



SUN TEN

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NEWSLETTER

中医 Traditional Chinese Medicine

New Uses of Ancient Formulas: *Yu Ping Feng San* [Saposhnikovia & Astragalus Formula], *Long Dan Xie Gan Tang* [Gentiana Combination], *Sheng Mai San* [Ginseng & Ophiopogon Combination]



Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is based on pattern differentiation, not disease differentiation. However, due to “ready made” pattern differentiations in textbooks, we might potentially create our own TCM-version of limitations: When treating a certain disorder, are our minds open for any possible pattern the patient might present, or are we “pre-programmed” towards the patterns commonly associated with that disorder?

A number of Chinese publications have a column entitled “New Uses of Ancient Formulas”. The following review may inspire a new approach in difficult to treat cases.

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New Uses of *Yu Ping Feng San* [Saposhnikovia & Astragalus Formula]

Yu Ping Feng San [Saposhnikovia & Astragalus Formula] literally means Jade Screen Powder, denoting the formula's function of securing the body exterior against exterior evils. It consists of *Huang Qi* [Astragalus], *Bai Zhu* [Atractylodes] and *Fang Feng* [Siler]. Common applications include susceptibility to the common cold and frequent infections, allergic rhinitis, profuse sweating, and chronic respiratory allergies. The traditional indication of *Yu Ping Feng San* is vacuity of lung qi and defence qi (also called wei qi). Defence qi regulates the opening and closing of the pores, guards the surface of the skin against external pathogenic factors, and regulates body temperature and excretion of sweat. Lung qi circulates defence qi, holds sweat and transports fluids to the skin. A lung qi imbalance can therefore result in frequent invasion of pathogenic factors, dry skin and abnormal sweating.

Use of *Yu Ping Feng San* in Skin Conditions

Looking at the functions of lung qi and defence qi, it is not surprising that *Yu Ping Feng San* finds new applications in the area of skin conditions. Dr. Bao Zuo Yi¹, Director of a dermatology department, relates different types of skin problems and the associated symptoms that make the disorders suitable for treatment with *Yu Ping Feng San*.

Use in Cold-Type Urticaria: Urticaria (hives) are red, itchy, raised areas on the skin. Cold-type urticaria usually appears as a result to exposure to cold wind, and is alleviated or disappears completely when the temperature gets warmer. As *Yu Ping Feng San* strengthens defence qi and secures the exterior, administration of *Yu Ping Feng San* can usually alleviate the condition significantly or completely cures it.

Use in Multiple Furuncles (boils): Furuncles are infections of hair follicles and are caused by staphylococcus bacteria. Their occurrence is linked to lowered immunity, hence treatment with *Yu Ping Feng San* with its property of securing the exterior tends to be successful.

Use in Primary Thrombocytopenic Purpura: A bleeding disorder of auto-immune nature, characterised by too few platelets in the blood due to platelets being destroyed by the immune system. The cause of this disorder is not fully understood. Symptoms include a characteristic skin rash (pin-point red spots), easy bruising, heavy menstrual bleeding, nose-bleed or oral bleeding, or loss of blood into the gastrointestinal (GI) tract. According to the clinical experience of Dr. Bao, the chance of remission is good with administration of *Yu Ping Feng San* for a time frame between two weeks to two months.

Use in Facial Paralysis Resulting from Herpes Zoster: Inflammation in response to the herpes virus can either cause an inflammation of the facial nerve or cause compression of the nerve within the fallopian canal, which in turn results in impaired transmission of signals to the facial muscles. Treatment is usually with acupuncture, however, Dr. Bao has found that results can be greatly augmented with use of *Yu Ping Feng San*.

Use in Recurring Canker Sores: Their cause in many cases is unknown. In contrast to cold sores, canker sores occur in the soft tissues of the mouth and are not contagious. Treatment with *Yu Ping Feng San* taken with warm water is usually successful within one to two weeks. The patient should be advised not to eat spicy, raw or otherwise potentially irritating foods during treatment.

“administration of *Yu Ping Feng San* can usually alleviate the condition (Cold-type urticaria) significantly or completely cures it.”

