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Standard and Specification

Expert Consensus Opinions on the TCM Diagnosis and Treatment of Epigastric Pain (2017)

Spleen and Stomach Diseases Branch of China Association of Chinese Medicine

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Epigastric pain is one of the most common syndromes in internal medicine of Traditional Chinese Medicine. Epigastric pain symptoms are seen in a variety of upper gastrointestinal diseases in clinical practice, such as peptic ulcer, chronic gastritis, and functional dyspepsia. In September 1983, the Internal Medicine Society of the All-China Association of Traditional Chinese Medicine held a National Symposium on the Spleen and Stomach Diseases and formulated the *Criteria for the Diagnosis and Treatment Efficacy Evaluation of Epigastric Pain (Draft)* ^[1]. In 1993, the Ministry of Health of the People's Republic of China issued the *Guidelines for Clinical Research on New Drugs of Traditional Chinese Medicine for the Treatment of Epigastric Pain* ^[2]. The Guidelines, along with the *Diagnostic and Treatment Efficacy Standards for the TCM Syndromes* formulated by the National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine in 1994 and 2012 all contained the diagnostic basis, syndrome classification, and efficacy evaluation criteria for epigastric pain ^[3-4]. In 2011, the Spleen and Stomach Disease Branch of the China Association of Chinese Medicine issued the industry standard *Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Treatment of Epigastric Pain* ^[5]. However, the standards and guidelines issued above have failed to include all the disease characteristics, diagnosis and treatment and clinical evaluation of epigastric pain, or there were insufficient consensus among them. With the continuous development of medical science and the continuous deepening of modern disease research, the classification of the disease syndromes and the selection of prescriptions have changed. Therefore, it is necessary to coatingther update on the basis of the relevant standards to meet the changing needs of clinical and scientific research.

The Spleen and Stomach Disease Branch of the China Association of Chinese Medicine took the lead in establishing the drafting team of *Expert Consensus Opinions on TCM Diagnosis and Treatment of Epigastric Pain* in Hefei in August 2014. Based on the principles of evidence-based medicine, the team members collected evidence-based data extensively and successively organized the domestic experts in spleen and stomach diseases to summarize and discuss a series of key issues such as the classification of the symptoms of epigastric pain, syndrome differentiation treatment, diagnosis and treatment procedures, and efficacy criteria, formed the first draft of the Consensus Opinions, and then conducted three rounds of voting according to the internationally accepted Delphi method. The first vote was held in Chongqing in September 2015, when this Consensus Opinions were modified based on the Expert Opinions. A second vote was held in Beijing in December 2015. In June 2016, the Spleen and Stomach Diseases Branch of China Association of Chinese Medicine held a core expert review meeting in Xiamen. More than 20 well-known experts in the spleen and stomach medicine from all over the country voted for the third time on this Consensus Opinions (draft) and fully discussed and revised it. At the 28th National Academic Conference on the Spleen and Stomach Diseases in Harbin in July 2016, the experts discussed, modified and examined again the Consensus Opinions, and held a final expert finalization meeting in Beijing in September 2016 to complete the formulation of this Consensus

Opinions. At the meeting, the voting options were: ① Completely agree; ② Agree, but with some reservations; ③ Agree, but with major reservations; ④ Disagree, but with reservations; ⑤ Completely disagree. If ① is selected by > 2/3 of the voters, or ① + ② are selected for > 85% of the voters, this clause will be adopted. The full text is now published as follows for reference by both domestic and foreign colleagues and is expected to be continuously improved in application.

1 Overview

1.1 Epigastric Pain refers to the Main Symptoms of Epigastric Pain near the Heart Fossa

Epigastric pain is a common clinical syndrome and a main symptom, often accompanied by symptoms, such as upper abdominal bloating, poor appetite, nausea, vomiting, noise, acid reflux, belching and other symptoms.

1.2 The discussion of epigastric pain was first found in the Inner Canon of Huangdi, and there are also disease names such as "the pain is directly against the heart" and "heartache"

