

Effectively Treating Children with Medical QiGong Therapy

(A 5 Element Approach to Pediatric Energetic Medicine)

Presented by **Christina J Barea, MMQ** at
11th World Congress Qigong/TCM
San Francisco, C 9/21/2008

An important discussion on the difference between treating adults and children with Medical Qigong Therapy. This presentation will address the particular adjustments necessary for performing Medical QiGong protocols on children between the ages of birth and 8 years of age. Topics include energetic anatomy, creative visualization techniques and qigong prescription exercises. In order to effectively perform Medical Qigong protocols it is necessary to make time and method adjustments for young children. An overview of the particular energetic anatomy will lay the foundation for identifying root causes of disease and how to quickly resolve patterns of disharmony.

Medical Qigong Therapy, a branch of Traditional Chinese Medicine, is quickly gaining popularity in the US as clinical trials continue to prove its efficiency at treating common pediatric health issues from asthma, allergies, ADHD, Diabetes Type I & II, cancer, high blood pressure, depression and more without the side-effects of prescription medications or invasive medical procedures. The practice of Medical QiGong has been a healing modality in Asia for over 3000 years with roots stemming into ancient Chinese Shamanism. In its most pure form Medical Qigong focuses on balancing the flow of energy within the body using only the body and the mind, although as a branch of TCM a practitioner may also use methods including herbs, tui na an mo, cups, moxa and gua sha. Considered to be the “Father” of Acupuncture it does not require the use of needles. With the current rise in interest and acceptance from Western populations of this healing modality it becomes increasingly important to establish the basic guidelines of effectively applying this therapy to the unique demographic of children. While allopathic medicine may in many instances see children as “little adults”, energy or Qi based medicine most assuredly does not.

Foundations

The perspective we use as a foundation is that of the 5 Element Theory of Traditional Chinese Medicine. The perspective of the 5 elements is that matter contains the combined energies of the 5 elements. Each element maintains balance through its Yin or Yang expression. By way of contrast the constant flux of energy provides a clear method to understand, diagnose and treat any human body.

To briefly summarize the 5 Element chart, each element represents a major Yin organ and the corresponding Yin Virtue/ Yang Emotion. Specifically, these are :

	Yin Organ	Yang Organ	Yin Virtue	Yang Emotion
Metal	Lungs	Large Intestine	Integrity	Grief
Water	Kidneys	Urinary Bladder	Wisdom	Fear
Wood	Liver	Gall Bladder	Kindness	Anger
Fire	Heart	Small Intestine	Love	Anxiety
Earth	Spleen	Stomach	Trust	Worry



When each element is in balance, the organs function smoothly and the child has a general “positive” demeanor in general, displaying the Yin Virtue of each organ. The onset of obstruction or stagnation in any one of these organs would trigger the likelihood of a “negative” emotion.

Imbalances in any body can be a consequence of influences from the following sources or a combination thereof:

- Hereditary
- Nutritional
- Lifestyle
- Environmental

In addition, the disruption in harmony could also be initiated by the emotion itself. In other words, disease can be triggered and manifest due to the exposure to toxins from any of the previously mentioned sources, but the root will reach into the delicate balance of flowing energy between the elements/organs.

Consideration should also be given to the state of the physical body structure before diagnosing with Medical Qigong in pediatrics. In my experience, if the body is out of alignment structurally then the effectiveness of treatment is compromised. Proper alignment of the bones is a key component in Qigong Dao Yin training¹ and that concept carries over to Medical Qigong Therapy.

¹ Dao Yin Qigong refers to qigong exercises done by an individual, they can be dynamic (moving) or static (still) and include breath, posture, intention, the 3 key components that define qigong.

Pediatric Energetic Anatomy

Children have a unique energetic anatomy and physiology that is in a constant state of change from the moment of conception until well into the adult years. For the purpose of this paper and to maintain a certain level of focus, we will examine the application of Medical QiGong Therapy, from here on noted as “MQT”, to children between the ages of birth and 8 years of age. This particular age group displays even within itself varying degrees of psychological, emotional and physical development but in terms of **energetic anatomy** there is a certain level of similarity. From the moment of conception and for the first 8 years or so, the child is primordially a spiritual being (shen²) existing at a higher vibration. At the moment of conception the Shen Xian³ (Eternal Soul) descends from Heaven⁴ and joins into the fertilized egg, activating the process of developing Jing. {see Figure 1} Thus, The initial flow of energy upon conception is from Shen to Qi to Jing.