Use of *Yu Ping Feng San* in Impediment Pattern

Dr. Zhang Hong Jun² recounts an interesting case history of using *Yu Ping Feng San* in impediment pattern. A 42 year old female patient had been suffering from wandering pain in all joints for several years. Hospital tests revealed that erythrocyte sedimentation was 50mm/1h, rheumatoid factor negative, and she was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis. She was prescribed non steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAID's) and TCM herbs that dispel wind and transform dampness, disperse cold and alleviate pain, with unsatisfactory results.



Upon her first consultation with Dr. Zhang, her symptoms were as follows: Severe joint pain, cold wind tends to chill her to the bone, spontaneous sweating, joint pain is exacerbated after sweating. Bright white facial complexion, pale swollen tongue body with cracks, and rough pulse. Diagnosis: Defence qi vacuity, causing defence qi to be too weak to push evil out of the exterior. This results in lingering wind-damp evil, blocking the channels and collaterals.

The formula of choice is *Yu Ping Feng San* with additions: *Huang Qi* [Astragalus] 20 g, *Bai Zhu* [Atractylodes] 15 g, *Fang Feng* [Siler] 12 g, *Ji Xue Teng* [Milettia] 10 g, *Xun Gu Feng* [Mollissima] 10 g. After taking this formula for 20 days, her spontaneous sweating had decreased, she didn't feel chilled to the bone any more, and her joint pain was alleviated. A repeated test for erythrocyte sedimentation revealed 20mm/1h (was 50mm/1h before Dr. Zhang's treatment), all other symptoms had returned to normal. Dr. Zhang modified the prescription with *Shu Di Huang* [Cooked Rehmannia] 10 g, and *Wu Shao She* [Zaocys] 6 g. The patient took another 52 doses after which the joint pain had disappeared completely. Further check-ups confirmed her recovery was permanent.

Dr. Zhang notes that her previous hospital treatment did not address three important symptoms: Her spontaneous sweating, the fact that the pain was exacerbated after sweating, and her feeling chilled to the bone when exposed to cold wind. If one uses merely wind-dispelling herbs this will deplete the defence qi even further. Treatment with *Yu Ping Feng San* benefits defence qi and secures the exterior, preventing wind evil from entering the exterior. At the second consultation the defence qi was strengthened and the exterior secured, and Dr. Zhang could add *Shu Di Huang* [Cooked Rehmannia] to nourish kidney essence, and *Wu Shao She* [Zaocys] to dispel wind. This way tip and root were both treated, and the patient recovered completely.

New Uses of Long Dan Xie Gan Tang [Gentiana Combination]

Long Dan Xie Gan Tang [Gentiana Combination] is the representative formula for draining repletion heat from the liver and gallbladder and clearing damp heat from the triple jiao. Symptoms include rib-side pain, headache, irritability, dizziness, blood-shot eyes, deafness, swollen ears, bitter taste in the mouth, and dark-coloured and turbid urine. The patient may also experience difficult and painful urination, swelling and itching in the genital area, or malodorous leukorrhea. Tongue: Red with yellow coating. Pulse is wiry, rapid and strong.

In Dr. Zu Hua Zheng's article "New Uses of Long Dan Xie Gan Tang"³, Dr. Zu provides examples of using *Long Dang Xie Gan Tang* in the treatment of different skin disorders to elaborate on the TCM principle "using the same method to treat different diseases".

Case 1: Use of Long Dan Xie Gan Tang in Herpes

A 72 year old male contracted herpes on his right hand and forearm. He was treated in hospital with several different antibiotics with no satisfactory results (as expected considering Herpes is a viral infection). At the first consultation with Dr. Zu, the right hand and forearm were swollen, ulcerative, and showed a bluish discoloration, with a burning and almost unbearable pain. He felt vexed, had a dry mouth with a bitter taste, red tongue with greasy yellow coating and a slippery fast pulse. The pattern was identified as damp-heat in the liver channel, affecting the lung and spleen and manifesting on the fleshy exterior. Hence, Dr. Zu decided to clear the liver and drain fire, resolve toxins, disperse swelling and relieve pain. *Long Dan Xie Gan Tang* with modifications was used: *Chai Hu* [Bupleurum] 12 g, *Huang Qin* [Scute] 10 g, *Zhi Zi* [Gardenia] 10 g, *Long Dan Cao* [Gentiana], *Mu Tong* [Akebia Caulis] 10 g, *Ze Xie* [Alisma] 10 g, *Che Qian Zi* [Plantago] 15 g, *Quan Xie* [Buthus] 6 g, *Wu Gong* [Centipede] three pieces, *Pu Gong Ying* [Dandelion] 30 g, *Da Huang* [Rhubarb] 10 g, *Ju Hua* [Chrysanthemum] 20 g, *Ban Lan Gen* [Isatis Root] 20 g, *Gan Cao* [Licorice] 5 g.

