## Discussion on the Treatment of Lung Nodules based on the "Five Elements Theory of Qi"

Xin Wen<sup>1</sup>, Kai Wu<sup>1</sup>, Yide Hao<sup>1</sup>, Chenchen He<sup>1</sup>, Jinqiang Wang<sup>1</sup>, Meng Li<sup>2,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Shaanxi University of Chinese Medicine, Xianyang 712046, Shaanxi, China <sup>2</sup>Shaanxi Provincial Hospital of Chinese Medicine, Xi'an 710003, Shaanxi, China \*Correspondence Author

Abstract: With the continuous development of imaging technology, the detection rate of lung nodules is increasing. Currently, the treatment of western medicine is mainly based on regular follow-up examination, which fails to get effective intervention in the early stage, and there is a risk of cancerous transformation after a long period of time. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) has developed a unique understanding of lung nodules in the course of long-term diagnosis and treatment, and has developed many effective therapeutic means. Based on the theory of "five elements of qi", Mr. Li Mang believes that the pathogenesis of lung nodules is always attributed to the deficiency of yang, qi depression and phlegm congealment, with the spleen-earth deficiency of yang and lung-jin failure of declaring and descending as the core of the disease, and that the treatment should be based on the basic rules of warming yang, strengthening the spleen and regulating lungs to resolve phlegm, in order to restore the normal qi and qi function of the lungs and spleens.

**Keywords:** Lung nodule, Five elements theory of qi, Qi mechanism qi, Accumulation.

#### 1. Introduction

Lung nodules are focal, rounded, hyperdense solid or subsolid lung shadows ≤3 cm in diameter, without lung atelectasis, hilar lymph node enlargement or pleural effusion. With the widespread use of low-dose chest CT, the clinical detection rate of lung nodules can be as high as 35.5%, of which 0.54% are diagnosed as lung cancer [1]. Therefore, early diagnosis of lung nodules is crucial, and pathology is the "gold standard" for diagnosis of lung nodules, but this technique is invasive, time-consuming, poorly reproducible [2], and less acceptable to patients. At present, there is no definite conclusion on the etiology of pulmonary nodules in modern medicine, and there is a lack of specific treatment means. Clinical follow-up and observation is the main focus, and surgical resection is performed when necessary, and prolonged follow-up and monitoring can only confirm the diagnosis so that the patients' quality of life is relatively low, and there are certain limitations in the clinic. At the same time, long-term medical behavior is easy to cause patients' emotional tension, the study found that the combined anxiety and depression in patients with pulmonary nodules was as high as 42.4% and 26.4% [3]. Traditional medicine has developed a unique experience of dialectical treatment of lung nodules in the process of long-term diagnosis and treatment, which has unique advantages in the early intervention of small nodules and interruption of cancerous changes [4].

Professor Liu Huawei is a national famous traditional Chinese medicine practitioner who specializes in the treatment of respiratory diseases using traditional Chinese medicine and has rich experience in treating lung nodules. Based on the qi theory of Chinese medicine and relying on years of clinical practice, Prof. Liu Huawei has creatively linked the five elements, internal organs and qi theory of Chinese medicine organically, which is used to explain the pathogenesis of difficult internal medicine diseases and guide clinical treatment, and has formed the theory of "five elements and qi theory" [5]. Dr. Li Mang, deputy chief physician, collected his experience in treating pulmonary nodules, with remarkable clinical efficacy, and now combines clinical practice to explain the treatment of pulmonary nodules, in order to provide a theoretical basis for the treatment of pulmonary nodules.

### 2. "Five Elements Gasification Theory" **Chinese Medicine Theory Connotation**

Viscera is the body's physiological activities, the basic unit of life functions, the five elements is the theory of the construction of the tool, viscera theory with the five elements theory both generalized the viscera "wood is said to be straight, ""fire is said to be inflamed" "soil is said to be crop wall "" gold is said to be from the leather " water is said to run down 'physiological characteristics of the viscera, bowels, body, official orifices organically linked to the formation of overall view of the bowels ', ' and through the" take the image and compare". And through the "image comparison" of the human body and the natural environment would like to link up to form a "holistic view of man and nature". Between the viscera, viscera and the natural environment is not static, always in dynamic equilibrium, the realization of the balance through the five elements "birth, grams and control" to coordinate the process of the formation of the gas movement changes, that is, the gas machine, showing "lifting and moving in and out". "Dispersion and aggregation" of the law of movement. However, when the "lifting in and out" is out of order, "discrete aggregation" is out of order, it will destroy the dynamic balance of the five elements, which is manifested as multiplying and insulting (anti-gram), resulting in the disorder of qi, qi and qiization out of order. Qigong qi hua is the specific expression of life activities, is centered on the five organs, the body's material, energy transformation process of the high degree of generalization. Under the physiological state, there are "Yanghua" and "Yinhua". "Yanghua" means Yanghua Qi, which refers to the process of gi transformation that manifests itself in functional changes such as promotion and warmth. The term "yinization" means the formation of yin, which refers to the process of nourishment, moistening and other material changes in giization. In the body's metabolic process, the dietary material through the gasification in order to change into gas, blood,