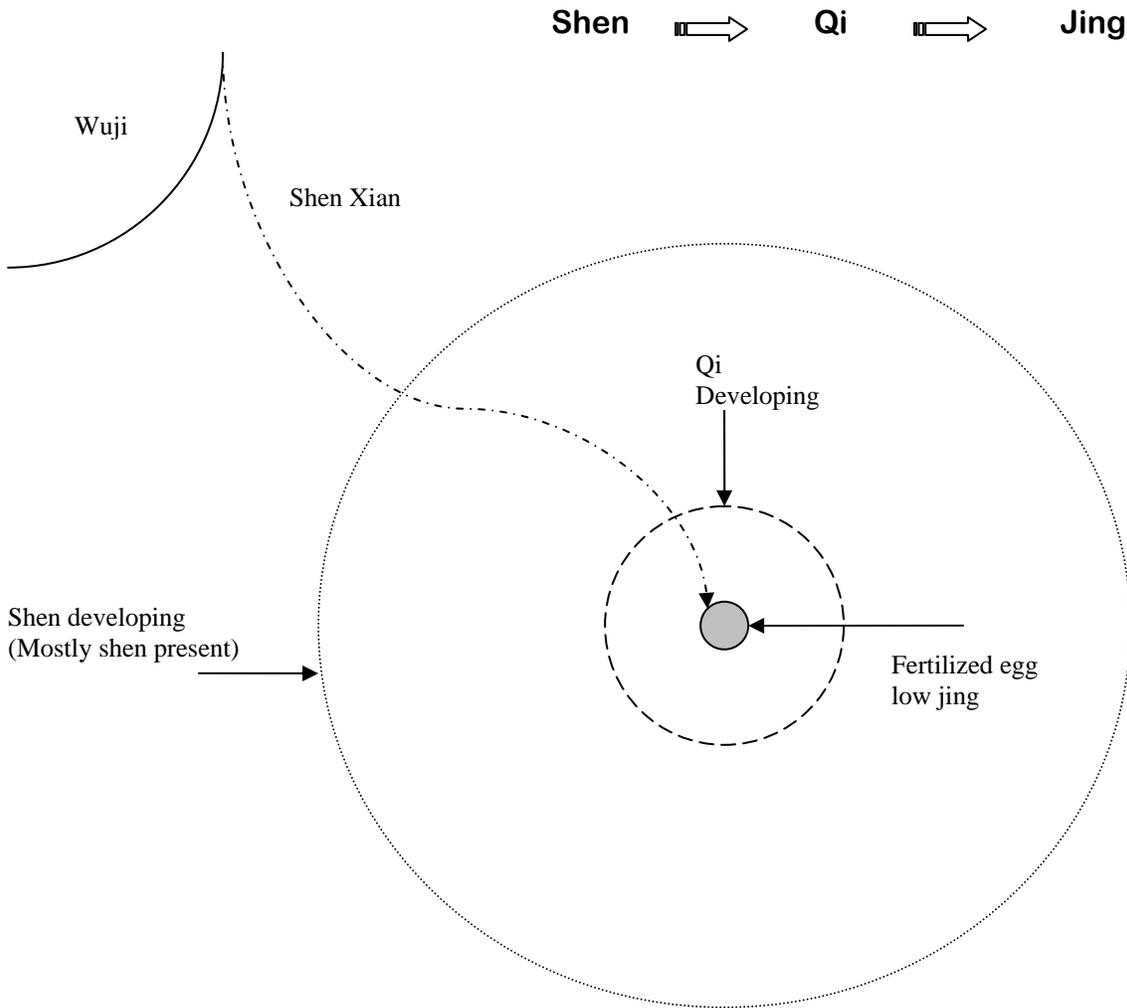


Figure 1: Moment of Conception – Wei Qi fields

² Depending on the context, Shen relates to “Spirit or mental”, Qi relates to “Energy or emotional”, Jing relates to “Essence or physical”

³ Shen Xian or Eternal Soul refers to that part of the being that exists independent of particular incarnations throughout time or lifetimes. It is the part of the being that spiritually evolves and learns over eons.

⁴ Heaven, in this case, refers to the Wuji or “infinite void” as well. “The ultimate source”

Developing Jing

Between conception and puberty the focus of development is directed towards creating the “house” in which the Yuan Shen⁵ (Original Spirit) will reside until it’s final departure upon death. The body is actively forming bones, tissues, blood and organs, all at this point in relation to the congenital jing⁶ established by the union of Mother, Father, Heaven and Earth energies present during conception. This also indicates that the entire being at this point is mostly Shen, existing at a higher vibration and in mass and size, much larger than the actual body it is rooted in.

The figure below is a graphic representation of the Jing in relation to the Shen and the information contained within the Shen waiting to manifest into a body. {see Figure 2} In simple terms, children are still mostly “out of their bodies”. As a result, their awareness and sensitivity reaches further than that of an adult and they are more “open” or receptive and responsive to subtle energies.