The patient was advised to use the decoction both internally and externally. After 10 doses, the swelling of the right hand and forearm decreased and the burning pain was alleviated. The patient continued to apply the formula both internally and externally for two months, after which his condition had disappeared.



Dr. Zu comments that since treatment targeted at the virus infection alone did not achieve significant results, treatment had to include the patient's constitution which was prone to excess. This type of constitution, when combined with over-eating, is likely to result in liver and stomach damp heat brewing internally. If a virus infection is added to this scenario, external evil combines with internal evil and is hard to treat. Using TCM pattern differentiation revealed that this was a case of combined internal and external evil (dual disease of the interior and exterior), and thus a treatment strategy of treating both the interior and the exterior had to be adopted. *Long Dan Xie Gan Tang* clears and transforms damp heat in the interior. *Pu Gong Ying* [Dandelion], *Ju Hua* [Chrysanthemum], *Ban Lan Gen* [Isatis Root], *Wu Gong* [Centipede] and *Quan Xie* [Buthus] out-thrust evil from the exterior and relieve pain.

Case 2: Use of Long Dan Xie Gan Tang in Furuncles

A 42 year old male suffered from furuncles (boils) spread all over his body since Chinese New Year when he was consuming large amounts of food and alcohol. The furuncles appeared both on back and front of the body; the most affected areas were around the waist and buttocks. He had undergone treatment in several hospitals where he was treated with medicine plasters to no avail. Questioning the patient revealed that he had always been fond of smoking, drinking and rich foods, and had never restricted himself in these habits. His tongue was red with thick white greasy coating, his pulse rapid and slippery.

“...treat the interior by clearing and transforming damp heat of liver and stomach, and treat the exterior by resolving toxin...”

Consuming too many rich foods and alcohol engendered damp heat, which after some time affected the liver, gallbladder, spleen and stomach. By way of the channels and network vessels this damp heat spread throughout the body and manifested on the exterior. Thus, the correct treatment strategy is to treat the interior by clearing and transforming damp heat of liver and stomach, and treat the exterior by resolving toxin, dispersing the furuncles and freeing the network vessels. Dr. Zu uses *Long Dan Xie Gan Tang* with modifications: *Chai Hu* [Bupleurum] 10 g, *Huang Qin* [Scute] 10 g, *Zhi Zi* [Gardenia] 6 g, *Long Dan Cao* [Gentiana] 6 g, *Mu Tong* [Akebia Caulis] 10 g, *Ze Xie* [Alisma] 10 g, *Che Qian Zi* [Plantago] 15 g, *Huang Lian* [Coptis] 5 g, *Ku Shen* [Sophora Root] 10 g, *Pu Gong Ying* [Dandelion] 30 g, *Zi Hua Di Ding* [Viola] 15 g, *Zi Jiao Ci* [Gleditsia] 10 g, *Ju Hua* [Chrysanthemum] 15 g, *Fu Ping* [Spirodela] 30 g, *Cang Zhu* [Atractylodes] 12 g, *Gan Cao* [Licorice] 6 g.

After taking five doses, the condition improved significantly, the furuncles started to disappear and no new furuncles emerged. After taking the prescription for one more week, his skin had healed well.

Dr. Zu explains that the important fact in this case was that the skin disorder was caused by dietary irregularities. Due to lack of moderation in terms of rich foods and alcohol, damp heat toxin was engendered internally, affecting liver, gallbladder, spleen and stomach and by way of the channels and network vessels spreading to the skin. Thus, Dr. Zu used *Long Dan Xie Gan Tang*, to clear and drain liver and spleen damp-heat, adding *Pu Gong Ying* [Dandelion], *Ju Hua* [Chrysanthemum], *Zi Hua Di Ding* [Viola], *Zi Jiao Ci* [Gleditsia], *Fu Ping* [Spirodela] and *Cang Zhu* [Atractylodes] to release toxins and dispel dampness. The patient was advised that in order for treatment to be successful he had to avoid foods that were rich, fatty or spicy, and abstain from alcohol.