fluid, essence for the body's nourishment, such as the "Suwen meridians and veins," "Drinking in the stomach, swimming overflow of vital essence, up to the spleen, the spleen dispersal of vital essence, up to the lungs, through the adjustment of the waterway, the lower bladder. Water essence four cloth, five meridians parallel .....", through the qi of the internal organs to achieve the body's energy transmission. If the yang chemistry is not as good as, the body function is low, the viscera function is weak, part of the dietary material becomes phlegm dampness, water drink, blood stasis and other intermediate metabolites, to become the human body secondary pathogenic factors. Tumors, nodules, etc. are the interlocking forms of these metabolites. Yang deficiency and water flooding condense into phlegm. If yin is too much, too much material aggregates in the body, and the invisible qi coagulates into a tangible evil, then phlegm, dampness, water and blood stasis will be inter-conjugated to form tumors, nodules and so on.

# 3. Analyzing the Pathogenesis of Lung Nodules based on the Theory of "Five Elements and Oi"

Lung nodules are gradually recognized in modern medicine with the continuous development of diagnostic imaging technology, and there is no corresponding name for them in Chinese medicine. With the mutual learning of Chinese and Western medicine, TCM practitioners have classified lung nodules as "cough", "accumulation", "phlegm nucleus" and other diseases according to their symptomatic characteristics or morphological features [6]. The key to diagnosis and treatment of diseases in Chinese medicine is to grasp the core of the disease mechanism, different medical practitioners have different academic schools and academic experience, although the lung nodule has a different understanding of different means of treatment, but clinically proven to be effective. For example, a study based on literature analysis [7] found that "qi deficiency, qi stagnation, phlegm, and blood stasis" are the basic pathological changes affecting the development of lung nodules, which reflects the core disease mechanism of lung nodules. Lung nodules are "accumulation" diseases characterized by lumps and nodules, which are mainly due to the fact that pathological products such as qi, phlegm, blood stasis and so on are agglutinated with each other in the lungs, and become tangible lumps over time [8]. Based on the author's study of the "five elements of qi theory", I believe that its pathogenesis is closely related to qi qi, and its core pathology can be summarized as yang hua is not as good as qi, qi depression and phlegm conglomeration.

Yang is not as good as it should be, i.e., the transpiration and vaporization function of Yang cannot promote the metabolism of Yin essence substances, resulting in the accumulation of phlegm, blood stasis and other pathological products in the body. The author believes that insufficient qiization of the spleen and earth, and failure of transportation are the root of the disease. "Suwen Menstruation and Veins": "Spleen qi disperses the essence, which returns to the lungs", and the dietary materials are transported to the lungs through the physiological function of the spleen, which is the main transportation and transformation function, so that the essence is transported to the lungs, and at this time if there is insufficient transportation of the spleen and insufficient

qiization of essence and essence, then phlegm and drink and other pathology products can easily be formed, which become the material source of the development of pulmonary nodules. If the spleen's transportation is insufficient, it will easily form pathological products such as phlegm and beverages, which become the source of lung nodules. Li Zhongzi's "Compendium of Evidence" says, "The spleen is the source of phlegm, and the lungs are the storage of phlegm", and the two elements, earth and gold, are mutually reinforcing, further elaborating that the spleen, as the root of material metabolism, is susceptible to phlegm attacking the lungs even though the phlegm is born in the spleen. Spleen and stomach is the hub of qi lifting and lowering, spleen and stomach qi is the power of the generation of the five organs, is the flow of qi and blood and the source of the spirit of the source, the spleen and earth qi is not as good as, then all the organs are affected by its [9]. The Ancient Chinese Medicine of Circular Motion mentions that "the central qi is like an axis, the four dimensions are like a wheel, and the axis runs the wheel ....." The Four Sacred Sources of the Heart states that "when the middle qi fails, elevation is stifled. ..... Lung gold right stagnation and gas disease", Huang Yuan Yu 'a gas flow' theory [10] 'middle jiao deficiency, not only the viscera qi function malfunction, but also affect the qi operation and other organs, resulting in the whole body qi disorders'. In summary, the spleen is the root of disease development, the spleen and soil qi is not as good as, easy to cause phlegm, dampness, water and drink condensation and become nodules of the disease.

