

**THERAPEUTICS**

(Treatment according to named disease)

病状別治療

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*The Kanpo Treatment  
of Digestive Disorders*

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*Portland, OR  
April 24/25 2010*

## Digestive Disorders from a Kanpo perspective

In Kanpo 漢方, Sino-Japanese Herbal Medicine, disorders & imbalances of the Stomach & intestines are taken very seriously & are considered to be the author of many diseases. The notion that the Earth constitutes the center & origin of good health (acquired energy) is well-established both in Japanese Herbology as well as in Acupuncture & moxibustion practices. E.g.: prophylactic moxibustion on S.36 every day for longevity or the inclusion of Ginger (Sheng Jiang), Jujube (Da Zao) and Licorice (Gan Cao) as “messenger” herbs in many formulas (all sweet in nature and nourishing to the middle jiao). Amongst the several 12<sup>th</sup> century Jin-Yuan period schools in China, the Center-Tonifying School of Li Dong Yuan held that treatment of Stomach/Spleen was at the heart of all successful treatment along with proper dietary practices. One of his primary students later travelled to Japan and his teachings in turn strongly influenced one of the major theoretical currents there, later to be known as the Gosei-Ha 後世派, Reformation School, started by Dosan Manase 曲直瀬道三 (1507-1594) and others. In this school, tonifying the Earth element became a standard clinical focus from the Edo Period to the current era.

It should be noted that, in TCM, most patterns of fluid imbalance are attributed to Spleen. However in Kanpo, since Spleen belongs to Yin, only chronic, degenerative illness affecting the digestive system where actual organic changes are taking place (e.g.: endocrine and PH dysfunction, ulceration, cancer etc.) are considered to be Spleen problems. These will be treated with true tonics e.g.: Four (or Six) Gentlemen / Si (Liu) Jun Zi Tang and their derivatives. However, in the majority of less severe cases, digestive problems often begin with functional imbalances (Qi). Accumulation & stagnation of pathological fluid (Suidoku 水毒) can cause many problems of digestion & naturally block the normal flow of Qi also. So in Kanpo, the Stomach is treated directly in many of these examples using herbs that descend Qi & fluids, resolve damp accumulations & promote normal T & T. In other words, most functional problems of the digestive system are considered Yang & therefore the Stomach (The “Sea of Fluids”) is treated first.