New Uses of *Sheng Mai San* [Ginseng & Ophiopogon Combination]

Shen Mai San originates from the classic *Nei Wai Shang Bian Huo Lun* [Identification of Internal and External Diseases], compiled by Li Dongyuan. It is comprised of *Ren Shen* [Ginseng], *Mai Men Dong* [Ophiopogon], and *Wu Wei Zi* [Schizandra]. *Sheng Mai San* supplements both qi and yin, and prevents excessive perspiration, addressing symptoms of qi and yin vacuity such as profuse sweating, thirst, shortness of breath, fatigue, palpitations, and a dry mouth and tongue. The tongue tends to be pale red with a thin dry coating, and the pulse is weak and vacuous.

Dr. Chen Jian Jun⁴ reports an interesting application of *Sheng Mai San* in a case of impediment syndrome:

Use of *Sheng Mai San* in Impediment Syndrome:

A 44 year old female patient (tea farmer). Has lived for the past three years with her husband in a cottage in the mountains, working in the forest during tea picking time, which would leave her soaked with dew, particularly the lower limbs. This tea picking season she started feeling uncomfortable, and after having worked in the rain, she was experiencing aching pain all over her body and had lost her appetite, but sought no treatment. However, after two weeks had passed, the condition worsened and she had problems walking, so that her husband had to carry her to the consultation. Her symptoms included a white face, palpitations and shortness of breath, fatigue, low voice, diarrhoea, aching pain in the joints, no appetite, pale tongue with a thick white coating, and a deep, fine weak pulse.

The pattern was diagnosed as wind-damp at the exterior with concurrent lung and spleen qi vacuity. Dr. Chen used *Sheng Mai San* with additions: *Ren Shen* [Ginseng] 10 g (the Ginseng was cured by steaming to become warmer in nature), *Mai Men Dong* [Ophiopogon] 10 g, *Wu Wei Zi* [Schizandra] 6 g, *Ma Huang* [Ephedra] 10 g, *Yi Yi Ren* [Coix] 60 g, *Xing Ren* [Apricot Seed] 6 g, *Zhi Gan Cao* [Baked Licorice] 6 g, *Fu Zi* [Aconite] 15 g, *Xi Xin* [Asarum] 3 g. After three doses, she could walk herself to the next consultation and her condition had improved greatly. She was instructed to take another three doses after which she had recovered completely.

Dr. Chen notes that in this case, wind-damp-cold had invaded the body due to qi vacuity, entered the channels and network vessels and had become lodged in the joints, causing qi and blood stagnation and resulting in impediment pattern. In this case cold evil was strong, and cold evil tends to constrict and cause pain. As the patient had delayed treatment and lost her appetite, her spleen qi was greatly depleted. With a vacuous spleen her body couldn't dispel dampness, thus her pattern comprised both vacuity and excess. Due to her symptoms and signs, *Sheng Mai San* was indicated to supplement her vacuity. Adding *Ma Huang* [Ephedra], *Yi Yi Ren* [Coix], *Xing Ren* [Apricot Seed] and *Zhi Gan Cao* [Baked Licorice], also known as *Ma Huang Xing Ren Yi Yi Gan Cao Tang*, addressed her pain, and *Fu Zi* [Aconite] and *Xi Xin* [Asarum] resolved the exterior and dispelled dampness, dissipated cold and alleviated pain.

Use of *Sheng Mai San* in Dyspnea

In the same article, Dr. Chen describes a case of dyspnea, a 72 year old male, farmer. The patient had been suffering from chronic bronchitis which had been flaring up from year to year for over the past 20 years. At his first consultation, he was complaining about dyspnea triggered by a cough following a cold. Previous treatment with both Western and Chinese medicine had yielded no results. His symptoms included a green-blue to purplish colour facial complexion and lips, difficulty breathing, lifting his shoulders when opening his mouth, severe breathing difficulties when lying down, cough with copious yellow sticky and hard to expectorate sputum, palpitations, insomnia, poor appetite, thirst, constipation, purplish tongue, with a yellow thick greasy coating, and a regularly interrupted pulse which was fine and vacuous. The pattern was identified as wind-heat invading the lung, with heart and lung qi vacuity.