"Su Wen · Liu Yuan Zheng Ji Da Lun" said: "The attack of hepatobiliary stagnation predisposes people to pain at the epigastric region, supports two flanks upwards, blocks the throat, and is difficult to swallow food and drink", "Su Wen · Zhi Zhen Yao Da Lun" said "Jueyin Si Tian, fen mi suo sheng, the stomach of the people's disease is the pain directly against the heart", and the discussion of the etiology of epigastric pain in the The Inner Canon of Huangdi has laid the foundation for the later generations of physicians to study and treat the epigastric pain. Zhang Zhongjing created the DaJianzhong Decoction, Aconite Japonica Rice Decoction, Peony and Licorice Decoction, Wuzhuyu Decoction, Xiaojianzhong Decoction and Astragalus Jianzhong Decoction in the Han Dynasty were commonly used prescriptions for the treatment of the epigastric pain in the later generations. In the Tang Dynasty, Sun Simiao's *Prescription for Emergency Preparedness and Heart Abdominal Pain* had nine kinds of heartache. In the Song Dynasty, Yan Yonghe's "Jisheng Recipe" coatingther pointed out nine types of heartache. During the Jin and Yuan Dynasties, Li Gao established a branch of "Epigastric Pain" in the Volume II of "Lanshi Secrets", distinguishing the epigastric pain from heartache and drafted three recipes: Grass Cardamom Pills, Divine Reviving Qi Decoction and Mahuang Cardamom Pills. Zhu Danxi "Danxi Heart Method" said: "Patients with the spleen disease, food vomiting after eating, abdominal distension like Ai, epigastric pain, heart anxiety", clearly pointed out that heartache actually referred to the epigastric pain, the main symptom of the disease was the middle Jiao spleen and stomach lesions.

1.3 Epigastric Pain is More Common in the Upper Gastrointestinal Disease in Modern Medicine

The common diseases causing the epigastric pain are acute (chronic) gastritis, peptic ulcer, functional dyspepsia, gastroptosis and gastric mucosal prolapse. Epigastric pain due to diseases such as gastric cancer, hepatitis, cholecystitis, pancreatitis, pneumonia and myocardial infarction is not in the scope of this disease syndrome, but adjuvant therapy can be performed with reference to this Consensus Opinions.

2 Etiology and Pathogenesis

2.1 **External evils or exogenous pathogens invade the stomach, eating and drinking harm the stomach, emotional disorders and injury from work and rest**, or due to drug **damage**, or the spleen deficiency is the main cause of epigastric pain^[6-7]

Exogenous feelings of cold, heat, dampness and other pathogens, **guest in the stomach**, resulting in epigastric qi blockage. **Irregular or improper diet** leads to food **stagnation**, damage to the spleen and stomach, the stomach qi stagnation. Worry and irritation will cause liver loss or failure in regulating the venting or catharsis which goes against the stomach, stomach loss and declining, in severe cases, even stomach discord caused by qi stagnation and blood stasis. The spleen and stomach weakness, the internal operation is not functioning well, poor qi or weak yang qi in the middle Jiao, not only susceptible to cold, the spleen and stomach deficiency cold, but also easy to accumulate food stagnation, depression and stagnation of heat, resulting in loss of stomach yin

2.2 "Pain caused by block of qi and blood meridians" and "Pain caused by deficiency of qi and blood, excessive consumption of yin essence and loss of meridian support" are the basic symptoms of epigastric pain

Stomach for the yang soil, moisturizing and aversion to dryness, for the five viscera and six internal organs of the great source, the main acceptance, decomposed water valley, its qi to and down for Shun, should not be stagnant. Cold pathogens, diet and stomach injury can cause middle coke qi block, stomach loss and fall and the occurrence of epigastric pain, it is "Pain caused by block of qi and blood meridians"^[8-9]. Or lack of endowment, combined with acquired malnutrition, weak temper; or lack of spleen yang, cold from endogenous; or stomach dryness, stomach loss of support, it is " Pain caused by deficiency of qi and blood, excessive consumption of yin essence and loss of meridian support"

2.3 The disease is located in the stomach and is most closely related to the liver and spleen

Liver qi transverses, Muwang multiplies the earth, or the middle soil chokes, Muyu does not reach; or liver fire incandescent, burning stomach yin; or liver blood stasis, stomach loss and pride, so stomach disease is mostly related to the liver. The spleen and stomach cohabit in the coke, each other exterior and interior, a total of the main rise and fall, so the spleen disease mostly involves the stomach, stomach disease can also be spread to the spleen. If tiredness and internal injury, hunger and satiety are impermanent, each spleen and stomach are the same disease^[10-11].

