

Acupunctural Therapy for Cerebrovascular Diseases

by Dr. Situ Hansun

Cerebral vascular disease is a common illness and one that severely impairs health, threatens life, and affects one's ability to perform. It is reported that cerebrovascular diseases are among the major causes of death. Therefore, their effective prevention and cure has become one of the important issues in the field of medicine, within as well as outside China.

Cerebrovascular diseases include cerebral hemorrhage, cerebral thrombosis, cerebral embolism, subarachnoid hemorrhage, cerebral angrospasm, and so on. The causes of the various forms of this disease vary. Cerebral hemorrhage, for instance, is due to hypertension and arteriosclerosis. Blood vessel stenosis, change of blood composition, or slowing down of the blood flow may lead to cerebral thrombosis; while emboli, whether in solid, liquid, or air form, block up cerebral vessels and will cause cerebral embolism. The factors that bring about subarachnoid hemorrhage are deformity of arterial and venous vessels, rupture of congenital aneurysm, hypertension, arteriosclerosis, hemopathy, and so on. Cerebral angrospasm is due to cerebral arteriole spasm, which in turn leads to cerebral tissue, hypoxemia, and edema.

The common term used in China for cerebrovascular diseases are "stroke" (中風), "tsu-jung" (卒中), "lei-jung" (類中), "da-jwei" (大厥), and others. Detailed descriptions of the symptoms of these diseases are found in the following ancient Chinese medical texts: *The classic of Acupuncture* (針灸甲乙經); *A Discussion of Pathological Treatment by Symptoms* (諸病源流); *The classic of Internal Medicine* (內經論), *The Complete Book of Home Remedies* (金匱要略), and there are more. All these texts maintain that the primary factors involved in strokes are impairment of the heart, liver, and kidneys in old age, thus causing an imbalance of *yin* and *yang* forces in the body. A weakness in the *yin* results in excessive *yang*, which produces fire in the body. That fire then transforms into wind. When that form of energy and blood rises and circulates to the brain, it may cause a blockage of the sinuses and acupuncture meridians. In such cases, the patient will feel delirious, or in more severe cases, may lapse into a coma.

In later generations, physicians were of the theory that strokes occur when there is an excess of fiery energy in the heart and deficient renal fluids, so that the body is unable to control it. This results in the weakening of *yin* and a strengthening of *yang*, to the point that the overbearingly hot energy causes delirium or drowsiness, the bone and muscle lose their ability to function, and so the patient suddenly passes out.

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(see this issue's Bodhi Stand for
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