Dr. Chen prescribed *Sheng Mai San* with additions, using *Ren Shen* [Ginseng] 10 g, *Mai Men Dong* [Ophiopogon] 10 g, *Wu Wei Zi* [Schizandra] 10 g, *Shi Gao* [Gypsum] 30 g, *Ma Huang* [Ephedra] 10 g, *Xing Ren* [Apricot Seed] 12 g, *Zhi Gan Cao* [Baked Licorice] 6 g, *Yu Xing Cao* [Houttuynia] 30 g, *Jin Qiao Mai* [Wild Buckwheat] 30 g.

After five doses the patient's condition started to improve. After taking the prescription for another week, the patient felt well.

Dr. Chen remarks that a prolonged lung disorder will deplete both qi and blood, which then tends to affect the heart. An additional external evil invading the lung will cause further damage to both lung and heart. The patient manifested with both heart and lung qi vacuity, and evil repletion, which made his case complicated. *Sheng Mai San* was used to supplement heart and lung, *Ma Xing Gan Shi Tang* was used to clear the lungs and calm his breathing. *Jin Qiao Mai* [Wild Buckwheat] and *Yu Xing Cao* [Houttuynia] reinforced the formula's action of clearing the lung and transform phlegm.

References available upon request.

中医基础 TCM Principles

Articles appearing under the heading "TCM Principles" are suitable for graduates of the **Sun Ten Self Study Course** and carry footnotes referring to content explained in the course. The articles are ideal to review your studies and further your knowledge in a particular area of TCM.

Simple But Powerful Combinations

By Dagmar Riley.

The following highly effective classical formulas can easily be made up combining two to four single herbs from the Sun Ten range. Empty bottles in two sizes (90ml and 200ml) and Sun Ten bottle labels are available for your convenience.

Severe Pain: *Shi Xiao San* [Pteropus & Bulrush Formula]

Biomedical Function: Analgesic, improves circulation.
TCM Functions: Alleviates severe pain by quickening blood and dispelling stasis, and dispersing accumulation.

Ingredients:

- *Wu Ling Zhi* [Pteropus].
- *Pu Huang* [Pollen Typhae] in equal quantities.

Both *Wu Ling Zhi* and *Pu Huang* free the blood vessels, remove stasis and alleviate pain.

Dosage: Take 1 g every hour in cases of acute pain, or 2 to 3 g three times per day.

Traditional Indications: Severe pain due to blood stasis, e.g. painful menstruation (may be used before and during menstruation), endometriosis, headache, chest pain, epigastric pain and abdominal pain.

Pain due to blood stasis manifests as pain that is stabbing, in a fixed location, and tends to be worse at night time; menstrual blood is dark and clotted. This pain is brought about by blood stagnating and blocking the channels. According to TCM theory, "when there is stoppage, there is pain", hence this type of pain has to be treated by moving blood. Be aware that additional treatment might be required depending on the cause of blood stasis. Blood flow may be inhibited by qi stagnation, trauma, haemorrhage or cold evil, with qi stagnation as the probably most common cause. Add either *Chai Hu Shu Gan Tang* [Bupleurum & Cyperus Combination] for severe qi stagnation or *Xiao Yao San* [Bupleurum & Dang Gui Combination] in gynaecological cases with premenstrual tension.

Modern Applications (providing the appropriate traditional indications are present): Severe abdominal or epigastric pain, dysmenorrhea, endometriosis, headache, coronary artery disease, pain due to external injuries, and retention of the lochia.

Combination with Other Formulae:

Shi Xiao San can be combined with other formulae to add an analgesic effect.

