



deficient

fire



There are two common outcomes when there is Deficient Fire in a child's 5 Element Profile. One is a deficiency of "Heart Blood," and the other is a deficiency of "Heart Yang," which is Fire or warmth. The child may exhibit qualities of one or both. Because the Fire Element's Heart, in Eastern Medicine, also encompasses the mind, with "Heart Blood" Deficiency there are essentially fewer available resources (blood and energy) to nourish the heart and mind. So, Deficiency of "Heart Blood" can look similar to Excess Fire, with symptoms such as excitability, difficulty focusing, restlessness, anxiety and difficulty being present, but for reasons of deficiency, not excess. With deficiency of "Heart Yang," the child will appear to have less "fire," less drive, less passion, and less "joie de vivre." Although ambition and drive fall into the category of the Wood Element, there can be a general lack of enthusiasm for, and engagement in, life, which can appear as low ambition, depression, fatigue, introversion, and boredom.

Fire Element Associations

Yin Organs: Heart & Pericardium

Yang Organs: Small Intestine & Triple Warmer

Sense/Organ: Speech & Tongue

Fluid: Sweat & Blood

Tissue: Blood Vessels

Indicator: Complexion

Smell: Scorched

Taste: Bitter

Sound: Laughing

Season: Summer

Energy: Upward

Climate: Heat

Direction: South

Color: Red

Life Cycle: Ripening/Peak

Psychosocial Issue: Presence & Engagement

Balanced Emotions: Love & Joy

Imbalanced Emotions: Anxiety & Despair

Common Physical Symptoms of Deficient Fire

Pale complexion, palpitations, restlessness, anxious, cold hands and feet, easily chilled, easily exhausted from over-stimulation and over-excitement, sweats easily, especially on head, chest, hands, feet, no light in the eyes, dream-disturbed sleep, difficulty sleeping, lack of joy, inability to follow through, difficult speech (stuttering), numbness, dizziness, fatigue, poor concentration, low vitality, fear of being alone, nervous, easily startled, poor memory, shortness of breath, chest tightness

COMPLEMENTARY THERAPIES AND LIFESTYLE RECOMMENDATIONS

#1 Physical Treatment: Build Blood and Warmth

A Deficient Fire child has energy that looks like a fire that just can't quite get started; it comes and goes in fits and starts and often fizzles out. The key to steadiness in a Deficient Fire child is building up strength with food and warmth. As with most deficiencies, diet is one of the most important treatments. Strongly nourishing foods like red meat, beets, organ meats such as heart and tongue, and other blood building foods are recommended. Similar to Deficient Wood's "blood deficiency," it is not a literal diagnosis, but rather a notion that the blood is weak, similar to anemia in Western Medicine. Vegetarianism is not recommended for children with any propensity toward "blood deficiency." If a child is averse to eating meat, great lengths should be taken to turn this aversion around for the long term health of this child. Additionally, drinking hot tea and eating warm cooked foods are important in building up the body's blood and energy.

In addition to building blood, keeping a Deficient Fire child warm should be a high priority. Make certain this child's feet, low back, belly, and head are kept warm; hot packs on the feet, back, and belly can be a source of comfort. Hot baths and saunas deeply add warmth to the body. Building blood and warmth in a Deficient Fire child will bring a steadiness of energy, providing clarity, focus and peace to his mind, and strength and calm to his body. Please give extra attention to the following Food section as food and herbs are really the best way to build blood.

Food Therapy

Dietary Habits and Food Recommendations

Eat Regular, Small Portions of High Quality Meat

Because Deficient Fire Element lends itself to “blood” and fluid deficiency, regular, small portions of high quality meat (organic, grass fed, and free range) is necessary, especially poultry and red meat (beef, bison, venison, elk, and lamb).

Eat Fresh Vegetables and High Quality Oils

The base of the diet should be fresh organic vegetables, some raw but mostly cooked, with liberal use of high quality oils (esp. olive, sesame, and pumpkin seed) used mostly unheated to keep the essential fluids bountiful.



Fire Element Foods

In general, eating most of the TCM Food Correspondences would be helpful in both “blood deficiency” and “deficiency of Heart Fire.” The exceptions are: strongly bitter and cooling foods should be avoided in Heart Fire Deficiency, and strongly bitter and hot foods should be avoided in Heart Blood Deficiency.

Red: beef, raspberries, cranberries, strawberries, cherries, red grapes, tomatoes, pomegranate, red peppers, rhubarb, radicchio, beets, persimmons, watermelon, adzuki beans, red beans, and lychee

Bitter: (Subdues and Descends Flaring Fire, Cooling, Moving): germ and bran of grains, green vegetables, arugula, dandelion, watercress, chard, cucumber, chocolate, coffee, chai tea and its spices, and black and green tea Deficient Fire Element types may be sensitive to caffeine; some may need to avoid it.

