



Dry Sleep™

Classic antecedent: Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang *Tonifying the Centre and Benefiting Qi Decoction* and Suo Quan Wan *Contracting the Source Pill*.

Huang Qi Radix Astragali
Bai Zhu Rhizoma Atractylodis macrocephalae
Chen Pi Pericarpium Citri reticulatae
Sheng Ma Rhizoma Cimicifugae
Chai Hu Radix Bupleuri
Shan Yao Radix Dioscoreae
Sha Yuan Zi Semen Astragali complanati
Qian Shi Semen Euryalis

Wu Wei Zi Fructus Schisandrae
Tu Si Zi Semen Cuscutae
Fu Pen Zi Fructus Rubi
Shan Zhi Zi Fructus Gardeniae
Che Qian Zi Semen Plantaginis
Suan Zao Ren Semen Ziziphi spinosae
Zhi Gan Cao Radix Glycyrrhizae preparata
Da Zao Fructus Jujubae

The remedy Dry Sleep was formulated to treat nocturnal enuresis in children. Its main action is to tonify and lift Qi of the Spleen and Kidneys, astringe, and calm the Mind. It is therefore primarily for nocturnal enuresis deriving from deficiency and sinking of Qi of the Spleen and Kidneys. As we shall see, there are other patterns causing nocturnal enuresis.

This remedy is primarily for children suffering from a Deficiency condition: these children will be of a weak constitution and quiet. They may have other inherited weaknesses such as near-sightedness (short-sightedness).

This remedy treats nocturnal enuresis by tonifying and lifting Spleen- and Kidney-Qi. It secondarily also clears Heat as this may be a secondary factor in this condition.

Weak constitution may be a cause of nocturnal enuresis in children. Constitutionally-deficient Kidneys are unable to control fluids and fail to provide Qi to the Bladder: this results in nocturnal enuresis.

Pre-natal or perinatal shock in children can be a cause of nocturnal enuresis. This can be observed in a bluish colour on the child's forehead.

The pathology of enuresis and incontinence is characterized by Deficiency in the majority of cases. This may be a deficiency of the Lungs, Spleen or Kidneys. Lung-Qi communicates downwards with the Bladder and the Lungs, which govern Qi in general, also provide Qi to the Bladder to control urine. Thus deficient Lung-Qi is unable to control the Bladder and urine leaks out.

Spleen-Qi raises Qi in general and a sinking Spleen-Qi may be unable to control urine which leaks out. The Kidneys obviously control urination directly as the balance of Kidney-Yang and Kidney-Yin influences urination and also because Kidney-Yang provides Qi to the Bladder to control and transform urine. Moreover, the Kidneys control the two lower orifices, one of which is the urethra. Therefore, when there is sinking of Qi in urinary problems, it involves also sinking of Kidney-Qi (in addition to sinking of Spleen-Qi).

There are, however, some Full type of enuresis. An example of these is in some children in whom nocturnal enuresis is due not to a deficiency, but to Liver- and/or Heart-Fire infusing downwards to the Bladder. These tend to be tense and highly-strung children.

Some modern Chinese doctors in fact think that the pathology of enuresis in modern children is different than in the old times. They say that in the old times, children's constitution was often weak due to poor diet and that enuresis was mostly due to the child's poor constitution; in modern children, the constitution is better than in the past due to improved living conditions and diet. They therefore think that enuresis is often due to Heat and Phlegm in the Heart from a nervous disposition.¹

Therefore, enuresis in children can be classified in two broad

categories: on the one hand quiet and shy children, on the other rather hyperactive and nervous children. The pattern of Kidney deficiency pertains to the former group, while that of Liver- and/or Heart-Fire pertains to the latter group.

Nocturnal enuresis in such children is also due to agitation of the Ethereal Soul (*Hun*) at night by Liver-Fire.

When due to Liver-Fire, enuresis may be accompanied by grinding teeth at night, restless sleep, nightmares, waking up crying, thirst, bitter taste, red tongue with redder sides and a yellow coating, Wiry and Rapid pulse.

The prescription for enuresis from Liver-Fire is Long Dan Xie Gan Tang *Gentiana Draining the Liver* Decoction and the applicable *Three Treasures* remedy is *Drain Fire* (a variation of Long Dan Xie Gan Tang: besides draining Liver-Fire, it also drains Heart-Fire and calms the Mind).

When due to Heart-Fire, nocturnal enuresis would be accompanied by nervousness, palpitations, thirst, insomnia, crying at night, red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating, pulse Overflowing on left-Front position.

The prescription for enuresis from Heart-Fire is Dao Chi San *Eliminating Redness Powder* which, in the *Three Treasures* is *Drain Fire*. This is a variation of Long Dan Xie Gan Tang that, besides draining Liver-Fire, it also drains Heart-Fire and calms the Mind.

In some cases, nocturnal enuresis may be due to Damp-Heat in the Bladder: this is more common in older children. In such cases, enuresis would be accompanied by difficult urination, burning on urination, a sticky-yellow tongue coating and a Slippery pulse.

The prescription for enuresis from Damp-Heat would be Ba Zhang San *Eight Upright Powder*. This formula clears Heat and resolves Dampness from the Bladder. The *Three Treasures* remedy for enuresis from Dampness in the Bladder is *Separate Clear and Turbid* which is a variation of Bi Xie Fen Qing Tang *Dioscorea Separating the Clear Decoction*: this formula resolves Dampness from the Bladder and opens the Water passages.

