



# Technical Specification

**ISO/TS 23961-3**

## Traditional Chinese medicine — Vocabulary for diagnostics —

### Part 3: Abdomen

*Médecine traditionnelle chinoise — Vocabulaire pour les  
diagnostics —*

*Partie 3: Abdomen*

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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

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This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 249, *Traditional Chinese medicine*.

In addition to text written in the official ISO languages (English, French, Russian), this document gives text in Chinese, Japanese and Korean. This text is published under the responsibility of the member body for China (SAC) and is given for information only. Only the text given in the official languages can be considered as ISO text.

A list of all parts in the ISO 23961 series can be found on the ISO website. <https://www.iso.org/standard/88888888/iso-ts-23961-3-2024>

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at [www.iso.org/members.html](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

## Introduction

Abdominal diagnosis is one of the unique diagnostic methods in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). International standards in the field of TCM are needed to facilitate international communication, medical activities, scientific researches and regulations. Furthermore, the standardization of terminology is very important for manufacturing products (e.g. education-related products and diagnostic products).

This document facilitates government regulation and policy. It also facilitates the international trade of abdominal diagnosis related products and services.

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# Traditional Chinese medicine — Vocabulary for diagnostics —

## Part 3: Abdomen

### 1 Scope

This document defines terms for abdominal diagnosis. The equivalent terms in Chinese characters (Pinyin), Japanese characters and Korean characters are given in [Annex A](#).

### 2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

### 3 Terms and definitions

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>

— IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>

#### 3.1 General

##### 3.1.1

##### **abdominal examination**

method of physical investigation of the abdomen

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

Note 2 to entry: Methods include palpation.

Note 3 to entry: See term 2.4.74 "abdominal examination" in Reference [\[1\]](#).

##### 3.1.2

##### **manifestation**

symptom or identifiable result of a specific ailment or situation

Note 1 to entry: Manifestations can be either objective when observed by a physician, or subjective when perceived by the patient.

#### 3.2 Abdomen structure

##### 3.2.1

##### **epigastric region**

epigastrium

part of the *upper abdomen* ([3.2.7](#)) above stomach and below the diaphragm inside mammillary line

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

Note 2 to entry: See [Annex B: Figure B.1](#), key 3 and [Figure B.2](#) key 3.

### 3.2.2

#### **chest and hypochondrium**

region along the costal arches

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

Note 2 to entry: See [Annex B: Figure B.1](#), key 4 and [Figure B.2](#), key 4.

### 3.2.3

#### **lateral upper abdomen**

lower hypochondrium

region of the abdomen bounded by the lower costal arch and the side of the chest

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

Note 2 to entry: See [Annex B: Figure B.1](#), key 5 and [Figure B.2](#), key 5.

### 3.2.4

#### **supra-umbilical region**

region above the umbilicus

central region of the abdomen above the navel

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

Note 2 to entry: See [Annex B: Figure B.1](#), key 6 and [Figure B.2](#), key 6.

### 3.2.5

#### **left or right umbilical region**

para-umbilicus region

region beside the umbilicus

central region of the abdomen left and/or right beside the navel

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

Note 2 to entry: See [Annex B: Figure B.1](#), key 7 and [Figure B.2](#), key 7.

### 3.2.6

#### **infra-umbilical region**

region below the umbilicus

central region of the abdomen below the navel

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

Note 2 to entry: See [Annex B: Figure B.1](#), key 8 and [Figure B.2](#), key 8.

### 3.2.7

#### **upper abdomen**

abdominal region above the level of the navel

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

Note 2 to entry: See [Annex B: Figure B.1](#), key 9.

### 3.2.8

#### **lower abdomen**

abdominal region below the level of the navel

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

Note 2 to entry: See [Annex B: Figure B.1](#), key 10.



### 3.2.9

#### **lateral lower abdomen**

part of the lower abdominal region lateral to the mammillary line

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

Note 2 to entry: See [Annex B: Figure B.1](#), key 11.

## 3.3 TCM abdominal manifestations on clinic

### 3.3.1

#### **abdominal strength**

quality of being tense in abdomen

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

### 3.3.2

#### **tenderness**

pain as a result of pressure

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

### 3.3.3

#### **resistance**

tension opposition to an active force

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

Note 2 to entry: The term is used to describe resistance to pressure.

### 3.3.4

#### **stuffiness**

localized subjective feeling of *fullness* ([3.3.5](#)) and obstruction

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

Note 2 to entry: See 2.3.152 “stuffiness” in Reference [1] and 09-319 “stuffiness” in Reference [2].

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Note 3 to entry: The term is used to describe epigastric stuffiness.

### 3.3.5

#### **fullness**

subjective feeling of being filled to capacity

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

Note 2 to entry: The term is used to describe *fullness and discomfort in chest and hypochondrium* ([3.4.5](#)).

### 3.3.6

#### **pulsation**

beating of artery

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

Note 2 to entry: The term is used to describe pulsation of aorta.

### 3.3.7

#### **tension**

state of being stretched tight

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

Note 2 to entry: The term is used to describe *rectus abdominal muscle tension* ([3.4.15](#)).

### 3.3.8

#### **contracture**

state of static muscle shortening sometimes with shortening of skin

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

Note 2 to entry: The term is used to describe lower abdominal and inguinal muscle *tension* ([3.3.7](#)).

### 3.3.9

#### **flaccid abdominal wall**

restless peristalsis

state of thinness of the abdominal wall with decreased bowel movement

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

Note 2 to entry: The term is used to describe *unstable peristalsis* ([3.4.19](#)) (observed through flaccid abdominal wall).

### 3.3.10

#### **spastic abdominal wall**

state of rigidity of the abdominal wall with abdominal pain

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

Note 2 to entry: The term is used to describe abdominal wall *tension* ([3.3.7](#)).

## 3.4 Application of abdominal terms

### 3.4.1

#### **epigastric stuffiness**

stuffiness in the epigastric region

focal distension in *epigastric region* ([3.2.1](#)) reported by the patient

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

Note 2 to entry: See [Annex B: Figure B.3 a](#)).

Note 3 to entry: See term 09-335 “epigastric stuffiness” in Reference [\[2\]](#).

Note 4 to entry: The term is used to describe subjective epigastric *stuffiness* ([3.3.4](#)).

Note 5 to entry: The first mention is in the *Shanghanlun* [\[3\]](#).

### 3.4.2

#### **epigastric stuffiness and resistance**

subjective feeling of *fullness* ([3.3.5](#)) and obstruction in *epigastric region* ([3.2.1](#)) reported by the patient and opposite force when abdomen is palpated

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).

Note 2 to entry: See [Annex B: Figure B.3 b](#)).

Note 3 to entry: See term 2.3.150 “stuffiness and rigidity below the heart” in Reference [\[1\]](#).

Note 4 to entry: The term is used to describe *epigastric stuffiness* ([3.4.1](#)) and *resistance* ([3.3.3](#)) to pressure.

Note 5 to entry: The first mention in the *Shanghanlun* [\[3\]](#).

### 3.4.3

#### **obstructive sensation in epigastrium**

rectus *abdominal muscle tension* ([3.4.15](#)) under the costal arch associated with feeling of obstruction and discomfort in *epigastric region* ([3.2.1](#))

Note 1 to entry: See [Table A.1](#).