Fans Out like Flames: chard, kale, parsley, dandelion greens, watercress, and arugula

Looks Like a Heart: hawthorn berries, strawberries, tomatoes, red peppers, pomegranates, and beets

Hot and Spicy Like Fire: hot peppers and black pepper (good for Heart Yang Deficiency, limit with Deficient Heart Blood)

Traditional: lamb, heart, corn, and apricot

Food Recommendations for Common Deficient Fire Conditions

Foods to Strengthen Heart Fire

Signs of Heart Fire Deficiency: exhaustion, cold extremities, shortness of breath on exertion, racing heart, spontaneous sweating, feeling cold, and easy to fatigue

Eat: warm cooked foods, lamb, beef, scallion, corn, short grain (glutinous) rice, oats, aniseed, chili, saffron, chai tea spices (cinnamon, cardamom, clove, ginger, nutmeg, pepper, allspice), chai tea, coffee, and cocoa

Avoid: bitter cold and raw foods, raw vegetables, citrus fruits, yogurt, ice cream, ice-cold drinks, frozen foods, and foods heated in the microwave

Foods to Strengthen Heart Blood

Signs of Heart Blood Deficiency: anemia, heart palpitations, fatigue, weakness, inner restlessness, forgetfulness, being easily startled, difficulty sleeping, bad dreams, and agitation

Eat: warm cooked soups and stews with high quality meats including blood sausage, beef and chicken hearts and liver, chicken, beef and pheasant. Also eat: oysters, chicken egg, cherries, longans, red grapes, short grain (glutinous) rice, wheat, oats, lotus seeds, beets, beet kvass, fresh goat, sheep, and cow's milk

Avoid: dehydrating foods such as: coffee, acrid chai tea, and its spices



Photo: MCardiz

Cooking Methods

Eat a basis of soups, stews, stir-fry, roasted meats, and root vegetables. Limit raw foods, salads, and fresh fruit. Avoid all cold and frozen foods and ice-cold drinks. Deep frying, stir frying, flambéing, sautéing, toasting, and dehydrating are all considered Fire Element cooking preparations. Most will be strengthening to the Deficient Fire Element.

Supplements: Floradix®, an herbal liquid iron supplement

Herbs

(best taken in tea form): cinnamon, ginger, anise, garlic, cayenne pepper, rose, rose hips, and reishi mushroom (best in tincture form)

Acupressure

Holding or massaging the following points is one of the most potent treatments for balancing the deficient meridian(s). Look at the Constitutional Meridian Analysis to determine which meridian(s) to focus on: the Heart and Pericardium, the Small Intestine and Triple Warmer, or all four. If the number from the Constitutional Meridian Analysis is 1 or 0, hold or rub the associated points for 1 to 3 minutes, once or twice daily. When locating the points always look for the tender spot. Treat points on both the left and right sides. Consider using Moxa (see appendix) on the points especially for “Heart Yang Deficiency.”

Heart Points

Heart 7 is located on the inside of the wrist on the pinky side on the wrist crease.

Heart 8 is located on the palm of the hand where the tip of the pinky rests when you make a fist.

Heart 9 is located on the pinky finger at the inside corner of the fingernail.

Conception Vessel 14 is located on the midline of the abdomen just below the bottom of the sternum.

Urinary Bladder 15 is located 2 finger widths adjacent to the spine at the level of the 5th thoracic vertebra.

Urinary Bladder 44 is located 4 finger widths adjacent to the spine at the same level as Urinary Bladder 15.

Pericardium Points

Pericardium 7 is located on the inside of the wrist in the center of the wrist crease.

Pericardium 8 is located on the palm of the hand where the tip of middle finger rests when making a fist.

Pericardium 9 is located in the center of the tip of the middle finger.

Conception Vessel 17 is located on the midline of the chest midway between the nipples.

Urinary Bladder 14 is located 2 finger widths adjacent to spine at the level of the 4th thoracic vertebra.

Urinary Bladder 43 is located 4 finger widths adjacent to the spine at the same level as Urinary Bladder 14.

Small Intestine Points

Small Intestine 3 is located on the pinky side of the hand on the crease when a loose fist is made.

Conception Vessel 4 is located on the midline of the abdomen 4 finger widths below the belly button.

Urinary Bladder 27 is located 2 finger widths from the spine in the first holes on the sacrum.