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Qi depression and phlegm coagulation, national medical master Wang Qingguo believes that the stagnation of qi is the basis of all nodular diseases [11], poor operation of qi, qi depression and fluid stagnation, stagnation of qi and blood coagulation, which can easily lead to fluid stasis and blood stagnation and become nodular diseases. Su Wen'To True to Great Theory, "all qi is depressed, all belong to the lung", emphasizing the central role of the lung in respiration and qi regulation. Lung master of a body of gas, coordination of the whole body of the operation of the qi, if its XuanDaSuShi function failure, the lung gas closed, through the regulation of the waterway function failure, gas stagnation JinZhuo, the water dampness, phlegm and turbid storage, and the lungs main section, towards the hundred veins, the lungs gas closed, affecting the ZongQi through the heart veins of the line of blood, the blood line is not smooth to stay for the blood stasis, the water dampness, phlegm, stasis, and blood stagnation difficult to be divided, and change of the nodule of the disease. To summarize, lung depression is the key pathogenesis of lung nodules, as it leads to the loss of smoothness of qi, imbalance of blood and fluids, and phlegm and blood stasis.

In summary, lung nodules are caused by abnormal function of qi, and accumulation of pathological products such as qi, phlegm and blood stasis as a result of failure of qi synthesis. Specifically, it is manifested by the change of the function of the spleen-earth, which "rises and clears" and "is the main transporter", which is manifested by the failure of the "yang" aspect of qi, and by the lung-jin, which "regulates the waterways" and "is the main regulator of nodules", which is manifested by the change of the substance of the lungs. Lung gold "regulates the water channel", "the main section" and other material changes, manifested in the "yin" aspect of the cohesion is too much, so its pathology is summarized as Yang

is not as good as, qi and phlegm condensation.

## **4.** Treatment of Lung Nodules based on the Theory of "Five Elements of Qi"

Lung nodules are the result of insufficient yang transformation and excessive yin transformation, which leads to qi depression and phlegm condensation in the lungs, resulting in impassable qi, loss of transportation and transformation by the spleen, and loss of declination and descent by the lungs. The aim of treatment is to restore the normal qi function of the spleen and lungs. If yang is not enough, it is better to tonify qi and yang, and if yin is too much, it is better to warm it and eliminate it, and also to regulate depression and resolve phlegm. Therefore, Yang is not enough and qi is out of order is the root of lung nodules, and qi depression and phlegm condensation is the key pathogenesis of lung nodules. Treatment of pulmonary nodules should be based on warming yang and strengthening the spleen, regulating the lung and resolving phlegm, regulating qi and emphasizing qiization.

#### 4.1 Warming Yang and Strengthening the Spleen

The term "phlegm-drinking" was first introduced by Zhang Zhongjing in the Essentials of the Golden Chamber. Broadly speaking, phlegm-drink refers to the general term of phlegm-drink diseases, including phlegm-drink, hanging-drink, overflowing-drink and branch-drink, and "phlegm-drink" is the core of the pathogenesis of such diseases. The term "phlegm-drinking" is the core of the disease mechanism. "When one is sick with phlegm-drinking, warm herbs should be used to harmonize it" Phlegm-drinking is a yin evil, and the treatment of this kind of disease is to use warm herbs to warm it up and neutralize it. Su Wen - to the true to be a great theory of "all the diseases of the water, clear and cold, all belong to the cold", "cold hot", "Su Wen regulating menstruation theory", "gas and blood, like the warm and cold, cold is crying and can not be, the warm is eliminated and to go! "Yang chemistry is not as good as, easy to become phlegm and water, phlegm and drink bias cold, easy to deter Yang, pathology, vicious circle, day long turn into nodules and other tangible things. Lung nodule disease for a long time, positive and evil competition, gi weakened, warming is not as good as, warming is the key rule of nodule dissipation [12]. Therefore, the author believes that the treatment of phlegm and drink should be based on the treatment of the spleen first, invigorate the spleen yang qi to warm the phlegm and drink, spleen health and phlegm clearing, and eliminate the material basis of nodule formation. In the clinical process, the tutor often uses Six Gentlemen Soup to regulate qi and strengthen the spleen, drying dampness and resolving phlegm. Six Gentlemen Soup is from "Taiping Huimin Hejian Burei Fang", which is composed of Four Gentlemen Soup plus Semixia and Chen Pi, in which ginseng is sweet and warm to replenish the vital energy of the spleen and stomach: Atractylodes macrocephala is sweet, warm, bitter and dry to help ginseng replenish the vital energy and strengthen the spleen; Poria is sweet and light, which is light and seepage and benefit dampness; Chen Pi, which is pungent and warm to regulate vital energy, strengthen the spleen and remove dampness and resolve phlegm; Semixia can remove dampness and resolve phlegm, eliminating lumps and dispersing knots; Glycyrrhiza can replenish the spleen and benefit vital energy to remove phlegm and relieve cough, and regulate the various medicines; or add Huo Yao, Suh Ye, etc. to remove the turbidity of the fragrance and to wake up the spleen. The combination of all the medicines will make the spleen yang healthy, and the qi will be as normal.

