

Stomach

胃

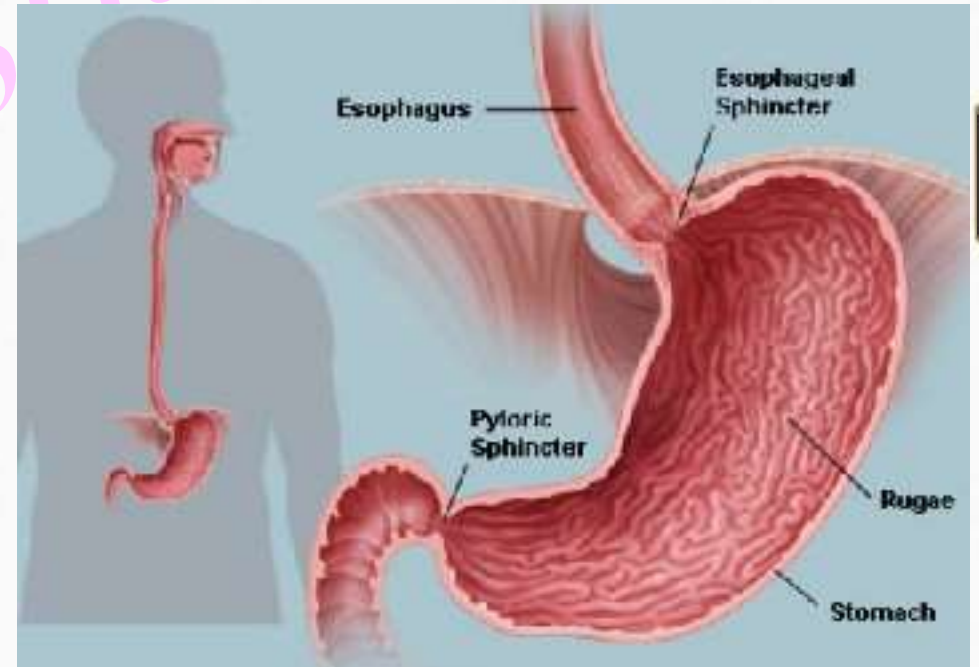


ay

stomach

Stomach

- The stomach receives food from the esophagus. As food reaches the end of the esophagus, it enters the stomach through a muscular valve called the lower esophageal sphincter.
- The stomach secretes acid and enzymes that digest food. The stomach muscles contract periodically, churning food to enhance digestion. The pyloric sphincter is a muscular valve that opens to allow food to pass from the stomach to the small intestine.



Three Parts of the Stomach

- The stomach is connected with the esophagus in the upper and the small intestine in the lower, usually divided into three parts:
- 上脘 shangwan (the upper part of the stomach 'fundus' and cardia)
- 中脘 zhongwan (the middle part of the stomach)
- 下脘 xiawan (the lower part of the stomach and pylorus) .

Sea of Grain and Water

- The stomach is also known as the "sea of grain and water" 胃者水谷之海 Food is digested here, then sent downward to the small intestine, where the essential substances are transformed and transported by the spleen to the whole body.
- The spleen and the stomach collectively are known as the “post heaven foundation,” 後天之本 that is, their proper nourishment establishes the foundation for a healthy life.

Stomach controls the receiving of food

- Anatomically the stomach has ridges and bumps inside it which assist in grinding the food up into chyme.
- Stomach Qi holds this ingested food so that it can be prepared “rotted and ripened” 腐熟水谷.
- Because the qi of the Stomach descends, it then passes prepared foods on to the Small Intestine so that the food doesn't sit too long in the stomach and stagnate.

Rebellion of Stomach Qi

- A rebellion of Stomach qi means the qi movement goes the wrong direction – up instead of down. This can look like nausea, vomiting, hiccups, and/or wretching.

Stomach rots and ripens the Food

- This refers to the breakdown of solid food into liquid form. The Spleen (pancreas) does the actual 'digestion,' extracting Food/Gu qi from the chyme that is produced in the Stomach.

Stomach controls the transportation of food essence to the Spleen

Stomach controls descending of Qi

- Just as the chyme (rotted/ripened food) descends to the Small intestine for nutrient extraction by the Spleen, waste products descend to the Large Intestine/colon, rectum, and anus. All are downward moving.
- If the Stomach is impaired, the Qi can flow in the opposite direction causing nausea, heartburn, and acid reflux. This is called **rebellious Qi**.
- Middle Jiao problems such as gas, bloating, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting and hiccups are widely seen in the clinic.

Stomach likes wetness

- The Stomach, as a Yang organ, has a built-in dry/heat and doesn't want more!
- You will note that this is in direct opposition to the Spleen's preferences.
- This is why the diet and constitution must be balanced in order for the wheel to spin correctly.

Spicy Food

- Because the Stomach is heat-oriented, if it becomes too hot (through eating too much spicy food, inflammatory diseases, emotions, etc.) the heat can transfer into the meridian so the patient in question might have heat symptoms anywhere the channel/meridian flows.
- That can manifest as a toothache sp. Upper teeth since the channel goes to the gums and teeth, as acne along the jawline, etc.

Dreams

- Dreams often have meaning in Chinese medicine. For stomach, they translate in the following:
 - When one dreams of large meals the Stomach is deficient
 - When one dreams of hunger the Spleen is deficient
 - When one dreams of seeing the sun or of heaviness and inability to move there is excess or damp heat in the body.

-
- Generally, it is considered that *whatever kind of disease occurs, if stomach qi is still strong, the prognosis will be good.*
 - It is said, "Stomach qi is the foundation of the human body. When there is stomach qi, there is life. When there is no stomach qi death will follow." Preserving stomach qi is therefore considered an important principle of treatment.