Triple Warmer Points

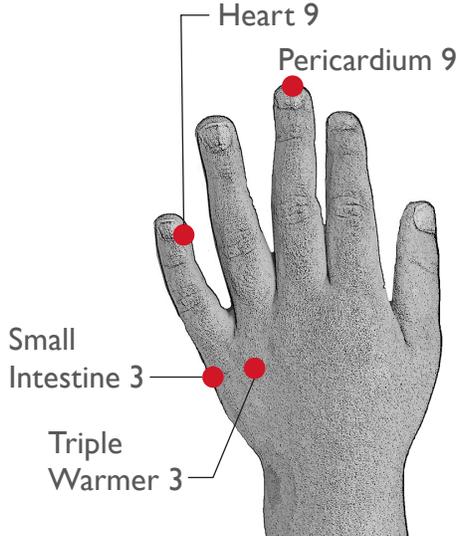
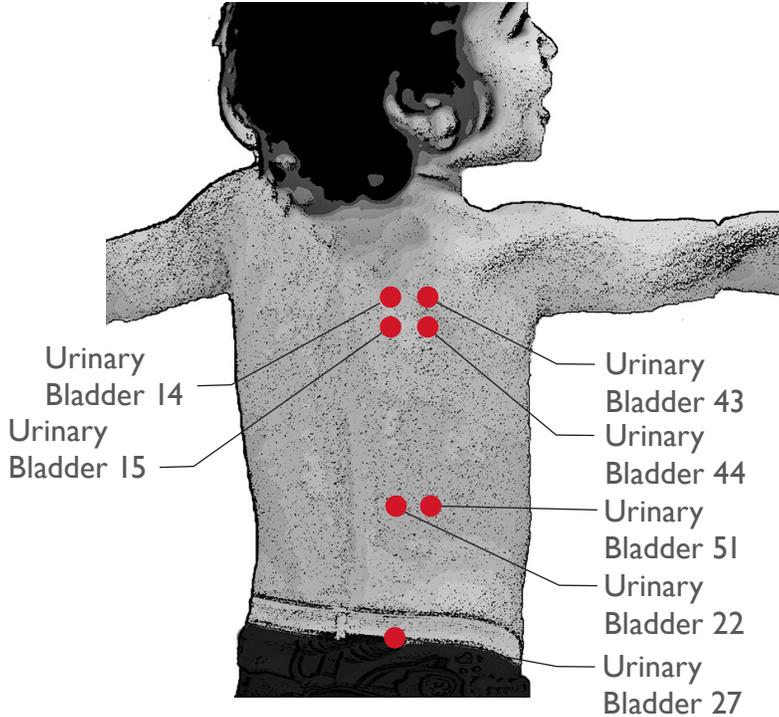
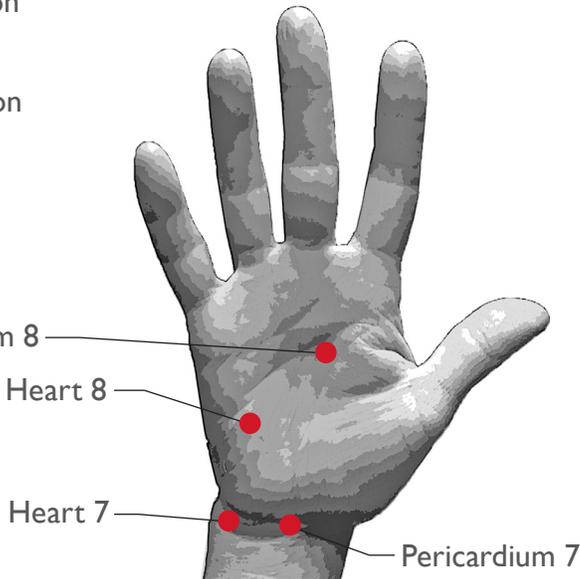
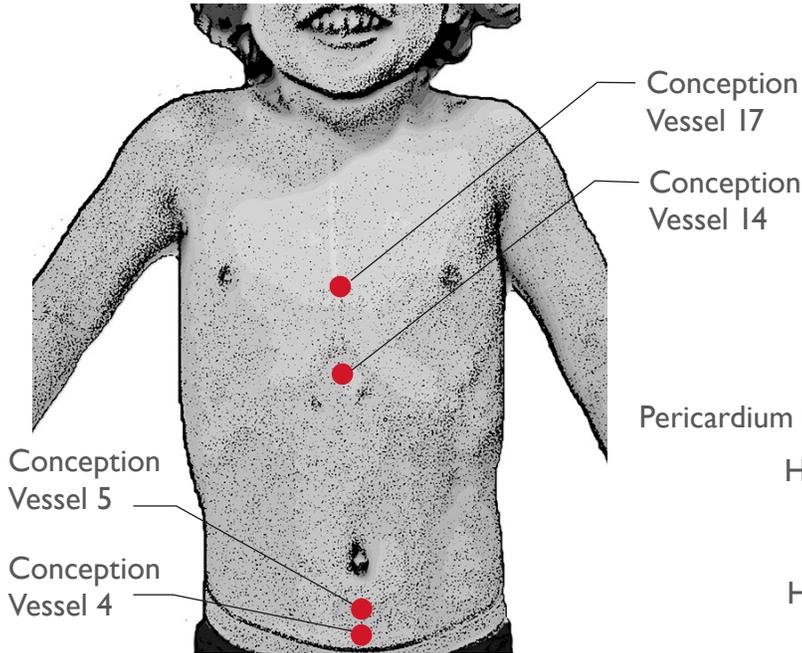
Triple Warmer 3 is located on the back of the hand just below the space between the 4th and 5th knuckles.

Conception Vessel 5 is located on the midline of the abdomen 3 finger widths below the belly button.

Urinary Bladder 22 is located 2 finger widths from the spine at the level of the 1st lumbar vertebra.

Urinary Bladder 51 is located 4 finger widths from the spine at the same level as Urinary Bladder 22.

Acupressure - Deficient Fire



Chinese Pediatric Massage - Tui Na

In addition to the Well Child Treatment shown in the Chinese Pediatric Massage section of the Balancing Your Child's Elements chapter, choose from the points below to balance your child's Deficient Fire energy.

Middle Finger Heart: Rub the middle of the tip of the palm's surface of the middle finger, pushing in one direction only from the tip to the 3rd knuckle crease, 100-500 times. This point strengthens the Heart Channel, quiets the spirit, and treats night crying.

Palm Base: Knead 50-100 times at the base of the palm where the two bulges meet. This point strengthens the Pericardium Channel, quiets the spirit, stops fright, treats diarrhea, and stops night crying.

Pinky Small Intestine: Rub the line on the palm side outer edge of the pinky, pushing in one direction only from the tip to the base, 100-500 times. This point strengthens the Small Intestine Channel.

Forearm Thumb Side Push: Rub the line on the inside of the forearm, on the thumb side pushing in one direction only from the wrist to the elbow, 100-300 times. This point warms the Fire Element and treats diarrhea.