- With *Xiao Yao San* [Bupleurum & Dang Gui Combination] in cases of dysmenorrhea or endometriosis if liver qi stagnation is suspected to be the cause for blood stasis. As the circulation of blood depends on qi, qi stagnation can cause blood stasis. Liver qi stagnation can manifest as premenstrual breast distension, emotional frustration, feeling stressed or angry, irregular menstruation, frequent sighing.
- For severe qi stagnation, combine with *Chai Hu Shu Gan Tang* [Bupleurum & Cyperus Combination].
- With *Chuan Xiong Cha Tiao San* [Cnidium & Thea Formula] for migraine headaches or headache characterised by stabbing pain of fixed location.

Contraindications: Due to its blood moving properties this formula is contraindicated during pregnancy. Caution in patients using blood thinning medication.

Source: Tai Ping Hui Min He Ji Ju Fang (Imperial Grace Formulary of the Tai Ping Era), written between 976~997 AD and probably published around 1110 AD.

Threatened Miscarriage: *Shou Tai Wan* [Fetus Longevity Pill]

TCM Function: Supplements the kidneys and "calms the foetus".

Ingredients:

To be made up from:

- *Tu Si Zi* [Cuscuta] two parts.
- *Sang Ji Sheng* [Loranthus] one part.
- *Xu Duan* [Dipsacus] one part.
- *E Jiao* [Gelatin] one part.

Tu Si Zi and *Sang Ji Sheng* supplement the kidneys and have traditionally been proven effective in the treatment of threatened miscarriage. *Xu Duan* supplements liver and kidneys, stops uterine bleeding and calms the foetus. *E Jiao* supplements blood and yin and stops bleeding.

Dosage: Take 2 to 3 g three times per day.

Traditional Indications: Threatened miscarriage in the first trimester due to kidney vacuity. Often, there is a history of miscarriage. Symptoms include vaginal bleeding during pregnancy, lumbar soreness or pain, bearing down feeling in the lower abdomen. Dizziness, exhaustion, weak legs, and frequent urination.

Kidney yang vacuity:

- Tongue: Pale with a moist white coating.
- Pulse: Sunken, slow, weak.

Kidney yin vacuity:

- Tongue: Red without coating.
- Pulse: Floating and vacuous.

Both kidney yin and yang need to be supplemented, as the possibility of sinking of qi inherent in threatened miscarriage needs the uplifting function of yang, whereas yin and blood supplementation is necessary to adequately nourish the foetus.

Above treatment is effective only if the condition is not due to genetic problems with the foetus.

Combination with Other Formulae:

- With *Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang* [Ginseng & Astragalus Combination] in cases of strong bearing down feeling or pronounced qi vacuity. Qi vacuity symptoms: Shortage of qi (weak, short, hasty breathing, faint voice), disinclination to talk, fatigue, lack of strength, spontaneous sweating, dizziness that worsens with taxation, dropping distending feeling in the abdomen.
- With *Dang Gui Shao Yao San* [Dang Gui & Peony Formula] as a preventative combination throughout the first trimester. *Dang Gui Shao Yao San* was first mentioned in Zhang Zhong Jing's classic "Jin Gui Yao Lue" of the Han Dynasty and was used to ease abdominal pain during pregnancy. The formula treats the so common pattern of liver blood vacuity and spleen vacuity with damp (liver invading spleen). While *Shou Tai Wan* supplements the kidneys, *Dang Gui Shao Yao San* regulates the liver and strengthens the spleen to support the spleen in the extraction of nutrients and blood production.



Caution: Do not use or use only in combination with heat clearing herbs in cases of blood heat. Symptoms of blood heat: Feeling hot, restlessness, irritability, thirst, dry mouth, insomnia, dark urine. Tongue: Red with yellow coating. Pulse: Rapid.

Source: Yi Xue Zhong Zhong Can Xi Lu (Records of Heart-Felt Experiences in Medicine with Reference to the West).

Asthma: *Fu Ling Xing Ren Gan Cao Tang* [H.A. and Licorice Combination]

TCM Function: Promotes normal movement of qi and loosens the chest (treats feeling of oppression in the chest that results from qi stagnation due to emotional depression).

Ingredients:

To be made up from:

- *Fu Ling* [Hoelen] six parts.
- *Xing Ren* [Apricot Seed] four parts.
- *Gan Cao* [Licorice] one part.