The modern doctor, Dr Chen Su Wen uses the formula Ma Huang Yi Zhi Tang *Ephedra-Alpinia Decoction* for nocturnal enuresis in children.² The formula is composed of only three herbs and it has an elegant structure that is worth exploring:

Ma Huang Herba Ephedrae 10g

Yi Zhi Ren Fructus Alpiniae oxyphyllae 10g

Wu Wei Zi Fructus Schisandrae 10g

Dr Chen explains that Ma Huang is pungent and scattering while Wu Wei Zi is sour and astringent: the combination of the pungent and sour tastes regulates the Qi Mechanism. Also, Ma Huang enters the Lungs (which controls the Water passages) and Wu Wei Zi the Kidneys: these two herbs together coordinate the movement of fluids in the Water passages of Lungs and Kidneys and they regulate the Qi transformation by the Bladder. Yi Zhi Ren warms the Kidneys, astringes the Jing and reduces urination.

The modern doctor Dr Shen Min Nan adopts the method of clearing the Heart to treat nocturnal enuresis in children.³ This is an interesting approach which resonates with my own ideas about enuresis in children in whom I think that the Heart plays a role in its pathology.

Dr Shen uses a formula called **Qing Xin Zhi Yi Tang** *Clearing the Heart and Stopping Leakage Decoction*:

Huang Lian *Rhizoma Coptidis* 4g

Gan Cao *Radix Glycyrrhizae uralensis* 4g

Zhu Ye *Folium Phyllostachys nigras* 4g

Lian Qiao *Fructus Forsythiae* 8g

Shi Chang Pu *Rhizoma Acori tatarinowii* 8g

Fu Ling *Poria* 8g

Yuan Zhi *Radix Polygalae* 8g

Suan Zao Ren *Semen Ziziphi spinosae* 8g

Chen Pi *Pericarpium Citri reticulatae* 8g

Dan Nan Xing *Rhizoma Arisaematis preparatum* 8g

Dr Shen makes a very interesting observation when explaining the choice of formula. He says that enuresis in children has been discussed in the old classics since a long time but he thinks that the pathology of this disease in modern children is different than in the old times. He says that in the old times, enuresis was mostly due to the child's poor constitution, while in modern children, this problem is often due to Heat and Phlegm in the Heart from a nervous disposition. He says that modern children's constitution is better than that of children in the past due to improved living conditions and diet.

The modern doctor Dr Sun Hao gives his interesting observations as to why tonifying the Kidneys sometimes does not help children's nocturnal enuresis.⁴ He says that the most common approach in the treatment of this condition is to tonify the Kidneys.

He thinks that the reason this approach sometimes does not give results is due to the involvement of the Heart in the pathology of enuresis. He says there are two combined Kidney-Heart patterns in children's enuresis: one when the Kidneys are weak and the Heart in a Full condition; the other when they are both deficient. He recommends the following prescriptions for these two conditions.

1) Kidney deficiency and Heart-Fire

Fu Pen Zi *Fructus Rubi* 30g

Yi Zhi Ren *Fructus Alpiniae oxyphyllae* 30g

Rou Cong Rong *Herba Cistanches* 30g

Wu Wei Zi *Fructus Schisandrae* 15g

Fu Ling *Poria* 30g

Cang Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis* 30g

Dan Nan Xing *Rhizoma Arisaematis preparatum* 15g

Ban Xia *Rhizoma Pinelliae preparatum* 20g

Shi Chang Pu *Rhizoma Acori tatarinowii* 15g

Yuan Zhi *Radix Polygalae* 15g

Yu Jin *Radix Curcumae* 10g

Lian Zi Xin *Plumula Nelumbinis* 10g

2) Heart and Kidneys deficiency

Dang Shen *Radix Codonopsis* 30g

Huang Qi *Radix Astragali* 30g

Sang Piao Xiao *Ootheca Mantidis* 30g

Fu Pen Zi *Fructus Rubi* 30g

Shan Zhu Yu *Fructus Corni* 30g

Rou Cong Rong *Herba Cistanches* 30g

Sheng Di Huang *Radix Rehmanniae* 30g

Yi Zhi Ren *Fructus Alpiniae oxyphyllae* 30g

Fu Shen *Sclerotium Poriae paradicis* 30g

Shi Hu *Herba Dendrobii* 20g

Shi Chang Pu *Rhizoma Acori tatarinowii* 15g

¹Shen Min Nan "The Use of the Formula Qing Xin Zhi Yi Tang in the Treatment of Nocturnal Enuresis in Children" in Journal of Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Za Zhi*), Vol. 30, No. 9, 1989, p. 60.

²Journal of Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Za Zhi*), Vol. 30, No. 5, 1989, p. 46. Chen Shu Sen "Ma Huang Yi Zhi Tang."

³Journal of Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Za Zhi*), Vol. 30, No. 9, 1989, p. 60. Shen Min Nan "The Use of the Formula Qing Xin Zhi Yi Tang in the Treatment of Nocturnal Enuresis in Children."

⁴Journal of Chinese Medicine (*Zhong Yi Za Zhi*), Vol. 34, No. 5, 1993, p. 312. Sun Hao "Why Tonifying the Kidneys Sometimes Helps Nocturnal Enuresis in Children and Sometimes it does Not."

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