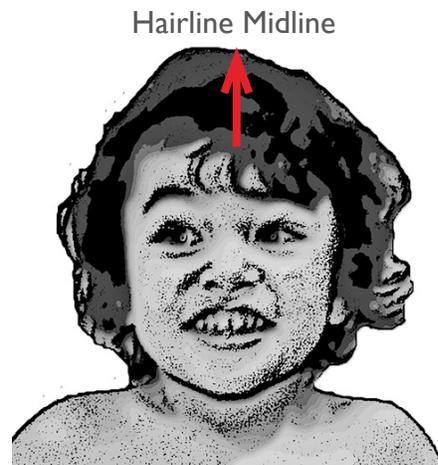
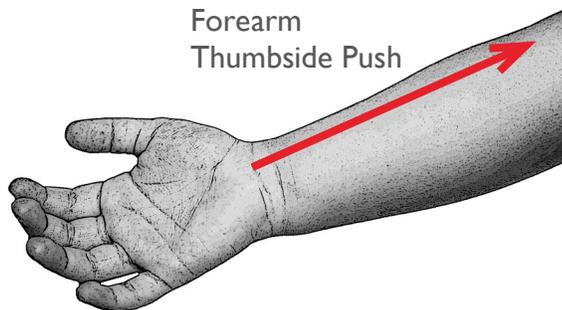
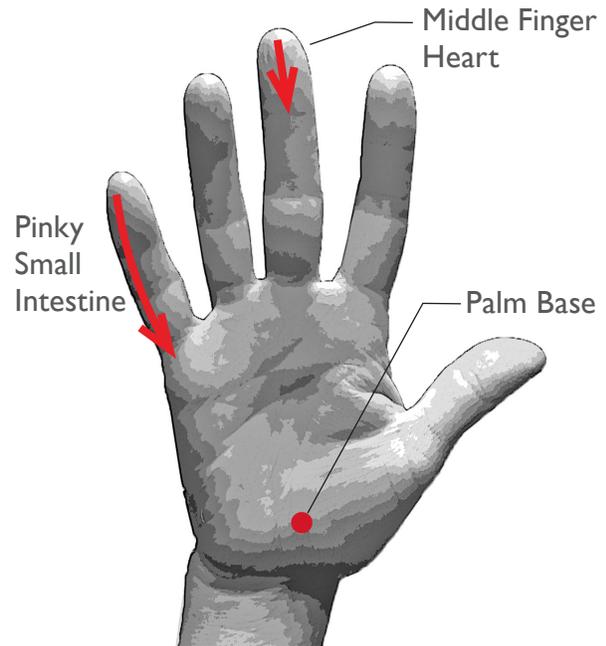
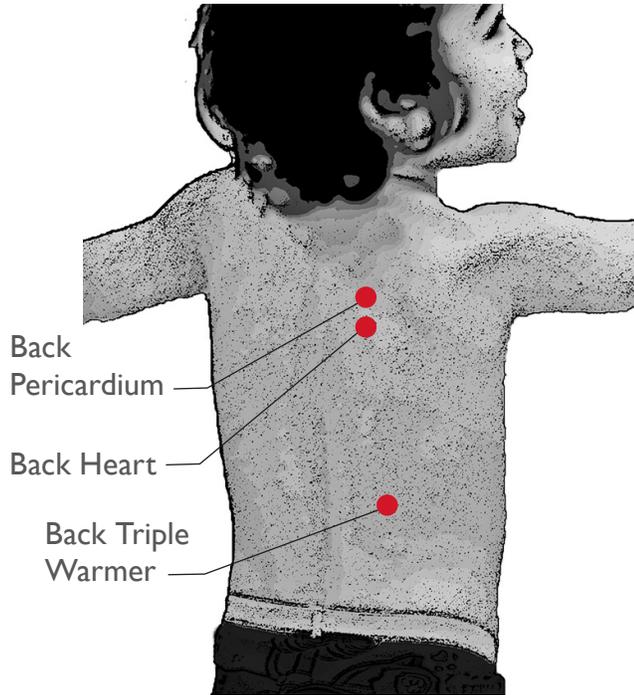
Hairline Midline: Gently rub just above the forehead thumb over thumb from the front hairline backwards 50-100 times. If the fontanel is not closed yet, only push to the forward edge. This point quiets the spirit and treats night crying.

Back Heart: Knead the point 2 finger widths adjacent to the spine at the level of the 5th thoracic vertebra, 150-300 times. This point harmonizes the Heart.

Back Pericardium: Knead the point 2 finger widths adjacent to the spine at the level of the 4th thoracic vertebra, 150-300 times. This point harmonizes the Pericardium.

Back Triple Warmer: Knead the point 2 finger widths from the spine at the level of the 1st lumbar vertebra, 150-300 times. This point harmonizes the Triple Warmer.

Chinese Pediatric Massage Deficient Fire



Japanese Pediatric Acupressure - Shonishin Stroking and Tapping Technique

To further strengthen the Fire Element, I recommend using a wooden spoon or a small piece of wood, as the tool of choice. The Wood Element strengthens Fire through the Mother-Child relationship. Just avoid using something with sharp edges. Stroke and tap amounts listed are for children 1-3 years old. Increase amounts for older children; decrease for infants less than one-year-old.

Deficient Fire Element Stroking and Tapping Sequence

- #1 Stroke down the back, 100 strokes for the whole back
- #2 Tap 20 taps each, at Governing Vessel 12 (between shoulder blades), Governing Vessel 11 (below Governing Vessel 12), UB 14, UB 15, and UB 22 (on each side of spine)
- #3 Chest: stroke from center out 30 strokes
- #4 Chest: tap 20 taps at Conception Vessel 17 and 14
- #5 Abdomen: stroke down from ribs to just below the belly button, 30 strokes
- #6 Arms: stroke down 15 strokes each arm
- #7 Back of legs: stroke down 15 strokes each leg
- #8 Front of legs: stroke down 15 strokes each leg

Governing Vessel 12 is found between the shoulder blades below the 3rd thoracic vertebra.

Governing Vessel 11 is found between the shoulder blades below the 5th thoracic vertebra.

Urinary Bladder 14 is located 2 finger widths adjacent to spine at the level of the 4th thoracic vertebra.