Fu Ling strengthens the spleen and transforms phlegm. *Xing Ren* stops wheezing and coughing. *Gan Cao* supplements the spleen (used in spleen vacuity with shortness of breath) and moistens the lungs.

Dosage: Take 2 to 3 g three times per day.

Traditional Indications: Chest impediment (fullness and oppression in the chest or chest pain), shortness of breath. Sensation of obstruction in the chest accompanied by shortness of breath, palpitations, asthma, cough, chest and back pain.

Modern Applications (providing the appropriate traditional indications are present): Bronchial asthma, cardiac asthma, pulmonary emphysema.

Source: Jin Kui Yao Lue (Prescriptions from the Golden Chamber) by Zhang Zhong Jing.

中西医结合 Integrated Traditional and Western Medicine

Biomedical Profile of Ginseng & Dang Gui Ten Combination according to Current Research Findings

Introduction

Ginseng & Dang Gui Ten Combination (GDGT), in Chinese Shi Quan Da Bu Tang, is a qi and blood supplementing formula originally mentioned in the Tai Ping Hui Min He Ji Ju Fang (Imperial Grace Formulary of the Tai Ping Era), written between 976~997 AD.

GDGT is a variation of *Ba Zhen Tang* [Dang Gui and Ginseng Eight Combination] plus *Huang Qi* [Astragalus] to supplement defence qi, and *Gui Zhi* [Cinnamon] to warm yang and expel cold. The ingredients are:

- *Ren Shen* [Ginseng], *Bai Zhu* [Atractylodes], *Fu Ling* [Hoelen], *Gan Cao* [Licorice] (= *Si Jun Zi Tang* / Four Major Herb Combination): Supplement qi, strengthen spleen.
- *Bai Shao* [Peony], *Shu Di Huang* [Rehmannia], *Dang Gui* [Tang-Kuei], *Chuan Xiong* [Cnidium] (*Si Wu Tang* / Dang Gui Four Combination): Supplement and quicken blood.
- (*Si Jun Zi Tang* + *Si Wu Tang* = *Ba Zhen Tang*).
- *Gui Zhi* [Cinnamon] warms (spleen and kidney) yang and expels cold, *Huang Qi* [Astragalus] supplements qi, boosts defence qi and secures the exterior.

Modern applications include its use in vacuity type blood disorders such as anaemia and leukaemia, as an aid in minimising side-effects of both chemotherapy and radiation therapy, as general tonic to enhance energy, immunity, appetite and concentration for AIDS or Cystic Fibrosis Syndrome (CFS) patients, post-partum & post surgical conditions, poor wound healing, chronic and debilitating illness, gynaecological disorders due to blood and qi vacuity with vacuity cold including infertility, habitual miscarriage, and abnormal uterine bleeding.

Influence on the Circulatory System and Basal Metabolism

Influence on the Circulatory System

GDGT increases the number of blood cells and improves blood circulation: In a blood deficiency rat model, the administration of GDGT granules could markedly increase haemoglobin and red blood cells. In another study, anaemic rats were given GDGT and the control group were given water. Haemoglobin and red blood cells were tested after eight days. In the study group, both haemoglobin and red blood cells had increased significantly compared to the control group. It was also discovered that GDGT reduces the prothrombotic effects of stress and helps maintain blood circulation.⁵

The Effect on Basal Metabolism

According to TCM, GDGT has a dual function of supplementing both qi and blood. In modern medical terms, qi supplementation enhances the functions of the organism, tissue and cells. The material basis for these functions is Adenosine triphosphate (ATP), the principal carrier of chemical energy in cells. An experiment with rats revealed that GDGT seems to accelerate glucose absorption in the small intestine. During the glucose metabolism ATP is produced. Experiments also show that orally administered GDGT in granule form has an anti-fatigue function and can prolong hypoxia tolerance and swimming time in mice.⁶ Moreover, GDGT caused an increase in body weight of the mice, indicating that GDGT has a definite qi supplementing effect.⁷

Clinical examples of dual qi and blood deficiency: 30 cases of dual qi and blood deficiency manifesting as pale enlarged tongue with teeth marks, and deficient weak or fine pulse were administered GDGT. GDGT not only markedly improved symptoms such as frequent night-time urination, loose stool, aversion to cold and cold extremities, swollen feet and puffy face, but also elevated blood serum cortisol and haemoglobin content.⁸