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#### 4.2 Regulate Lungs and Resolve Phlegm

Miscellaneous Diseases Source and Flow Rhinoceros Candle "evil accumulation in the chest, blocking the airway, the gas can not pass for phlegm ..... for the blood ..... and then formed into a shape and block". Lung nodules are located in the lungs, and are caused by stagnation of lung qi and storage of phlegm and blood. Prof. Zhu Zhusheng believes that the lungs master a body of gas, coordination of the whole body viscera, meridians of the gas, and the lungs for the source of water, through the regulation of the waterway, the Division of the liquid Xuanfa Suhui, the lung gas is not declared, the liquid distribution is not normal, stopping in the lungs, the condensation of phlegm drink, the accumulation of internal birth [13]. Danxi Xinfa, "phlegm is a thing that rises and falls with the qi, and it is nowhere to be found." The "good treatment of phlegm is not to treat phlegm and treatment of gas, gas is smooth, then a body of fluids with the smooth." Gas is the original power of the body's qi, blood and fluid operation, qi is not smooth, will make phlegm and drink stagnation, and then induce the disease, the treatment when the first gas [14]. The tutor used Er Chen Tang. Wen Bile Tang, Scrofula Pill and other qi products to regulate qi and stagnation, and resolve phlegm and disperse joints. In Er Chen Tang, Chen Pi is pungent and warm to regulate qi and stagnation; it is combined with half-summer to dry dampness, resolve phlegm, eliminate swelling and disperse nodules; in Wen Bile Tang, Hovenia Citrus is hard to move qi and break nodules; in Scrofula Pill, Xuan Shen is bitter and salty to soften and disperse nodules; Zhe Beimu is bitter and sweet to clear heat and resolve phlegm, disperse nodules and eliminate carbuncles; oyster is salty and cold to soften and disperse nodules; a high-frequency complex network analysis of traditional Chinese medicines found that[15], National Physician Han Mingxiang mostly used the Scrofula Pill as an addition to treating nodules of the lungs. The two medicines are used to regulate qi, and the combination of all the medicines together can regulate qi and stagnation, resolve phlegm and dissipate the function of tuberculosis.

#### 5. Typical Case

Patient, female, 57 years old, from Xianyang, Shaanxi Province, was first seen on April 14, 2023. Complaint: lung nodules were found for more than 2 years. Chest CT showed: slightly increased texture in both lungs. There were multiple solid nodules in the upper lobe of the right lung and the middle lobe of the right lung (the larger nodule was about 9 mm in diameter), with partial calcification. Fibrous streak foci in the medial segment of the right middle lobe and lingual segment of the left upper lobe. Self-reported chest tightness and shortness of breath, no cough, coughing up a small amount of white sticky sputum, coughing up sputum is unfavorable, dry mouth, bitter mouth, food can be eaten, sleep can be, bowel movement. The tongue was reddish, the moss white and greasy, and the pulse was fine. Denied history of

allergy and other major diseases. TCM diagnosis: lung nodule (Qi stagnation and phlegm condensation). Treatment: Warming yang and resolving qi, regulating qi and resolving phlegm were the mainstay. Propose Huang Lian Wen Bile Tang combined with Citrus Aurantium Six Gentlemen Tang plus subtractions. Prescription: Guang Huo Xiang 15g, Jiang Han Xia 12g, Perilla leaf 10g, Poria 15g, Atractylodes macrocephala 10g, Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae 10g, Bamboo Root 10g, Platycodon Grandiflorus 10g, Huang Huanglian Tablet 3g, Bran Fried Citrus Aurantium 10g, Roasted Glycyrrhiza Glutinosa 6g. 14 dosages, one payment / day, 2 times / day divided service.