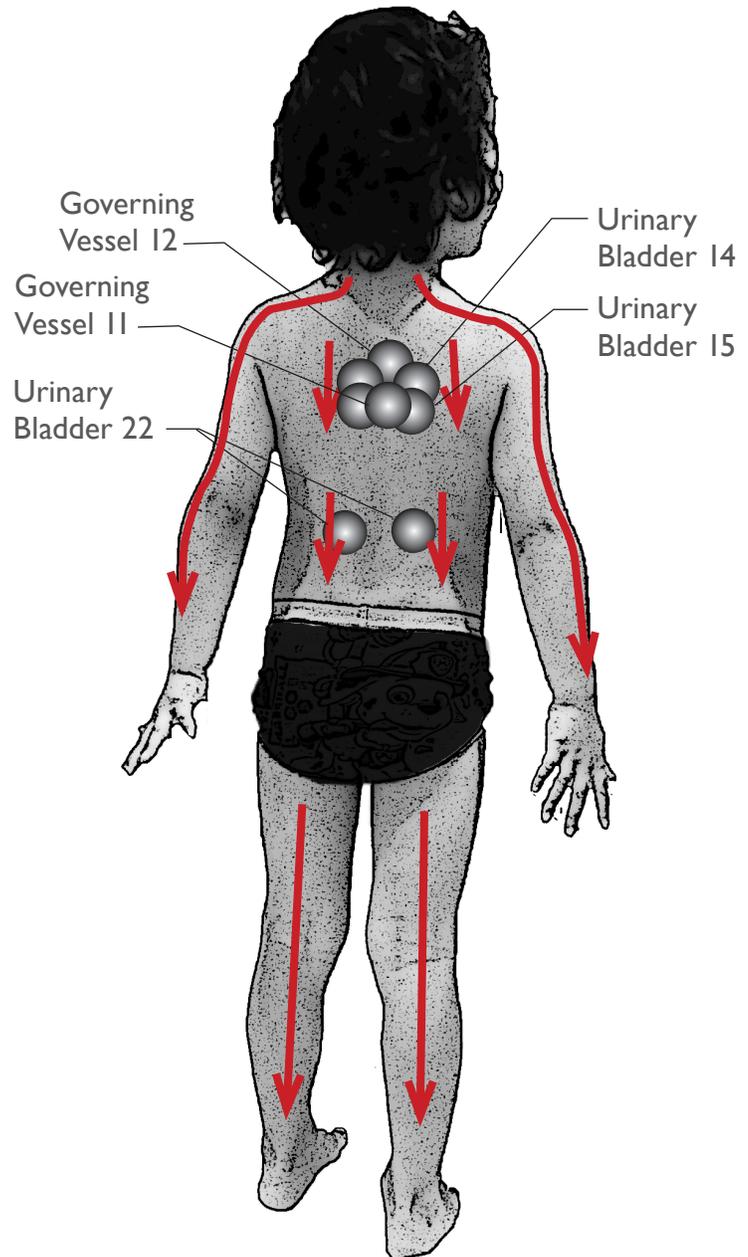
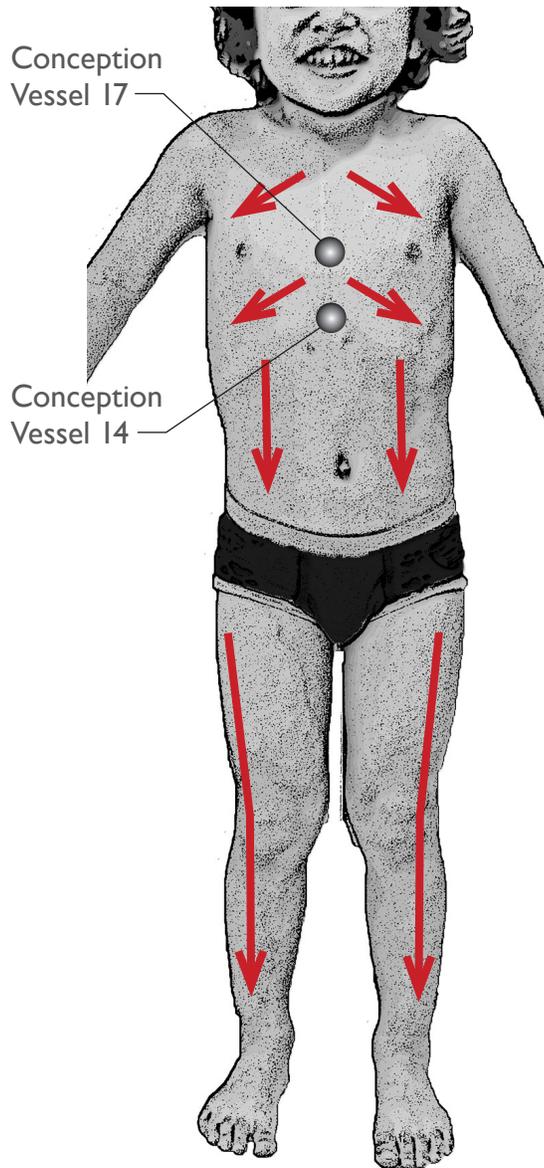
Urinary Bladder 15 is located 2 finger widths adjacent to spine at the level of the 5th thoracic vertebra.

Urinary Bladder 22 is located 2 finger widths from the spine at the level of the 1st lumbar vertebra.

Conception Vessel 14 is located on the midline of the abdomen just below the bottom of the sternum.

Conception Vessel 17 is located on the midline of the chest midway between the nipples.