2.4 Patients with severe epigastric pain can see hematochezia, hematemesis and even blood loss; epigastric pain for a long time into the collaterals caused by blood stasis

Patients with long-term pain, blood stasis and epigastric pain due to collateral entry are mostly positive. The chronic disease is mostly a mixture of deficiency and excess or deficiency syndrome. Deficiency is mostly due to weakness of the spleen and stomach. Weakness of the spleen and stomach, dampness, stasis, etc. The pathological changes in the epigastric pain are complex, and the pathogenesis can evolve, resulting in changes. Stomach fever is blazing, blood pressure is violent, or blood stasis is blocked, blood does not follow the meridian, or spleen is weak, unable to control the blood, resulting in blood in the stool and hematemesis. Heavy bleeding can cause qi to fall off with blood, which is life-threatening. If the spleen and stomach is dereliction of duty, damp turbidity endogenous, depression and heat, fiery internal congestion, it can lead to severe epigastric pain and refusal to press; Causes vomiting and nausea. If the gastric epigastric pain lasts for a long time, from the qi component to the blood component, the long-term pain enters the collaterals to cause stasis, and the stasis of the gastric cavity can form a syndrome^[12-13].

3 Syndrome Differentiation^[14-17]

3.1 Cold Evil Stomach Syndrome

Main Symptoms: 1) Stomach pain violently; ; 2) Aggravated pain due to cold. Secondary Symptoms: 1) Fear of cold; 2) Relieved by warmth. Tongue and Pulse: Pale tongue with white coating; tight pulse string.

3.2 Stomach Injury Syndrome Caused by Diet

Main Symptoms: 1) Epigastric bloating and pain which are refused to be pressed; 2) Humic acid odor. Secondary Symptoms: 1) Nausea and vomiting;; 2) Not thinking about eating or drinking; 3) Bad and disgusting smell, food smell; 4) Stools or sour and smelly Qi. Tongue and Pulse: Thick and greasy tongue coating; slippery.pulse string.

3.3 Liver and Stomach Discord Syndrome

Main Symptoms: 1) Epigastric bloating or pain; 2) Bloating on two sides. Secondary Symptoms: 1) Every episode or aggravation often due to emotional distress; 2) Upset; 3) Frequent belching;; 4) Good sigh. Tongue and Pulse: Pale red tongue, thin and white coating; pulse string.

3.4 Spleen and Stomach Damp-Heat Syndrome

Main Symptoms: 1) Abdominal bloating or pain; 2) dry mouth or bitter taste. Secondary Symptoms: 1) Dry or bitter mouth; 2) Poor appetite; 3) Nausea or vomiting; 4) Short and yellow urine. Tongue and Pulse: Red tongue, thick yellow and greasy coating; slippery. pulse

3.5 Cold and Heat Mixed Syndromes:

Main Symptoms: 1) Epigastric bloatingand pain, aggravated by cold; 2) Dry mouth or bitter taste. Secondary Symptoms: 1) Poor appetite; 2) Noisy; 3) Nausea or vomiting; 4) Borborygmus; 5) Loose stools. Tongue and Pulse: Pale tongue, yellow coating; slippery pulse string.

3.6 Blood Stasis and Stomach Blocking Syndrome

Main Symptoms: Epigastric tingling, the pain does not move. Secondary Symptoms: 1) Aggravated stomach pain at night; 2) Dark complexion. Tongue and Pulse: Dark purple tongue, tongue ecchymosis; astringent pulse string

3.7 Stomach Yin Deficiency Syndrome

Main Symptoms: 1) Dull epigastric pain; 2) Hunger and loss of appetite. Secondary Symptoms: 1) Dry mouth; 2) |Weight loss; 3) Five upset fevers. Tongue and Pulse:Red tongue, less fluid or tongue cracks without coating; thin pulse.

3.8 Spleen and Stomach Deficiency and Cold Syndrome

Main Symptoms: 1) Epigastric dull pain, relieved by warmth and pressing; 2) Pain reduction after gettingfood. Secondary Symptoms: 1) Fatigue of limbs; 2) Fear of cold and cold limbs; 3) Pale salivation; 4) Loose stools; 5) Poor appetite. Tongue and Pulse: Pale tongue or tongue tooth marks, thin and white tongue coating; weak or slow pulse.

Syndrome Diagnosis: Essential for the main symptoms, add 2 Secondary Symptoms and the diagnosis can be made by referring to the tongue and pulse

4 Clinical Treatment

4.1 The treatment goal of Epigastric Pain is to relieve the symptoms, restore the spleen and stomach functions and prevent the disease progression

Epigastric pain can be seen in a variety of digestive diseases, including functional and organic diseases. Functional diseases are aimed at relieving the symptoms and improving the quality of lives of patients; organic diseases such as peptic ulcer and chronic gastritis are aimed at relieving the symptoms and preventing the disease progression and recurrence.