On May 05, 2023, the second consultation, chest tightness and shortness of breath relieved after taking medicine, still dry mouth, bitter mouth, pale tongue, white greasy moss, fine pulse. Proposed Hovenia tangerine six gentleman's soup combined with anti-scrofula pill plus reduction. Prescription: Bran fried Citrus aurantium 10g, Platycodon grandiflorus 15g, Codonopsis pilosula 15g, Bran fried Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae 15g, Poria cocos 10g, Ginger semixia 12g, Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae 10g, Roasted Glycyrrhiza Glabra 6g, XuanShenGen 15g, ZheBEIJIANGMU 15g, Piper betelvetum 30g, Oyster 30g decocted first. 14 dosages, one payment/day, 2 times/day divided service.

On May 26, 2023, the third diagnosis, after taking the medicine, chest tightness and shortness of breath were obviously relieved, only the morning mouth is bitter, tongue is red, moss is white and greasy, pulse is thin. Proposed Hovenia tangerine six gentleman's soup plus subtraction. Prescription: patchouli 15g after the next, ginger and half-sia 10g, perilla leaf 15g, poria 15g, fried atractylodes macrocephala 10g, Chen Pi 10g, Platycodon grandiflorus 15g, fried citrus aurantium glutinosa 10g, baked licorice 6g, thick Park 10g, ginseng slices 15g. 14 payment, a payment / day, 2 times / day divided service, 200ml each time.

On March 11, 2024, chest CT showed: (1) solid nodules in the upper lobe of the right lung and the middle lobe of the right lung (about 4mm in diameter), partly accompanied by calcification, and follow-up was recommended; (2) striated foci in the middle lobe of the right lung; (3) texture of the two lungs had increased in intensity; (4) fatty liver had been detected; and the left kidney was cystic.

Comment: Lung nodule is the manifestation of abnormal qi mechanism and gi stagnation and phlegm condensation in the lungs. The patient's main symptom of chest tightness, shortness of breath, cough and phlegm, is the stagnation of lung qi, declaring and descending failure, stagnation of phlegm condensation of the phenomenon, and the patient's course of the disease for a long time, the evil and positive fight, positive qi deficiency, shortness of breath, cough and phlegm is not conducive to the phenomenon of the deficiency of lung, spleen and qi, dry mouth, bitter mouth is the suspicion of the heat for a long time. Treatment, seize the disease for a long time, the spleen and soil yang insufficiency, transport and transformation failure of the pathogenesis of the root, "the lung is the storage of phlegm apparatus", lung depression phlegm condensation of the key mechanism, taking into account the shortcomings of the day-long transformation of heat, the first diagnosis of Huanglian warm gallbladder soup

to warm yang qi, Hovenia tangerine and six gentleman's son soup to strengthen the spleen and regulate qi to resolve phlegm, second diagnosis of the patient's symptoms are reduced, the main Hovenia tangerine and six gentleman's son soup Kuangfuxu spleen and stomach! The patient's symptoms were reduced in the second consultation, and the main treatment was Hovenia Luk Jun Zi Tang to restore the spleen and stomach, which was essential for gasification and Qi, and the Anti-Scrofula Pill to resolve phlegm and disperse knots. In the third diagnosis, the patient's chest tightness and shortness of breath improved significantly, dry mouth and bitter mouth basically disappeared, and the effect was not changed, and the patient kept the prescription and continued to advance, which had a good effect. The patient in this case has a long history of disease, treatment to keep the prescription to follow, before and after a year long, is not only the test of the patient, but also the test of the doctor, is the "disease as a mountain, after the disease such as silk" a true portrayal.

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#### 6. Conclusion

Qigong qiqing is the specific expression of life activities, is centered on the five organs, the body's material, energy transformation process of a high degree of generalization. Although the lung nodule disease position in the lung, but clinically not only for the lung an organ disease, but more inter-organ interaction, qi elevation disorder caused by disease, so the treatment should be a unified view of the five organs, pay attention to the balance of yang and yin, grasp the spleen and earth in the qi, in the material metabolism in the core position of the lung, the lung gold master of the body of the qi, the main regulator of the waterway, the main section of the key physiological, warming and strengthening of the spleen, the lung and phlegm as the basic rule, to restore normal qi qi function of the lung and spleen, to restore normal qi qi function of the body, to restore normal qi qi function. Restore the normal qi qi function of the lungs and spleen.

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