Japanese Pediatric Acupressure Deficient Fire



Essential Oil Therapy

Essential oils can be diffused in a room and/or applied diluted to the back of the head, the belly, the back, the chest, or the bottom of the feet, or to the acupressure points listed in the Acupressure section for added effect. Bergamot has photosensitive properties so avoid sun exposure after application. Check the Essential Oil section in the Balancing Your Child's Elements chapter for age appropriate recommendations for oil use.

Frankincense: Nature: Slightly Cooling, Drying
5 Element Organs: Heart, Kidney, Lung
Strengthens immune system; treats all issues of Lungs, acute and chronic. Calms and strengthens the Spirit; treats focus, anxiety, depression, and irritability. An oil for spirituality, awareness and tranquility.

Ginger: Nature: Hot

5 Element Organs: Heart, Kidney, Lungs, Spleen, Stomach

Warms and strengthens digestion; treats low appetite, bloating, gas, nausea, and indigestion. Stimulates Yang (Fire) energy of the Heart and Kidney; treats poor circulation, fatigue, low energy, chest pain, and low back and joint pain. Strengthens immune system and purges cold and mucus from the Lungs. Stimulates willpower.

Hyssop Linalool: Nature: Warming, Drying

5 Element Organs: Heart, Lungs

Strengthens Lung Yang and immune system; treats allergies, sinusitis, and bronchitis. Strengthens Spleen and Stomach; dries Damp. Purges Phlegm from Lungs and Heart. Strengthens Heart Yang. Opens chest. Strongly antiviral.

Lavender: Nature: Cooling, Drying

5 Element Organs: Liver, Lung, Pericardium

Moves Liver Qi; treats tension, frustration, headaches, and muscle spasms and tightness. Calms the Spirit; treats palpitations, nervousness, irritability, insomnia, and restlessness. Relieves chest tightness. Treats infection.

Lemongrass: Nature: Warming

5 Element Organs: Liver, Spleen

Builds Blood in the Heart, Liver, and Spleen (along with Nutmeg). Treats depression from Liver Blood Deficiency.

Warms the Spleen for healthy digestion; treats gas, bloating, fullness, poor appetite, cold limbs, poor concentration, heaviness, fatigue, and sluggishness.



Photo: MCadiz

Rose: Nature: Cooling, Moistening
5 Element Organs: Heart, Liver, Kidney
Balances Fire and Water; opens the connection and balances. Has special resonance with love, emotional intimacy, and reproduction. Opens Heart; helps connect in a healthy way with others. Cools and regulates the Liver; treats headaches, red eyes, temper tantrums, nervous tension, and constipation. Nourishes Yin and clears Fire; treats insomnia, irritability, and restlessness.

Valerian Root: Nature: Cooling
5 Element Organs: Liver, Pericardium
Clears Heart Fire; treats palpitations, anxiety, and insomnia. Apply to the bottoms of the feet to help child wind down to sleep. Strengthens Liver Yin, subdues Liver Fire; treats headaches, nervous tension, and restlessness. Strengthens Heart Qi, Yang and Blood, and Spleen and Stomach.

Vetiver: Nature: Cooling, Moistening
5 Element Organs: Heart, Liver, Spleen, Stomach
Moves Liver Energy. Calms, strengthens and invigorates the Heart. Nourishes and invigorates Blood. Strengthens Stomach and Spleen; treats poor appetite, weight loss, anemia, and malabsorption.

Flower Essence Therapy

The following flower essences are specific for balancing issues common to Deficient Fire Element children and can be taken internally in drinking water, directly from the tincture bottle under the tongue, applied to the forehead, back of the head or chest for emotional issues, or the belly for digestive issues, or to the points listed in the Acupressure section of this chapter. More specific guidelines are available in the Flower Essence Therapy section of the Balancing Your Child's Elements chapter.

Aloe Vera: Used to rejuvenate and moisten. Balances Fire and Water. Useful for “burnout;” when Excess Fire energy and activity exhausts and dries out the body. Increases vitality. Resonates with the Heart and creative energy.

Agrimony: Used for emotional self expression. Child hides true feelings; appears cheerful but suffering inside.

Buttercup: Used for shyness and withdrawal. Key word indicators: communication, confidence, creativity, self-expression, and social relationships.

Cerato: Used for building self-confidence and self-esteem. Child needs constant affirmation that she is doing things right. Remedy fosters an independent and pioneering spirit so the child does not need to be coaxed or accompanied on every adventure and mundane activity. Child has self doubt, needs guidance, and dislikes being alone.

Clematis: Used to bring child into present moment focus, engagement, and attention. This child lives in his own world; watching too much television, reading, engaging in imaginary play, or playing video games. Remedy helps with re-entry after long illness. Key word indicators: indifferent, vacant, inattentive, daydreaming, avoidance, distracted, concentration, disorientation, fascination, and grounded.

Heather: Used for self-centeredness. Key word indicators: excessive talking, self-preoccupation, loneliness, and withdrawal. This child focuses too much on his personal problems and is an energy drain to those around him. This remedy helps with listening and self-expression.

Hornbeam: Used to build resilience for daily life. Child is inexplicably tired, so much so that the exhaustion makes him miss out on life. Key word indicators: discouraged, morning lethargy, difficulty facing the day's work, procrastination.