4.2 Epigastric pain is treated with the treatment principle of "Smooth Relaxing of the Bowels" and "Soothing Stomach to relieve the pain" as the basic treatment method^[8, 18]

The pathogenesis of the onset of epigastric pain is "Without the smooth relaxing of the bowels, there will be pains", and the "Relaxing the Bowels" method is mostly used in the treatment to restore the ups and downs of the spleen and stomach to the normal level, regulate qi and blood to make them flow smoothly and the pain will be spontaneously stopped. For example, those with cold condensing should dispel cold and promote qi; those with food accumulation should eliminate accumulation and remove stagnation. Those with qi stagnation should soothe the liver and regulate qi. Those with blood stasis should promote the blood circulation and remove the blood stasis. Those with the chronic illness entering the collaterals should

the
Epigastric pain is often accompanied by stagnation of qi, and it is often compatible with the spicy qi-regulating products. Soothing the stomach to relieve the pain is the basic treatment method.^[19]

4.3 Syndrome Differentiation and Treatment

4.3.1 Cold and Evil Invading the Stomach Syndrome

Treatment Method: Warming the stomach to dispel cold, regulating qi to relieve pain..

Main Recipe: Liangfu Pills ("Good TCM Recipes Collection") and Hexiangsu Powders (TCM Recipe of the Bureau of Peaceful People's Welfare Pharmacy). Drugs: Galangal, Cyperus Rotundus, Perilla frutescens, tangerine peel, Roasted Licorice Root. Modification: For those who have expressed an aversion to cold and have headache, add clove, Rhizoma Chuanxiong; For those who have poor appetite and digestion, add medicated leaven, membranes of chicken gizzards

4.3.2 Diet Injures Stomach Syndrome

Treatment Method: Help digestion and guide stagnation, soothe stomach to relieve pain.

Main Recipe: Baohe Pills (*Danxi Heart Method*) or Citrus Aurantium Guiding Stagnation Pills (*Treatise on Internal and External Injury Differentiation*). Drugs: Hawthorn, Medicated Leaven, Pinellia ternata, Poria, tangerine peel, Semen Raphani, malt, Citrus aurantium, rhubarb, Radix scutellaria, coptis, Atractylodes macrocephala, Alisma orientalis. Modification: For patients with severe epigastric bloating, add Amomum villosum, betel nut; For patients with constipation, add mirabilite; For patients with full chest, add Perilla frutescens, Nepeta paniculata panicle.

4.3.3 The Liver and Stomach Discord Syndrome

Treatment Method: Regulating qi to relieve depression, and soothing the stomach to relieve pain

Main Recipe: Bupleurum Soothing the Liver Powder (*Medical Standards*). Drugs: Tangerine peel, bupleurum, Rhizoma Chuanxiong, cyperus rotundus, Citrus aurantium, white peony, licorice.

Modification: For patients with frequent belching, add agarwood, inula; For patients with acid reflux, add cuttlebone, calcined corrugated seeds; abdominal flank fullness, For patients with loose stools, add Codonopsis, fried Atractylodes.

4.3.4 Spleen and Stomach Damp Heat Syndrome

Treatment Method: Clearing away heat and removing dampness, regulating qi and stomach.

Main Recipe: Lianpu Yin (*On Cholera*). Drugs: Magnolia officinalis, Coptis chinensis, Acorus calamus, Pinellia ternata, tempeh, stir-baked Fructus Gardeniae, reed root. Modification: For those with nausea and vomiting, add bamboo, tangerine peels For those with poor appetite, add Medicated Leaven, grain sprouts, malt; For those with limb drowsiness, white and greasy tongue coating, add Coix seed, perrin;

4.3.5 Mixed Cold and Heat Syndrome

Treatment Method: Use the Xinwentong Power to relieve depression and clear away heat from bitter cold to reduce venting. Soothing the stomach to relieve stomach irritation.

Main Recipe: Banxia Xiexin Decoction (*Treatise on Febrile Diseases*). Drugs: Pinellia ternata, Radix Scutellaria, dried ginger, Ginseng, roasted licorice (Radix Glycyrrhizae), Rhizoma Coptidis, Jujube. Modification: For patients with severe dampness heat and sticky mouth, add coix seed, Peran; For patients with epigastric bloating, add bergamot, citron.

4.3.6 Blood Stasis Blocking the Stomach Syndrome

Treatment Method: Promoting the blood circulation to remove blood stasis, regulating qi and stomach.

