Outline of Common Respiratory Tract Ailments
Overview—handout, part 2
*(also see handout, Treatment Plans—Viral Infections, Respiratory Tract)

• Common Cold
  o Etiology—Stress, loss of sleep; immune imbalances; exposure to viral pathogens
  o Symptoms—Sniffles, runny nose (clear), sore throat, headache, nasal congestion, sometimes fatigue, myalgia
  o TCM patterns—wind-cold; wind-heat; also look for spleen Qi deficiency, other underlying signs of excess or deficiency patterns
  o Suggested treatments
    ▪ Branch: symptomatic relief as needed; typically use warming herbs if wind-cold pattern exists (cinnamon, ginger, elecampane, wild ginger)
    ▪ Root: use immunomodulators carefully (turkey tails, artist conk, etc.)
  o Contra: Spleen Qi tonics during the acute phase; cold herbs

• Influenza
  o Etiology—lowered immunity; exposure to viral pathogens
  o Symptoms—nasal congestion, sore throat, cough, fever; anorexia
  o TCM patterns—attack by exogenous wind-heat pathogen
  o Suggested treatments
    ▪ Branch: immunomodulators, appropriate symptomatic relief
    ▪ Root: follow acute phase with immunomodulators like medicinal mushrooms; sweating therapy
  o Contra: hot herbs, use sparingly; use warm Sp. Qi tonics carefully
• Strep Throat
  o Etiology—lowered immunity; contact with the pathogen through sharing drinks, kissing, etc. Most common in school-age kids and teens. Most common sore throat due to bacteria (about 10-15% overall); most sore throats are from viral infection.
  o Symptoms—sudden onset of scratchy sore throat, cough, yellow sputum, swollen lymph nodes in the neck, difficulty swallowing, headache, white patches on tonsils.
  o TCM patterns—attack by exogenous heat pathogen
  o Suggested treatments
    ▪ Branch: symptomatic relief (see separate handout)
    ▪ Root: for chronic bronchitis, lung-strengthening herbs (codonopsis, etc.), long-term immunomodulators, especially reishi, artist conk.

• Sinusitis
  o Etiology—Lowered immunity; respiratory allergies; predisposition; about 35 million people have at least one occurrence/year.; all sinuses connect with the nasal passages to drain debris, mucus; acute or chronic; not treatable, might involve Aspergillus, etc.
  o Symptoms—Can last for 12 weeks or longer; pain and congestion in the sinuses cavities around the nasal passages; headache.
  o TCM patterns—heat pathogen, but pay attention to underlying patterns (Sp. Qi deficiency, lung yin deficiency, etc., especially with chronic sinusitis.
  o Suggested treatments
    ▪ Branch: antiinflammatory herbs, antibacterials, immunomodulators; analgesics; decongestants; nasal saline flushes with
• Root: Immunomodulating herbs for chronic conditions; constitutional remedies

• Bronchitis/Pneumonia
  o Etiology—more susceptible, alcoholics, the elderly, immune-suppressed individuals (HIV), cancer treatment,
  o Much of pneumonia seen clinically is caused by viruses.
  o Streptococcus pneumoniae causes about 90% of all bacterial pneumonia cases.
  o Symptoms—Inflammation of lung with accompanying fluid build up. High fever with difficulty breathing; chest pain
  o Lungs have reddish appearance due to dilated blood vessels
  o TCM patterns—lung heat
  o Suggested treatments
    ▪ Branch: clear heat; support lung; cold bitter herbs like with berberine (see other handout with protocols)
    ▪ Root: Immune support

• Asthma
  o Etiology—A condition in which a person’s airways become inflamed, narrow and swell, and produce extra mucus, which makes it difficult to breathe.
heterogeneous disorder characterized by chronic inflammation of the respiratory airways that can be triggered by allergen exposure or by other mechanisms, possibly autoreactive/autoimmune. The autoimmune hypothesis is further, indirectly, supported by the response to immunosuppressive drugs.

- Can be life-long; affects any age

- Asthma can be minor or it can interfere with daily activities. In some cases, it may lead to a life-threatening attack.

- Symptoms—Asthma may cause difficulty breathing, chest pain, cough, and wheezing. The symptoms may sometimes flare-up.

- TCM patterns

- Suggested treatments

  - Medical treatment: Asthma can usually be managed with rescue inhalers to treat symptoms (albuterol) and controller inhalers that prevent symptoms (steroids). Severe cases may require longer-acting inhalers that keep the airways open (formoterol, salmeterol, tiotropium), as well as oral steroids.

  - Branch: herbs that have been used to treat asthma include mullein, boswellia (Indian frankincense), ivy tips (dried, extracted), and butterbur. Vitamin C (ascorbic acid) and omega-3 fatty acids (fish oil) can reduce inflammation and alleviate asthma symptoms. Antiinflammatory herbs such as pineapple stem (bromelain), hops, turmeric, ginger.

  - Root: Long-term herb selection depends on a differential dx, treatment of constitutional imbalances; avoiding potentially allergenic foods; controlling sources of airborne allergens in the house (air filters, pillow covers, hardwood floors; checking mold spore count, etc.

- COPD (Discuss if time)