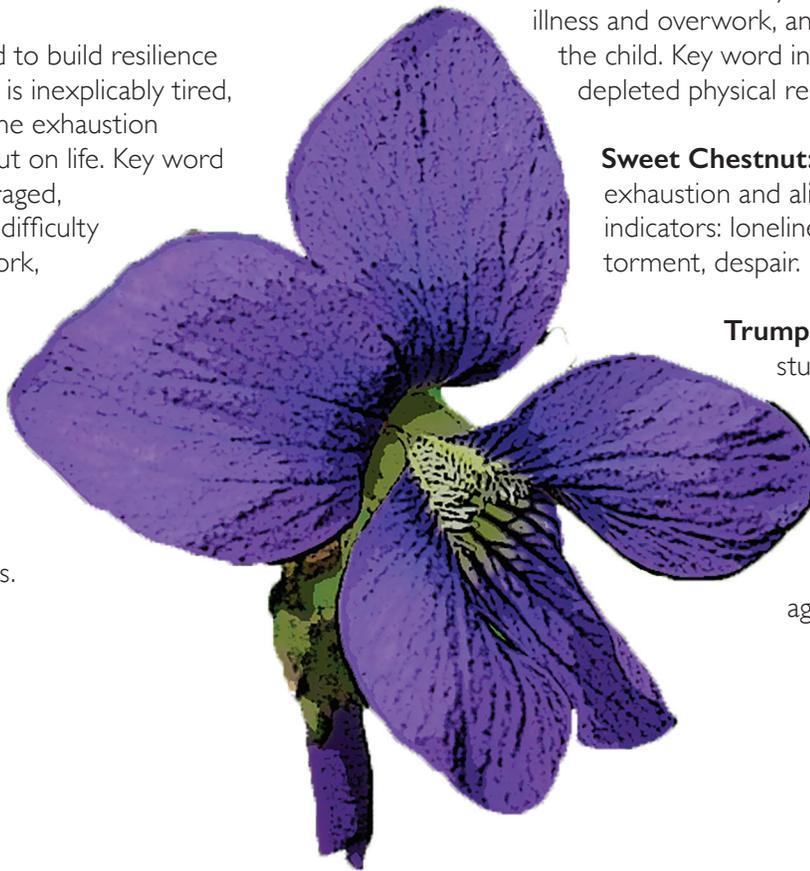
Lotus: Opens the heart to the outside world whilst keeping child protected from negative influences.

Mimulus: Used to quell known fears. Fears are of real, not imagined things: people, places, and activities. Child is shy, timid, sensitive, and blushes easily. Child needs to spend a lot of time alone yet may seem to be an extrovert. Child has difficulty meeting the challenges of everyday life due to fears and worries that unnecessarily hinder and upset him. Key word indicators: anxiety, insecurity, nervousness, social shyness.

Olive: Used to overcome exhaustion. Child experiences continued deep fatigue especially after overwork or lack of sleep. Although exhausted, the child continues on with daily activities but with no enthusiasm. This remedy helps with recovery after illness and overwork, and brings vitality back to the child. Key word indicators: strength, renewal, depleted physical resources.

Sweet Chestnut: Used for feelings of exhaustion and alienation. Key word indicators: loneliness during illness, anguish, torment, despair.

Trumpet Vine: Used for stuttering or other speech impediments including the ability to fully express oneself. Key indicating words are repetition, freedom, fear, confidence and aggressiveness.



Violet: Fosters openness, trust, and warmth, with others. Child is shy and delicate, and fears being in a group. There is a tendency to hold back but at the same time a desire to be included. Key word indicators: retreat, alienation, aloofness, communication, individuality, involvement, loneliness, receptivity, and self-expression.

Water Violet: Used for developing sociability and engagement with life and others. Child prefers to be alone, removed from other children and daily life. Child has difficulty with communication and emotional expression. Child is physically cold and pale. Child can occupy himself quietly for hours on his own. Key word indicators: asocial, aloof, disdainful, arrogant, withdrawn, low energy.

Cell Salt Therapy

The following cell salts are specific for balancing Deficient Fire Element conditions. They can be taken internally as a dissolving tablet or as a water solution under the tongue. More specific guidelines are available in the Cell Salt Therapy section of the Balancing Your Child's Elements chapter.

Cell Salt Indications

Calc. Fluor.: Sluggish circulation

Calc. Phos.: Anemia, blood circulation, brings tone to weak organs and tissues, builds sturdy, robust constitution

Ferr. Phos.: For oxygen-rich blood, anemia, strengthens blood vessels, circulation

Kali Phos.: Nerve nutrient, timid, weary, low vitality, nervous-sensitive disposition, bad mood, tantrums, difficulty sleeping, sharpens mental faculties, helps to maintain a happy and contented disposition

Mag. Phos.: Assists in getting magnesium into the system, take along with magnesium supplement, important for the heart, treats palpitations, racing heart, cramps

Nat. Mur.: Low spirits, hopelessness, headaches, blood thin and watery, pale skin, poor sleep

The Physical Environment

Keep Warm

As stated in the #1 Physical Treatment, this child needs to be kept warm. Allowing feet, belly, low back, and head (including ears) to be cold is robbing the body of vital energy. Saunas, sitting by a fire, hot baths and showers, microwave hot packs placed on the feet, low back and belly, sunbathing, and keeping feet, head, belly and low back covered, all protect and balance the Deficient Fire Element. Also, moderate exercise helps to create heat and generate “fire” in the body; however, too much exercise will consume Fire.

The Seasonal Adjustment

Summer

Sometimes when a child is deficient in the element of the season it is an exceptionally healthy time for the kiddo. It's like the energy of the season fills the child with all that he is missing. However, the opposite can also happen. It's like being deficient in the element actually repels the element from getting in. Or, if it gets in, the body rejects it like a foreign invader needing extermination. Some Deficient Fire Element children may have adverse reactions to the sun and heat in the summer time, tending toward heat exhaustion, or a milder version, what I call “wilted flower syndrome” (just what it sounds like). Headaches, sore throats, anxiety, and difficulty sleeping are some of the other possibilities. If this is the case, follow the recommendations in the Excess Fire chapter under Physical Environment for acupressure points and essential oils to clear heat. This may seem contradictory to previous advice, but it is fine to do in the short term.