Main Recipe: Danshen Drink (*Shi Fang Ge Kuo*) and Shixiao Power (TCM Recipes of the Bureau of Peaceful People's Welfare Pharmacy). Drugs: Salvia miltiorrhiza, Puhuang, Wulingzhi, Sandalwood, Panax notoginseng, Amomum villosum. Modification: For patients with severe epigastric pain, add Corydalis, turmeric; For patients with cold limbs and weak tongue and weak pulse, add Astragalus, cassia twig; For patients with dry mouth and throat, light tongue without coating, add dry Radix Rehmannia, Ophiopogon.

4.3.7 Stomach Yin Deficiency Syndrome

Treatment Method: Nourishing yin and generating body fluid, invigorating stomach to relieve pain.

Main Recipes: Yiwei Decoction (Differentiation of Febrile Diseases) and Paeonia Decoction (Treatise on Febrile Diseases). Drugs: Adenophora, Radix Ophiopogonis, dry Radix Rehmanniae, Polygonatum odoratum, White peony root, Licorice (Radix Glycyrrhizae) Modification: For those who are noisy, add Rhizoma Coptidis, Evodia rutaecarpa; For patients with more severe epigastric pain, add Magnolia officinalis, rose; For patients with dry stools, add hemp kernel, Trichosanthes kirilowii kernel.

4.3.8 Spleen and Stomach Deficiency Cold Syndrome

Treatment Method: Replenishing qi and invigorating the spleen, warming the stomach to relieve pain.
Recipe: Huangqi Jianzhong Decoction (*Synopsis of the Golden Chamber*). Drugs: Astragalus,

Cassia twig, White Peony root, Licorice (*Radix Glycyrrhizae*), Caramel, Jujube, Ginger.

Modification: For those with spitting and salivation, add *Atractylodes macrocephala*, ginger pinellia; For patients with acid reflux, add cuttlebone, calcined corrugated seeds; for patients with cold limbs, sore and weak waist and knees, add aconite, Sichuan pepper.

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4.4 Application of Chinese patent medicines

4.4.1 Qi Stagnation Stomach Pain Granules Soothing the liver to regulate qi, soothing the stomach to relieve pain. Used for treating the liver depression and qi stagnation, chest fullness and epigastric pain.

4.4.2 Dalitong Granules Clear away heat and relieve depression, soothe the stomach to reduce the adverse effects, and eliminate the stagnation through smooth urination. It is used for the syndrome of fullness caused by stagnation of heat in the liver and stomach, with symptoms of epigastric bloating, belching, anorexia, burning in the stomach, noisy pantothenic acid, epigastric pain and the dysmotility functional dyspepsia as shown in the above symptoms.

4.4.3 Weisu Granules Regulating qi to eliminate bloating, soothing the stomach to relieve pain. For the qi stagnation type of epigastric pain, the symptoms of epigastric pain have expanded to the two flanks, feeling comfortable after belching or flatulence. Epigastric pain will aggravate when emotional depression and anger occur, chest tightness and eating less, defecation is not smooth and chronic gastritis as shown in the above symptoms.

4.4.4 Moruodan Soothing the stomach to reduce the adverse effects, invigorating the spleen to relieve the swelling, regulating the collaterals to relieve pain. Used for chronic atrophic gastritis, with symptoms of stomachache, fullness, fullness, poor appetite and belching.

4.4.5 Compound Tianqi Stomachache Relief Capsules are used for acid suppression and pain relief, regulating qi and removing the blood stasis, warming the middle qi, invigorating the spleen, astringent hemostasis. Used for hyperchlorhydria, epigastric pain, gastric ulcer, duodenal ulcer and chronic gastritis.

4.4.6 Oriental Stomach Medicine Capsules Soothing the liver and stomach, regulating qi and promoting the blood circulation, clearing away heat to relieve pain. Used for epigastric pain, belching, acid swallowing, noisy, poor diet, irritability caused by the liver and stomach discord, blood stasis and heat blocking the collaterals, as well as gastric ulcer and chronic superficial gastritis.

4.4.7 Jinweilai Capsules Promoting qi and the blood circulation, and relieve pain in stomach. Used for acute and chronic gastroenteritis, gastric and duodenal ulcer caused by the liver and stomach qi stagnation and the damp heat stasis.

4.4.8 Jinghua Weikang Capsules Regulating qi and dispelling cold, clearing away heat and removing the blood stasis. It is used for epigastric distension and stuffy pain, belching, acid reflux, noise, and bitter taste caused by the Mixed Cold and Heat Syndrome with the symptoms of qi stagnation and blood stasis; duodenal ulcer as shown in the above symptoms..

