B vitamins and micronutrients, both water and fat soluble ones (Vit A, Copper, etc)
- secondary organ of Blood generation if Bone Marrow is deficient

Disorders of Liver/Gallbladder

1. Liver Heat: red eyes/ears/feet/perianal area.
2. Liver Heat with Wind: same as above + itch
3. Liver Damp Heat: same as above, with or w/o itch, damp/yeasty/phlegmy ears/feet, conjunctivitis, damp and inflamed armpits and inguinal folds). These patients will feel phlegmy/greasy, not dry.
4. Dryness/Blood Deficiency (+/- Wind + itch):

Blood Deficiency manifests as dry skin/feet, itchy coat, dandruff, and scratching. Blood acts as a moisturizer and lubricant, and helps to subdue Wind (pathogen that manifests as itching, scratching, shaking, trembling, seizures, etc). Blood deficiency can also cause poor stamina, fearful behavior/night time anxiety, and dry tendons/ligaments, which predisposes to acute soft tissue athletic injuries (sprains, joint injuries, tendon/ligament tears).