



ACUPUNCTURE

Spirits of the Points: The Spleen Official (Pt. 3)

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Editor's Note: Part 1 ([October 2020](#)) and Part 2 ([January 2021](#)) of this article discussed spleen points 1-3 and 4-6, respectively.

Spleen 7: Leaky Valley

A valley is a low-lying place between two hills or mountains, typically with a river running through it. The valley contains the life-giving waters essential to the earth's fertility; to the plants, animals and people that live in its proximity. This nourishing water must be contained so it is available in proper amounts and does not leak away.

If nourishment cannot be contained, it is of no use. It leaks out through the cracks, leaving us empty, unable to properly hold and derive benefit from the harvest. Physically, fluids can leak into the lower ankles and feet, causing swelling. Edema or emaciation in any part of the body can be a call for this point.



Some patients in need of the point are constantly hungry, but are unsatisfied, lethargic and un nourished by the food they eat. They may be unable to maintain a proper body weight. Mentally, they may be unable to remember and glean the wisdom of their experience. It is all quickly forgotten.

Spiritually, the gift of being "at home," wherever one is, cannot be achieved or maintained. Instead, one is restless, anxious and unsettled. This point can patch the leaks at whatever level they exist to restore the patient to a place of security, nourishment and fulfillment.

Spleen 8: Earth Motivator

This point is used to break up hard, inert and unresponsive earth. In some patients, earth can be like concrete - dried, stuck, tired and weak; lacking the motivation and ability to move. Spleen 8 is akin to bulldozing the earth before planting - breaking it up into small pieces that can then receive warmth and water. The seeds can then penetrate, sprout and extend roots.

The spleen, as the Official of Transportation and Distribution, is likened to a fleet of trucks that transport food to the people. Even if there is sufficient food, if it doesn't get to its correct destinations, the people will still starve. An imbalance in the spleen can be, metaphorically, like the trucks getting stuck, breaking down, or the drivers getting lost.

When the transporter Official gets stuck, this point can get it moving. The earth-imbalanced patient in need of this point may be physically inert, exhausted, lazy and unmotivated. Mentally, one may be stuck, stubborn, obstinate and immovable. Spiritually, one may lack a sense of contentment and being at home; or may feel imprisoned, without motivation or the possibility of forward movement.

Spleen 9: Yin Mound Spring

A spring occurs when pressure causes a natural flow of groundwater onto the earth's surface. It is

constantly being fed, refreshed and replenished from an underground source. Yin refers to the shady side of a mountain or hill. In the context of spirit, yin embodies the less obvious aspects of ourselves: the small inner workings and truths.

This spring, high on a mound, feeds the earth with its cooling, clear effervescence. It brings the potential of fertility and new life. It offers a quiet, inner perspective to patients who need to be focused, cleansed of outer distractions, and look within.

As the water point of the meridian, it regulates the distribution of fluid. Poor distribution can result in swellings, masses and painful accumulations. Too much water can cause one to drown at the level of the mind, awash in thoughts and fearful concerns. One may be a constant meddler in the lives of others or be overly self-absorbed.

The earth element is associated with the figure of the mother, the provider of nourishment and care. A good mother neither overwhelms nor ignores her children.

Too little water can dry out the earth, rendering it hard and infertile. Mentally, one can similarly become closed-minded, hard, bitter, and lacking in compassion for oneself or others. In either extreme, this point can be a welcome relief, providing a sober look inside oneself, calm and collected, wise and level-headed in times of stress.

Author's Note: English translations of point names are those taught by Professor J.R. Worsley and appear in *Traditional Chinese Acupuncture, Volume 1: Meridians and Points* by J.R. Worsley; published by Element Books, 1982.

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