4.4.9 Yanshen Jianwei Capsules Invigorating the spleen and stomach, regulating the cold and heat, and relieves the irritation pain by removing the cramps. Used for the chronic atrophic gastritis with deficiency in the essence and vital energy and the Mixed Cold and Heat Syndrome. Symptoms include epigastric fullness, pain, anorexia, belching, noise, and fatigue.

4.4.10 Sanjiu Weitai Granules Clearing away the heat and drying the dampness, promoting qi and blood circulation, and softening the liver to relieve pain. Used for stomachache caused by damp-heat, qi stagnation and blood stasis, with symptoms of abdominal dull pain, fullness and acid reflux, nausea and vomiting, noisy anorexia; superficial gastritis, erosive gastritis and atrophic gastritis, as shown in the above symptoms..

4.4.11 Weifuchun Tablets Invigorating the spleen and qi, promoting the blood circulation and detoxifying. Used for adjuvant therapy of precancerous lesion of chronic atrophic gastritis and postoperative gastric cancer, and chronic superficial gastritis belongs to the Spleen and Stomach Weakness Syndrome.

4.4.12 Biling Weitong Granules Promoting qi and the blood circulation, and relieving the pain in the stomach. Used for epigastric pain caused by qi stagnation and blood stasis; for chronic gastritis, see the above symptoms.

4.4.13 Weikang Capsules Invigorating qi and stomach, removing the blood stasis and stopping the bleeding, inhibiting the acid pain. It is used for patients with the epigastric pain caused by qi stagnation and blood stasis, fixed pain, noisy acid swallowing, gastric and duodenal ulcer and chronic gastritis, see the above symptoms.

4.4.14 Xiangsha Pingwei Granules Invigorating the spleen and drying the dampness. Used for treatment of the epigastric pain.

4.4.15 Buzhong Yiqi Granules (pills) Replenishing qi and enhancing yang. Used for weakness of spleen and stomach, subsidence of middle qi, fatigue, abdominal distension due to little food intake and chronic diarrhea.

4.4.16 Ganhai Weikang Capsules Invigorating the spleen and stomach, and relieving pain by convergence. Used for gastric and duodenal ulcers, chronic gastritis and reflux esophagitis caused by the spleen deficiency and qi stagnation.

4.4.17 Anweiyang Capsules Nourishing the middle and replenishing qi and detoxifying and building muscle. Used for maintenance treatment of gastric and duodenal ulcer and ulcer after healing, and has better curative effect for patients with deficiency cold type and qi stagnation type.

4.4.18 Fuzi Lizhong Pills Warming the middle and invigorating the spleen. Used for the spleen and stomach deficiency cold, epigastric and abdominal cold and pain, vomiting and diarrhea, and warming the hands and feet.

4.4.19 Wenweishu Capsule Warming the middle and nourishing the stomach and promoting qi to relieve pain. Used for stomachache caused by deficiency cold of middle energizer, with symptoms of epigastric cold pain, abdominal distension, belching, anorexia, little food intake, fear of cold and weakness; chronic atrophic gastritis and superficial gastritis, as shown in the above symptoms..

4.4.20 Xuehan Weitong Granules Replenishing qi and invigorating the spleen and warming the stomach to relieve pain. Used for stomachache caused by the spleen and stomach weakness, with symptoms of epigastric dull pain, relieved by warmth and pressing, aggravated by cold or fasting; for duodenal ulcer and chronic atrophic gastritis, see the above symptoms.

4.4.21 Xiaojianzhong Capsule (Granules) Warming and tonifying, relieving pain with urgency. Used for deficiency cold of spleen and stomach, abdominal pain, relieved by warmth and noisy acid swallowing, low food, stomach and duodenal ulcer.

4.5 Acupuncture Therapy

4.5.1 Acupuncture was performed at the acupoints of Foot-Yangming Meridian, Hand-Jueyin Meridian, Foot-Taiyin Meridian, and Ren Meridian. Prescription: Zusanli, Liangqiu, Gongsun, Neiguan, Zhongwan. Acupoints: For patients with the stomach cold add Liangmen; for patients with the stomach heat add Neiting; for liver depression add Qimen, Taichong; for the spleen and stomach deficiency cold, add Qi Hai, Pishu; for the stomach yin deficiency add Sanyinjiao, Taixi; for blood stasis add Xuehai, Geshu. Operation: filiform needle puncture, empirical purgation, deficiency syndrome with tonic, stomach cold and spleen and stomach deficiency cold appropriate moxibustion.

4.5.2 Moxibustion Cold External evils invade the stomach and spleen and stomach deficiency cold, take Zhongwan, Qihai, Medicated Leaven, Zusanli, Pishu, stomach Yu points to perform moxa stick moxibustion or ginger moxibustion (Zhongwan, Qihai, Zusanli points can also be performed warm acupuncture).

