



Prevention and Care for Cough in Chinese Medicine 咳嗽的中醫預防與保健(英文)

Cough is a respiratory reflex in human body protection, which aims to help remove foreign objects and secretion invading the respiratory tract in order to clean and protect the respiratory tract.

Cause of cough

Cough is commonly seen in common cold, pharyngitis, bronchitis, tuberculosis, pneumonia, respiratory tract contagious disease, and physically suppressing stimulation, chemical simulation, temperature stimulation, or the administration of certain medicines. Cough is not only triggered by problems of the trachea or lung but also related to nose, heart, and gastrointestinal system.

According to the theory of Chinese medicine, the cause of cough can be divided into external perception and internal injury. The cause of external perception invades the lung while the internal injury results in organ dysfunction, which then impairs the normal lung function. Whether it is internal or external, the lung and dispersing function are failed and trigger cough.

Prevention and care of cough

- Discipline body regularly to enhance physique and boost resistance to disease.
- Quit smoking and protect yourself from the environmental risk. Put on the mask in case of poor air quality or avoid leaving home.
- Pay attention to changes in weather and prevent catching a cold.
- Light meals. Avoid greasy, spicy and hot food (i.e. chili, pepper, wine, and lamb), stimulating, deep-fried and roasted food, cold drinks and cold food.

- Avoid food that is too sweet (could cause sputum).

Precautions for common cough

- In case of yellow sputum and sore throat, food supplement will be prohibited. Do not eat spicy food, deep-fried food, coffee, wine, lychee, longyan, and durian or any hot food.
- If the patient has watery and white sputum and itchy throat, do not eat turnip, gourd, star fruit, pear, and loquat as well as other cold food and drinks. Eat fruit with moderate quality (i.e. orange and apple).
- If the throat is dry and sputum is difficult to be coughed out, drink lukewarm and hot water. Do not swallow the water immediately but gradually, which will have better sputum reducing effect and throat nourishment. It will also reduce the likelihood of bloating and frequent urination as well as other side effect.
- Patients with allergic nose should avoid stimulating food while keeping the nose warm by doing massage on the acupuncture points near the nose.
- For heart-induced cough, follow the physician's instruction for medication and take more rest to avoid excess exercise. Avoid leaving home during drastic change of weather to prevent the deterioration of illness.
- Do not overlook the symptoms of cough. In case of unknown coughing, seek for medical treatment immediately. Find out the cause of illness through detailed examination. Do not take un-prescribed medicine to prevent accident.

Simple food therapy for cough

- Pear juice: For patients with cough more than 7 days, they can use one pear and remove the top to form a cap. Then remove the core and add 3 grams of 川貝粉 in the core with some honey. Cover with the cap and double boiler. Eat and drink the pear and juice.
- Honey: Removing heat and nourishing, which can diminish the itchy throat caused by the cough from tracheitis and help the patients to successfully spit out the cumulative sputum from the trachea.
- Patients with such cough can drink honey drink that not only reduces cough but also prevent injury on the throat due to intense coughing.