

Pathomechanisms of the Lung

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Pathomechanisms describe the dynamic process through which disease develops and transforms in the body. While pattern diagnosis provides the practitioner with a snapshot picture of the current state of illness, it is a thorough understanding of pathomechanisms that allows one to predict and prevent the progression of disease. A comprehensive knowledge of the pathomechanisms involved in a given case allows treatment to be more holistic, preventative, and effective. In modern China, pathomechanisms have become a major focus of Chinese medical literature and education. Up to now, relatively little of this material has been transmitted to the West, and consequently many practitioners have failed to go beyond pattern diagnosis to examine the underlying disease process that produces the patterns. Thus, pathomechanisms are often described as a 'missing link' in a Westerner's Chinese medical education. This series of texts devoted to pathomechanisms attempts to bridge this gap so that practitioners may advance their knowledge and reap the rewards of greater clinical success.

Pathomechanisms of the Lung discusses repletion conditions of the lung, including impaired diffusion of the lung, impaired depurative downbearing of the lung, and impaired diffusion and downbearing of the lung. The second section presents vacuity conditions, including vacuity of lung qi, lung yang, lung yin, and lung blood.

Each pathomechanism is described in detail with references to its historical development, then further differentiated by the specific aetiological factors. Each subsection discusses the origins and development of ideas relevant to this pathology, then gives the various symptoms, treatment strategies, and specific formulas, often with modifications to address the particular symptoms more directly. It is here that the author offers a review of relevant literature, spanning the entire range of traditional medical literature beginning with the early classics. For each text, he gives the specific quotations and then paraphrases and explains it. This provides the reader a sense of the historical evolution as well as the various clinical perspectives on each pathomechanism.

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