4.6 External Therapy

4.6.1 External application of spleen and stomach deficiency cold stomach pain, can be treated with external application. Cinnamomum cassia and clove were ground into fine powder, dressed with gauze, and externally applied at Zhongwan point for 10 to 20 minutes each time. Mix Evodia rutaecarpa with appropriate amount of white wine, pack into several packs with silk cloth, steam for about 20 min, ironing the abdomen, umbilicus and foot heart with medicine pack while hot, replace the medicine pack if cold, twice a day, 30 min each time; or take pain relief as the degree. In addition to the spleen and stomach deficiency cold syndrome, other stomach pain with this method is not effective.

4.6.2 Massage therapy uses Xingqi Zhitong treatment. Push, press, knead, rub, hold, rub, rub and so on. Acupoints and sites: Zhongwan, Tianshu, Ganshu, Pishu, Weishu, Sanjiaoshu, Shouzhongshu, Hand Sanli, Neiguan, Hegu, Zusanli, Qihai, epigastric region, back, shoulder and hypochondriac.

4.7 Diagnosis and Treatment Flow Chart

See Figure 1 for Details.

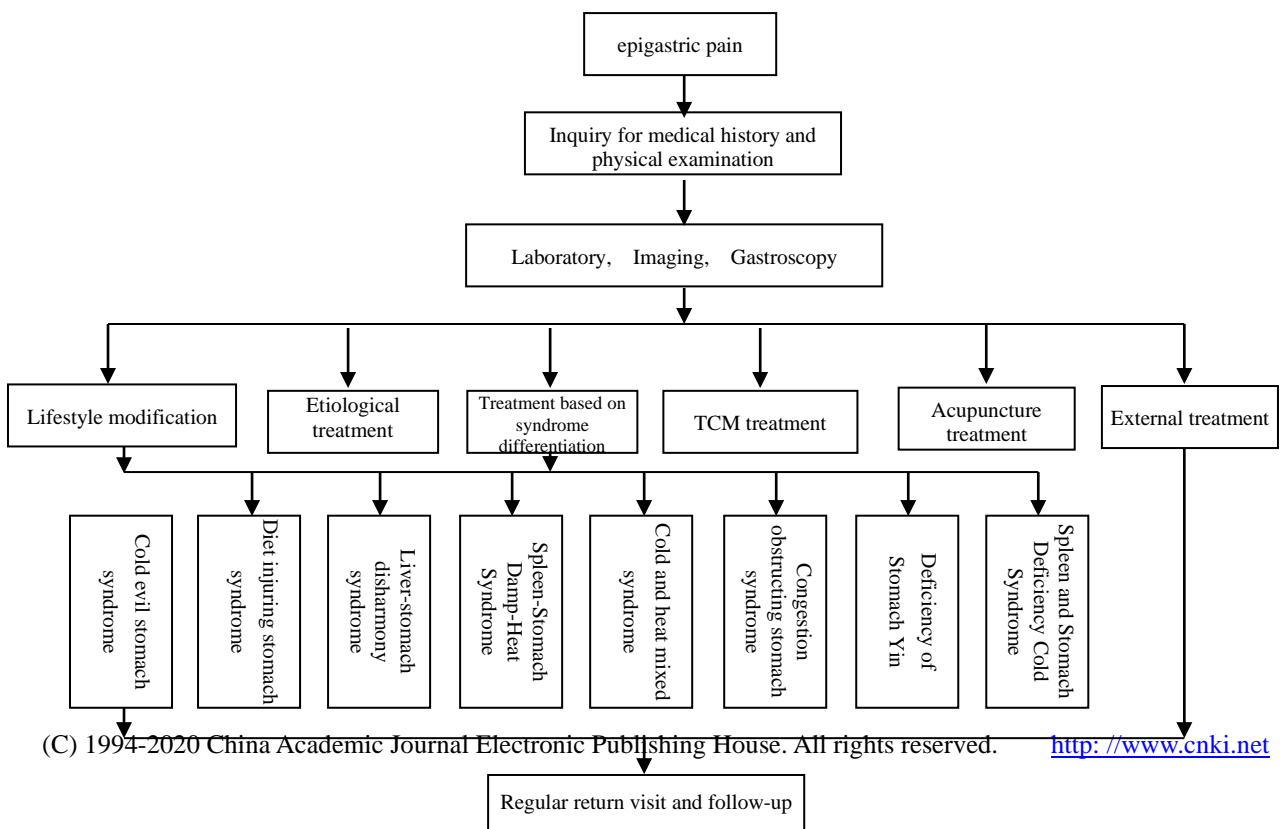


Figure 1 Flow chart of diagnosis and treatment of epigastric pain

5 Efficacy Evaluation

5.1 Pain Rating Scale

Epigastric pain can be assessed for the degree and frequency of pain and impact on life. Visual analogue scale (VAS) was used for pain severity [20]; the frequency of pain was quantified using the physician-reported outcome symptoms of the spleen and stomach.