Post-operative patients all experience some degree of dual qi and blood vacuity, which may be associated with anaemia and low levels of protein in the blood. It was found that post-operative patients that had been administered GDGT showed a marked increase in albumin, albumin/globulin, haemoglobin, red blood cells and blood platelets compared to the control group, demonstrating that GDGT effectively alleviates post-operative hypoproteinemia and anaemia.⁹

Influence on the Immune System

GDGT markedly builds and modulates immunity. GDGT administration to mice distinctly boosted phagocyte activity. After stopping administration of GDGT, the boosting effect continued for five days. Traditionally, this immune-enhancing effect of GDGT has been used in cases of debility, exhaustion, post-partum and post-surgical conditions, and to enhance immunity in old age.¹⁰

GDGT helps inhibit atopic dermatitis by preventing the elevation of serum immunoglobulin E (IgE) levels and correcting the Th1/Th2 (T-helper cells) balance skewed to Th2 (which is associated with increased incidence of allergy). A separate study confirmed the ability of GDGT to modulate T-cell responses against ovalbumin toward more balanced T1/T2 responses, which may help prevent the development of diseases associated with immune dysregulation such as recurrent infections or allergic diseases. In a study involving mouse cells, GDGT's ability to stimulate activity for nitric oxide production by macrophages suggested its possible application for immunopotentiality.¹¹ GDGT has also been found to enhance functions of Peyer's patch cells (intestinal immune system modulating activity) *in vitro* and *in vivo*.¹² A protective effect against *Candida albicans* infection in immunosuppressed mice was observed with administration of both GDGT and its components Ginseng, prepared Licorice, White Atractylodes, and Cnidium. This protective action is probably related to GDGT's activation of macrophage function.

Use in Support of Cancer Patients

GDGT is often used in alleviating side-effects of cancer treatment and improving quality of life for cancer patients. In this context, GDGT has been shown to act in various ways such as enhancing phagocytosis, cytokine induction, antibody production, induction of the mitogenic activity of spleen cells and protection against side-effects of anti-cancer drugs as well as radiation-induced immunosuppression and bone marrow toxicity.

Below is a summary of recent research in this area of use:

- In a study demonstrating that a disturbed immune system, especially an imbalance between monocytes and T cells in peripheral blood mononuclear cells, is closely related to cancer recurrence, it was found that GDGT increased the differentiation of peripheral blood mononuclear cells into cytotoxic T lymphocytes specific for tumour cells and also augmented Natural Killer cell activity.¹³
- Another study examined the effect of GDGT on mice with a primary melanocytic tumour and found the life span of GDGT-treated mice was over six months in mean value longer than that of the control mice.

Use in Hepatitis C

GDGT ameliorates anaemia during immunotherapy in patients with chronic hepatitis C. The present standard treatment for chronic hepatitis C is combined immunotherapy. A possible serious side-effect of this kind of treatment is haemolytic anaemia, which requires a reduced dose or complete withdrawal of the medication. GDGT, which contains bone marrow stimulating compounds, significantly ameliorated the reduction in haemoglobin levels in chronic hepatitis C patients who received immunotherapy.¹⁴

Osteoporosis

In a murine model of senile osteoporosis, GDGT proved effective in preventing bone loss, increasing both bone mass and the amount of bone forming surface. In another study, GDGT proved as effective as 17-beta-estradiol in preventing the development of bone loss induced by ovariectomy in rats.¹⁵



GDGT can be used with great effect in a wide array of clinical scenarios characterised by dual qi and blood vacuity, including AIDS, CFS, many types of cancer, general debility etc. Dual qi and blood vacuity manifests in symptoms including fatigue, pale complexion, lacklustre skin, tendency to soft stools, decreased appetite, fainting, blurred vision, numb extremities, muscle spasms, tendency to feel cold, with a pale and flabby tongue.

Contraindications

Due to GDGT's function of warming yang, it should not be used in cases with heat signs such as feeling hot and feverish, extreme thirst and desire for cold drinks, red face, red eyes, vexation and agitation, dry and hard stools, and red tongue.

References available upon request.

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