

## **SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY**

Acute and chronic anxiety present differently. Acute anxiety can result in:

- The sense of impending disaster or death
- Shortness of breath
- A smothering, claustrophobic sensation
- Heart palpitations
- Chest pain
- Dizziness
- Hot flashes and/or chills
- Trembling
- Numbness or tingling sensations in the extremities
- Sweating
- Nausea
- A feeling of unreality
- Distorted perception of the passage of time.

Chronic anxiety may be milder, more generalized, and symptoms may include a vague sense of anxiety much of the time, but the intensity of the feeling does not reach the levels of those in an actual panic attack. Other symptoms may be

- Chronic unease, especially around others
- Getting startled easily
- Headaches
- Chronic fatigue

### **Anxiety Symptoms and Ayurveda**

Ayurveda, Sanskrit for “science of life,” is the comprehensive medical system practiced for generations in India and many other countries. It associates the adrenal organs with anxiety. In this system of health and longevity, Vata is the mobile dosha (vital energy), and it is involved in all pain. If the vata flow of energy is disturbed, pain will result. In the case of excess vata which is associated with anxiety, fear and insecurity, the result may be radiating, migrating, shifting, shooting, pulsating, fluctuating or vague pain, that comes and goes. It is aggravated by cold and relieved by heat. (Morrison)

### **Anxiety Symptoms and TCM**

In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), emotions are classified into seven categories: joy, anger, worry, anxiety, sadness, fear and fright, which are further merged into five categories: joy, anger, anxiety, sadness and fear, relating to the heart, liver, spleen, lungs and kidneys, respectively. TCM's *Canon of Medicine* states “Anxiety injures the Spleen.” The emotions

injure the internal organs by disturbances of qi (vital essence) and blood. "Anxiety makes spleen qi depressed." In clinical practice, however, these relationships are not absolute. Zang-fu is the collective name for all internal organs and there are five zang organs - the Heart, Lungs, spleen, liver and kidneys. The Zang organs are mostly solid, characterized by transporting and digesting food and drink and discharging the metabolites. These organs, although named on the basis of anatomy, are not confined to the anatomical entities. They can be regarded as functional systems. In TCM, anxiety causes a deficiency in both the heart and the spleen, and is manifested by insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, loss of appetite, abdominal distention, loose bowels and lassitude. Besides disturbing qi and blood, the pathological changes caused by emotions may be transformed into fire, such as excessive heart fire. (Zhufan)