



# Prevent Gastroesophageal Reflux by Eating Properly

**Dr. Wu Pei-Ying, Physician, Traditional Chinese Medicine Dept.,  
Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital**

Mr. Chen, 35 years old, came to the TCM outpatient clinic due to long term bloating and acid reflux. His career was in interior decoration, which comes with hectic daily schedule, short lunch break. He acquired the habit of eating fast, wrapping a meal in less than 10 min. Also, the job itself is labor intensive, requiring frequent heavy lifting throughout the day. To rehydrate, he was accustomed to drinking icy drinks in summer and cold drinks in winter. Influenced by the construction site culture, he developed the habit of drinking energy enhancers on daily basis. He was troubled by stomach bloating for a while now, and the symptom was particularly apparent after a meal; after eating desserts and bread, eating too much, or when nervous, acid reflux would occur. Due to the occupied



work schedule during weekdays, he preferred to sit at home and be a couch potato watching T.V., sleeping late and wake up late.

Mr. Chen was slightly obese, a little pale in the face, with dark red tongue



color, fat tongue body and white coating, pulse moisten and hollow; had daily defecation habit, stool lacked shape, sticky in texture, with strong odor. For treatment, Mr. Chen visited the TCM clinic once a week for the recuperation of spleen and stomach qi through prescription, accompanied by acupuncture, and adjustments were made regarding his lifestyle and dietary habit. Few months later, the issues of bloating and acid reflux were relieved.

Mr. Chen was accustomed to eating fast, which leads to indigestion, and overburdened his stomach. On top of that, a long habit of drinking icy and stimulating drinks had affected the functionality of his stomach and led to inflammation. The process of digestion requires the secretion of gastrointestinal enzymes and regular smooth muscle peristalsis. Cold drinks lower the temperature in the gastrointestinal tract, causing blood vessels to contract, cutting blood supply to the region and affected digestion.

From the perspective of TCM, cold and raw food can damage yang qi in spleen and stomach, impeding digestive function, resulting in dampness stagnancy, and phlegm generation in the gastric cavity. As the old saying goes, “thirty-percent treatment, seventy-percent cultivation”. The term cultivation include lifestyle and emotional

regulation. Eat three-quarter full and leave the rest to help others, Master Cheng Yen said. Old Tibetan medicine also proposed the dietary philosophy of three-quarter full, leaving room for digestion.

Acupressure, the massage of pressure points, is an easy method of self-care. People who experience acid reflux and apply pressure on Zusanli (the stomach meridian) on the calf, Zhiyang (the Du meridian) on the back, or Geshu (the bladder meridian). For those who have bloated stomach, apply pressure on Gongsun (the spleen meridian), Neiguan (the pericardium meridian), Fenglong (the stomach meridian), and Xingjian (the liver meridian).

As for dietary therapy, cook white radish with mushrooms and vegetables in season. Stew the white radish through and through for an hour and half until transparent to remove its coldness, which by then can replenish the yin energy. In summer, refrain from cold and raw food. Try stirfry loofah with ginger, ginger melon soup, warm mesona tea, and mung bean soup for remove excess heat.

Utilize vacation time and travel outdoors. A popular misconception is that labor at work can replace exercise. The purpose of exercise is to relax muscles and stretch tendons,

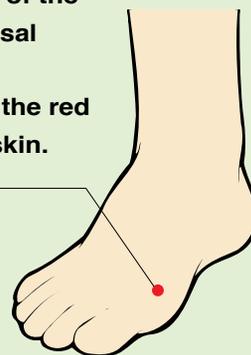


something that physical labor cannot achieve. When exercising, it is better to walk or jog, or to climb mountains, in order to facilitate circulation. Intense walking could cause muscle tension in back and calf muscles, hence inappropriate as a cultivation exercise. Our national education does not place adequate emphasis on exercise, and as result, people are not keen on exercising, which leads to the rise of chronic diseases.

The only way to treat gastrointestinal disease is to choose natural diet, avoid processed food, select seasonal vegetables, eat regularly and at a set proportion, sustain healthy exercise habit.

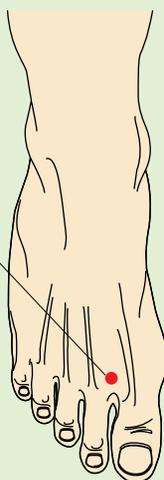
### Gong Sun

In a depression distal and inferior to the base of the 1st metatarsal bone at the junction of the red and white skin.



### Xing Jian

On the dorsum of the foot between the 1st and 2nd toes, proximal to the margin of the web at the junction of the red and white skin.



### Ge Shu

1.5 cun lateral to Zhi Yang, level with T7 and scapula inferior angle.

### Zhi Yang

In a depression below the 7th thoracic spinous process, level with scapula inferior angle