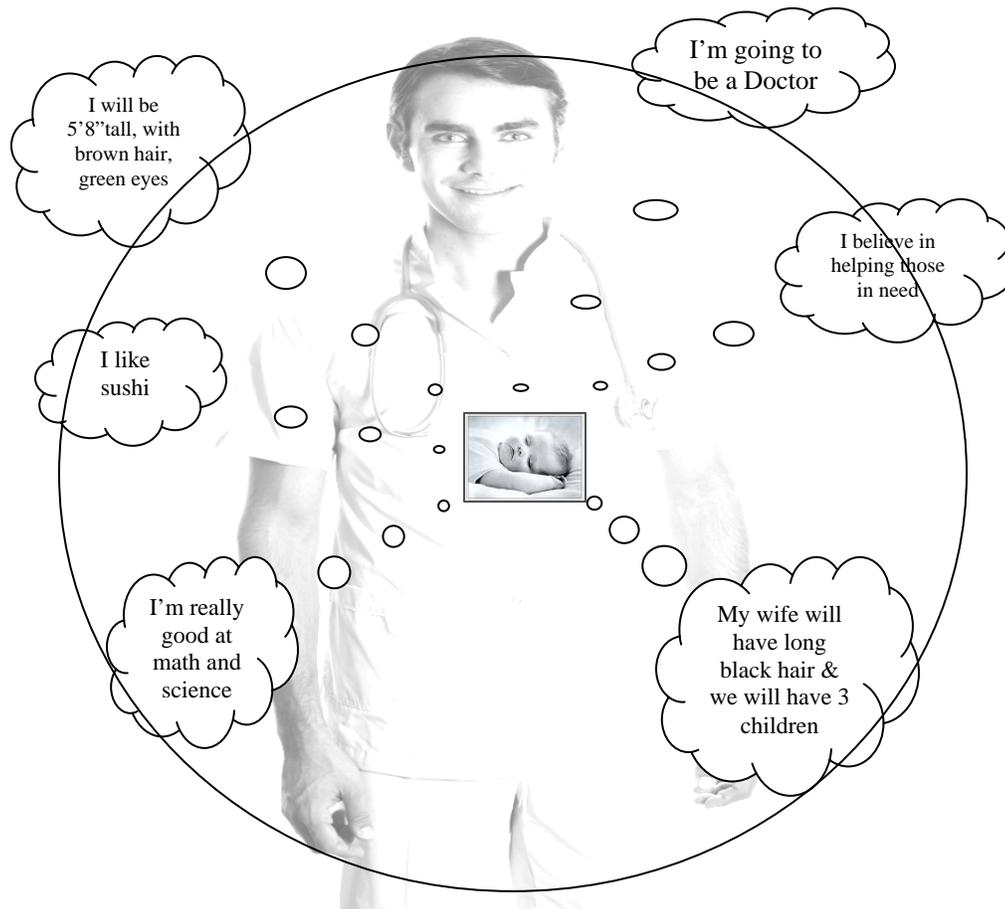


Figure 2: Shen body surrounding physical body

⁵ Yuan Shen refers to the original spirit inherent to the current lifetime, a result of the union of place, time, mother and father, in other words the characteristics you inherited upon conception.

⁶ Congenital Jing – refers to the quality of jing of the child inherited from the combined jing of Mother and Father.

Treatment Variations

The invasion of external pathogens of any kind (i.e. environmental, dietary, emotional or energetic) can best be defeated with a strong defense system. Gradual declines in health can sometimes be due to repetitive stress factors such as prolonged exposure to environmental stressors (weather, contamination), sustained malnutrition, or emotional duress (aggressive home environment)... While purging is the most common protocol for adults; in children, tonification seems to be the prescribed method of treatment. Because children have not accumulated years of emotional toxins or bad lifestyle habits, manifestation of disease is generally due to deficiency.

The major cause of deficiency is inadequate nutrition. The organs are delicate and in development and the body takes in just small quantities of food nutrients (compared to an adult). If the diet is out of balance then it quickly reflects in the child's health. It is important to note that proper diet also includes proper food types according to age (digestive capacity) and balanced intake of vitamins, minerals, proteins, carbohydrates, etc... Improper childhood diet can lead to higher incidents of colds, asthma, diabetes, fatigue, hyperactivity, ADHD and others. Quality of diet will also refer to the period of gestation and the attention the mother placed on proper nutrition. Once the diet has been corrected, then MQT can focus on the Qi and Shen.

Effectuating change at the Shen level of the being for children is easily done by means of creative visualization, positive affirmations and spiritual support. This restores their connection to the Divine and supports a positive thought process that is crucial to establishing internal harmony.

Treating children with MQT also poses another interesting factor which is session treatment time. With an adult it's not difficult to ask them to lie still on the table for an hour during a session. Children however, will be able to stay still for no longer than 5 or 10 minutes. This means that the time available for MQT is reduced by about 75% to 80%. The practitioner must then be able to quickly deliver an effective treatment. Accessing key points through gentle stimulation is a great way to accomplish that. Key points are Kd1, CV4, UB 10, GV 15, GV 16 and the Sishencong¹¹ at the Bai Hui. I have found that the combination of creative visualization and stimulation of the still point for even 5 minutes provides profound shifts in the shen and a rapid release of any thoughts or lingering emotions.