5.1.1 Visual analogue scale This method is used for the assessment of pain and is widely used in clinical practice in China. The basic method is to use a vernier ruler about 10 cm in length, with 10 scales on one side and "0" and "10" at both ends, respectively, with 0 indicating no pain and 10 representing the most intolerable pain. In clinical use, place the graduated side facing away from the patient, so that the patient can mark the corresponding position on ruler that can represent his/her pain degree. The physician scores it according to the position marked by the patient. The clinical evaluation is excellent in 0 ~ 2, good in 3 ~ 5, fair in 6 ~ 8 and poor in > 8.

5.1.2 Epigastric pain-spleen and stomach disease physician reported outcome symptom quantification criteria Epigastric pain evaluation includes five aspects: frequency, duration, degree, impact of work and life, and drug intervention, with a total score of 0 to 15: no score 0, mild score 1, moderate score 2, and severe score 3. Concrete 1.

Table 1 Quantitative criteria for physician-reported outcome symptoms of spleen and stomach diseases

Evaluation content	None (score 0)	Mild (score 1)	Moderate (2 points)	Severe (score 3)
Frequency		One episode in > 3 days, sometimes without	One attack in 2-3 days, with frequent attacks	Daily Episodes
Duration		Resolved within 1 hour	Relief within 1 to 3 hours	> 3 hrs relief, not even a full day
Degree		Slight pain	Significant but tolerable pain	Unbearable pain
Work life impact		No influence on work and life	Affects work and life	Serious influence on work and life
Pharmacological intervention		Resolved without medication intervention	Requires medical intervention to resolve	Partial remission or even no remission after conventional medication

5.2 Evaluation of the efficacy of single symptom other than epigastric pain [21-22]

In addition to stomachache, the main symptoms of epigastric pain include upper abdominal distension, poor appetite, nausea, vomiting, noise, acid reflux, belching and other symptoms. These single symptoms can be evaluated using patient reported outcomes (PRO). The patient's discomfort symptoms are divided into 4 levels: 0, I, II and III: 1) grade 0: no symptoms, 0 points; 2) grade I: mild symptoms, no impact on daily life and work, 1 point; 3) grade II: moderate symptoms, some impact on daily life and work, 2 points; 4) grade III: severe symptoms, affecting daily life, difficult to adhere to work, 3 points.

After treatment, the efficacy evaluation of single symptom is divided into 4 conditions: 1) Clinical recovery: the original symptoms disappear. 2) Significantly effective: the original symptoms were improved by 2 grades. 3) Effective: the original symptoms were improved by 1 grade. 4) Ineffective: no improvement in the original symptoms or aggravation of the original symptoms;

5.3 Efficacy Evaluation Criteria for Epigastric Pain

Nimodipine method was used to calculate: efficacy index = [(pretreatment score - post-treatment score)/pretreatment score] × 100%. It is divided into 4 levels: 1) clinical recovery: the main symptoms and signs disappear or basically disappear, with efficacy index ≥ 95%; 2) significant effect: the main symptoms and signs are significantly improved, with 70% ≤ efficacy index < 95%; 3) effective: the main symptoms and signs are significantly improved, with 30% ≤ efficacy index < 70%; 4) ineffective: the main symptoms and signs are not significantly improved, or even aggravated, with efficacy index < 30%.

5.4 Quality of Life Evaluation

At present, the Chinese version of SF-36 [23] and other health survey scales are commonly used for evaluation in China.

6 Preventive Adjustment

Stomachache attack is mostly related to emotional distress, improper diet, cold and warm discomfort, overwork, so in the prevention should pay attention to the spirit, diet, cold and warm, work and rest. Those with persistent stomachache should enter liquid or semi-liquid diet within a certain period of time, eat small meals, have a light and easily digestible diet; avoid rough and multi-fiber diet, avoid eating strong tea, coffee, tobacco and alcohol and spicy and other predisposing factors; use salicylic acid, adrenocorticotrophic hormone and other western medicines with caution.

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