

Summary of Chapter 23 of the Sù Wèn

Xuān Míng Wǔ Qì – Expounding on the Energies of Five Viscera

Paragraph 1

	Gān	Fèi	Xīn	Shèn	Pí
Taste	sourness	acridness	bitterness	salty	sweetness

Paragraph 2

Diseased Zàng:

	Xīn	Fèi	Gān	Pí	Shèn
Symptomatology	burping	coughing	talkativeness	acid regurgitation (swallowing)	yawning sneezing

Diseased Fǔ:

	Wèi	Dà Cháng & Xiǎo Cháng	Páng Guāng	Dǎn
Symptomatology	vomiting	diarrhea edema	difficult urination or incontinence	easily angered

Paragraph 3

When the refined energies of the five solid organs (zàng) being merged into one organ, the organ's energy will become excessive (shí) and disease will occur.

When merged into	Then
Xīn	desire for laughing, hysteria, giggling
Fèi	sorrowful, grief, crying
Gān	anger, excess of worrying, Gān → Pí
Pí	anxiety, timid, Pí → Shèn
Shèn	terrified, fright

Paragraph 4

Aversion to:

	Xīn	Fèi	Gān	Pí	Shèn
Aversion to	Rè	Hán	Fēng	Shī	Zǎo

Paragraph 5

Secretions.

	Xīn	Fèi	Gān	Pí	Shèn
Secretions	sweat	mucus (nasal discharge) snivel	tears	digestive fluids (serous saliva)	saliva (mucous saliva) spittle

Paragraph 6, 8

The five kinds of tastes are contraindicated to certain diseases of the five solid organs.

	Pungent (acrid) xīn – 辛	Salty xián – 咸	Bitter kǔ – 苦	Sweet gān – 甘	Sour suān – 酸
Property	dispersing Qì	drains bones	purges Xuè	bloats flesh	contracts tendons
Avoid this food when	Diseases of Qì	Bone diseases	Xuè diseases	Diseases of flesh	Diseases of tendons

Note: in the text of Wu [2]: the Chinese text and English text are not consistent.

English: "... the bitter taste affects the blood ... the salty taste affects the bone."

Chinese: "... the salty taste affects the blood ... the bitter taste affects the bone."

Wu [2] uses the text from the Tàì Sù in his English translation. This seems to be the correct version.

Maoshing Ni [4] translates it as "Salty taste purges the blood ...Bitter taste drains the bones..."

Paragraph 7

The five occurrences are:

Yīn Shèn illness manifests in Bone.

Yáng Xīn illness manifests in Xuè.

Yīn Pí illness manifests in Muscle.

Yáng Gān associates with Spring, but its disease stems from Winter.

Yīn Fèi associates with Autumn, but its disease stems from Summer.

Paragraph 8

The five pathogenic manifestations.

When pathogen enters:

Yáng level → manic (Rè disturbs one's consciousness).

Yīn level → bì or stagnation (Xuè circulation disturbed).

When pathogen is struggling at:

Yáng level → vertigo, dizziness, and problems of the head.

Yīn level → hoarseness, lose one's voice.

When pathogen travels from:

Yáng level → Yīn level: symptoms quit down, patient becomes calm.

Yīn level → Yáng level: outbursts of anger.

Paragraph 9

The five pathogenic pulses

When

Fú Mài of autumn in spring	(normal a xiàn mài)
Chén Mài of winter in summer	(normal a hōng mài)
Xiàn Mài of spring in late summer	(normal a huá mài)
Hōng Mài of summer in autumn	(normal fú mài)
Huá Mài of late summer in winter	(normal chén mài)

This is the controlling (kè) cycle of the wǔ xíng.

Paragraph 10

Corresponding attributes of spirit.

Xīn stores Shén – Mind.

Fèi stores Pò – Corporeal Soul; courage, boldness.

Gān stores Hún – Ethereal Soul; intuition.

Pí stores Yì ; intellect, thought, idea.

Shèn stores Zhì – Will; will power, volition.

Paragraph 11

Functions of the five Zàng.

Xīn : Xuè circulation; controls blood vessels.

Fèi : spreads Qì to skin surface; controls skin and body hair.

Gān : stores Xuè; controls tendons and nails.

Pí : transformation and transports of water and cereals; controls flesh and muscles.

Shèn : stores Jīng, generates marrow; controls bone and marrow.

Paragraph 12

The five overstrains.

Prolonged	overstrains	injures
Staring	Xīn	Xuè
Lying	Fèi	Qì
Sitting	Pí	Muscle
Standing	Shèn	Bone
Walking	Gān	Tendons

Paragraph 13

See paragraph 9.

Bibliography

- [1] Wiseman, N. and Feng, Ye, *A practical dictionary of Chinese Medicine*, paradigm publications, 1998.
- [2] Nelson, Liansheng Wu and Andrew, Qi Wu, *Yellow Emperor's Canon Internal Medicine*, China Science & Technology Press, 1999.
- [3] Unschuld, P., *Huang Di Nei Jing, nature, knowledge, imagery in an ancient Chinese medical text*, University of California Press, 2003.
- [4] Maoshing Ni, *The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Medicine*, Shambala, 1995.