Another method to increase effectiveness of a session is to add remote-healing. Remote healing provides the comfort of adequate time without the need to have the child present. It's often the case that sessions done remotely provide greater results than in person treatments. Always obtain parental consent before doing remote healings.

Creative visualization for Treatments

Knowing Shen to be a higher vibration, responsive to thought and light, then creating change in the Shen pattern can best be effectuated by consciously manifesting the thought process or color that supports the healing process. It is essential at this point to have a thorough understanding of vibratory medicine ranging from spiritual development, psychological development and processes, as well as the effect of colors on the various layers of the bodies

¹¹ Sishencong (EX-HN 1) are 5 points at the crown of the head. Each point corresponds to the 5 orbs or elements. There are four points that surround a central point that corresponds to GV20 (Baihui)

energetic fields. The most widely used (and safest) color is white. It brings in (or the absence of) all colors. Most, if not all, energy based healing systems will use white light as a neutral foundation. However, children may find it hard to focus on just one neutral color (while adults will find it easier). In my own clinical practice I have found that children prefer to use the visualization of the hues of the rainbow. This is quite convenient as rainbows contain all the colors of the 5 elements.

Qigong Prescription Exercises

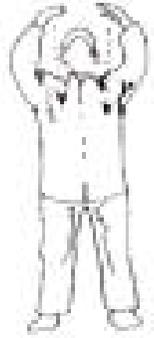
Rainbow Meditation – have the child close their eyes, they can be standing, seated or lying down. Visualize a beautiful rainbow stretching through the sky high over your head. Then, taking a deep breath, pull in one of the sides of the rainbow so that it comes down through the center of your head (I usually lightly touch the Bai Hui to help them feel the crown) and into (the correct organ). Feel the rainbow filling up the _____ with light and (warmth or coolness)¹² Have them breath into the area for about 9 breaths. The release. Remind the child that they can bring the rainbow into their body at any time. Also, once the rainbow has entered the organ, you can have the child focus on just one color according to the 5 element chart.

Sun Meditation – (for cases of cold invasion; increasing heat to resolve damp or phlegm or increasing yang energy) Have the child close their eyes, they can be standing, seated or lying down. Visualize a golden sun in the sky high over their head. See a large beam of the Sun's rays reach down and warm the crown of the head. Feel the warmth of the sun relax the skin and let the head open up to receive the warmth and light. Then, taking a deep breath, pull in the sun ray through the center of your head (I usually lightly touch the Bai Hui to help them feel the correct place) and into (the correct organ). Feel the sun filling up your body with light and warmth. Have them breath into the area for about 9 breaths. The release. Remind the child that they can bring the sun into their body at any time to relax, or promote healing. I've also prescribed the Sun to transform emotions or general aches and pains.

Pulling Down Heavens

This can be done standing or seated. Starting with hands by your sides, turn palms facing up and inhale as you begin to bring your arms up over your head (like gathering water to splash on your body). Once your hands are at the top of the head, turn palms down. Exhale as you bring hands down following the center line of the body in the front all the way down to the hips. Focus on the breath: inhale as the hands come up and exhale as the hands go down. This particular qigong move is perfect for relaxing, lowering hyperactivity and grounding. It can also be used to purge an excess from a particular organ if the focus is on the exhale and guiding the pathogens into the earth.

¹² Warm for organs that need to be heated, cool for organs that need to release heat.



Conclusion

Children are a true joy to work with. They are eager to participate in the session, curious and willing to release negative thought patterns or habits quickly. Making the session fun and an interactive experience ensures the cooperation of the child. Focus on doing a great intake before you begin, make sure the child is eating properly, keep the treatment it simple and effective and follow up with remote sessions. Add the element of creativity and imagination, remind the child either verbally or intuitively that they are a part of the Divine, support and empower them. Together, these components will ensure a thriving pediatric practice.

Bibliography

Professor Jerry Alan Johnson, PhD, DTCM, DMQ (China).

Chinese Medical Qigong Therapy Vol 1: Energetic Anatomy & Physiology

Chinese Medical Qigong Therapy Vol 2: Energetic Alchemy

Chinese Medical Qigong Therapy Vol 3: Differential Diagnosis

Chinese Medical Qigong Therapy Vol 4: Prescription Exercises & Meditations

California: International Institute of Medical QiGong, 2005

Cohen, Kenneth. *The Way of Qigong*, New York: Ballantine Books, 1997

Flaws, Bob. *A Handbook of TCM Pediatrics*, Colorado: Blue Poppy Press, 2002