Sensory Issues

Speech

Because the tongue and speech are the sense organ of the Fire Element, keeping an eye out for speech issues is important for imbalanced Fire Element children. This includes slow-to-develop speech, difficulty with enunciation, stuttering, etc. More information is available at www.asha.org/public/speech/disorders/ChildSandL.htm, The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association under Child Speech and Language. They have a great information page about what to look for and what is normal speech development.

Home Environment - Feng Shui

Promote the Fire Element through Immersion in the Element

Tend a fire or sit by a fireplace. Decorate with fun lights and candles. Wear red, orange, and pink clothing. Have pictures of fire, candles, and the color red on the walls. These all strengthen the Fire Element.

PRACTICAL PARENTING

The #1 Psychosocial Issue: Presence and Engagement

A similar restlessness and impatience can be seen in Deficient Fire kids as in Excess Fire kids, but the reason is more low endurance due to less Fire energy and “deficient blood.” However, addressing it in a similar way is useful, so consider the suggestions in the Psychosocial issue section of the Excess Fire chapter.

Honor Introversion but Affirm Emotional Intelligence

Some elemental types are more likely to be introverts. Deficient Fire is one of them. Day Masters or imbalances in Water or Metal are others. In addition to the issue of being an introvert in an extravert-valued world, this group of kids may need more assistance in learning to read social/emotional cues and coaching to act appropriately based on the cues provided. It’s possible this child may not really even notice that other people are involved in a particular interaction or that they have any impact on them. Talking over people, and not being able to “play catch” in a conversation (ie. stay on topic, ask broadening questions, respond with empathy to other’s emotions) can be typical with Deficient Fire Element kids. This is not for the same reasons as Excess Fire. Excess Fire kids are too excited to slow down and pay attention to other’s needs. Deficient Fire Element types may not have the same ability or desire to connect with others. Fostering emotional intelligence is the best medicine for the Deficient Fire Element. This includes modeling empathy for your child, understanding his perspective, naming emotions and the problem needing to be solved, and “playing out” difficulties. Play is the best teacher for all children, but especially children with Fire Element imbalances. Role playing,

using puppets or stuffed animals to give voice to an issue, exaggerating the situation in a silly way, and playing charades particular to the situation all open the door to connection.

The Emotion of the Fire Element: Joy **Create Moments of Joy, Love, and Connection**

Children with Deficient Fire Element may simply have a lack of joy, or they may go so far as having despair. They may also be anxious or detached. It’s important to be persistent in connecting with these children. You may not experience the feedback you are looking for, but because their main psychosocial issue is connection and engagement, persistence will pay off, for you and for them. Expressing joy yourself and intentionally creating moments of joy, love, and connection for you and your child will provide good patterning for this child. As mentioned in the Excess Fire Element chapter, protecting the innocence and belief in “magic” is important as well. See the suggestions for this in the Emotion section of the Excess Fire chapter.

The Strengths of the Element **Encourage Creativity**

All aspects of creativity increase Fire energy. Everything from visual art (including photography, coloring, painting, drawing, sewing, and knitting) to music, dance, singing, story telling, comedy, and acting, all feed the Fire Element. The process of brainstorming is very stimulating for the Fire Element. It can include coming up with ideas for creative projects, future plans, and solving everyday problems. Fire is one of the main sources of ideas, and in the state of Deficient Fire Element, the creative process may be stilted. The Deficient Fire Element child may be happy to go along with others’ ideas, but conscious instruction on the creative process will provide the spark to light his creative fire. Many resources for stimulating creativity

are available today. “Whack Pack” by Roger Von Oech is one example.

Role Playing and Other Drama Games

Your child may shrink at the idea of playing charades; but all things expressive and dramatic will push him out of his comfort zone for his future benefit, especially school. This is a child who will benefit greatly from playing make believe, telling stories and jokes, putting on skits, and playing singing games, all things he most likely won't feel comfortable doing, especially as he gets older. It is good to start early if you know this about your child.

Insights from the Creation and Control Cycle

Fortify the Deficient Element by Strengthening the Mother Element:

Strong Wood Builds Strong Fire

It takes wood to build and continuously fuel a fire. Through the creation cycle, the Mother element has the power to strengthen the Child element. Nurturing the Wood Element in all ways will bring strength to the Fire Element. Following the guidelines in the Deficient Wood Element will provide the best support for a Deficient Fire child to thrive. This is especially true if the Wood Element is also deficient. See the Deficient Wood Element chapter for recommendations.

Align with the Attributes of the Controlling Element:

Show the Introvert What to Do While in Retreat

Your Deficient Fire Element child will intuitively want to retreat, but he may not know how to best utilize the time in retreat. The attributes of Water that can go a long way to fortify Deficient Fire are rest,

reflection, and depth. This is different than simple isolation. It requires conscious engagement with the self. As a child gets older, journaling and drawing can facilitate this process.

Play and Lifestyle

Teach Balance. In our work hard, play hard culture, rest and calming activities such as reading, knitting, art, and journaling are under-practiced. Childhood is where we learn our work/play/rest balance. Deficient Fire Element kids need and typically want more down time. This is an organic need and should be honored. It doesn't hurt to push them to engage in the world as long as it is balanced with meeting their need for solitary down time. If you push them too far with overstimulation, you may find they become exhausted and have difficulty sleeping or exhibit moody and anxious behavior.