

Integration of Traditional Chinese Medicine in the Treatment and Support against the Coronavirus (COVID 19)

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The Coronavirus (COVID 19) was born in December 2019 into humans, during the cold damp Winter of Wuhan, the capital city of Hubei province China. This nasty, new-born cousin of the SARS virus, may develop into a fever (call your MD over 100.4 f), dry cough, fatigue, and shortness of breath. While most cases result in mild symptoms, some can progress to pneumonia and multi-organ failure, leading to a case fatality rate of under 6% worldwide (4.7.20) (3).

Starting in central China a few months ago, this virus infected over 80,000 and killed over 4,000 Chinese. Worldwide infections as of April 1st. are 1.3 million infected and a total worldwide fatality of over 78,000 (2). More than nine-in-ten people worldwide live in countries with travel restrictions and or lock downs amid COVID-19. It is spreading around the World, causing quarantines, devastating economies and causing general panic and distress.

This Coronavirus is preventable via the following strategies: of tracking and limiting exposures, washing hand and social distancing. But not preventable with a vaccine (yet) and with testing in the USA and elsewhere slow to confirm the full extent of coronavirus infection, the treatment seems to be supportive, not curative. There is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for COVID-19, though experimental antivirals have been used. Patients with COVID-19 receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms. For severe cases, treatments include care to support vital organ functions.

Integration of Western and Traditional Chinese Medicine for Coronavirus

There was a massive mobilization of resources and an unprecedented response within the People's Republic of China. This has involved huge testing programs, mandated self and hospital quarantine, closure of businesses, factories and provinces even the construction of entirely new hospitals within just weeks. Supportive to conventional medicine, Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is playing a major role in this effort to treat Covid 19 infection.

The Chinese have utilized TCM for every major infectious epidemic and pandemic for over 2,000 years. The ancient book of TCM *Huang Di Nei Jing* (Inner Canon of Huangdi) was written approximately 99 B.C.E.-26 B.C.E.; the text recorded a plague that could transmit disease from human-to-human with symptoms that were like those described for COVID-19. Other texts hundreds of years later, recorded therapies and formulas that were effective at treating infectious diseases.

Currently, the use of TCM has resulted in remarkable improvement and alleviation of symptoms in Covid-19 patients in China. Chinese Herbal Medicine has studied, developed and refined

formulas, from a massive experiential body of knowledge, within each epidemic and the coronavirus (Covid 19) is no different.

Xu Nanping, a vice-minister of science and technology for the Peoples Republic of China, said last week that “about 85 per cent of patients in China had been given the combined treatment” of TCM and Western Drugs, as reported by the South China Morning Post.(4)

SupChina an independent digital media company also reported ..”In a treatment plan released by the National Health Commission in early February, TCM therapies were highly recommended by China’s health authorities as an effective tool to mitigate patients’ symptoms of fever and breathing difficulties. According to Liú Qīngquán the director of the Beijing Traditional Chinese Medicine Hospitals and a member of the team dispatched to Wuhan, TCM had been used in roughly 9,600 COVID-19 cases across the country as of February 10. Outside Hubei, the province hit hardest by the epidemic, about 90% of the patients took TCM remedies at some point and received positive results. “After analyzing case reports from different areas, we have reached a conclusion that TCM is able to prevent mild cases from getting worse,” Liu said.(5)

According to Xinhua, the biggest and most influential media organization in China, "Western medicine offers important life-supporting measures such as respiratory and circulatory assistance, while TCM focuses on improving patients' physical conditions and immune function. They complement each other," said Zhang Boli, an academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering. (6)

Recently Wuhan's coronavirus control headquarters ordered integrated treatment of TCM and Western medicine, especially among non-critical patients, and observation of TCM's curative effects at designated hospitals. Statistics show that 2,220 medics from TCM hospitals and institutions across China have been sent to aid the epidemic fight in Hubei so far. Over 75 percent of COVID-19 patients are receiving TCM treatment in Hubei and over 90 percent in other parts of China. (7)

The main herbal formulas that has been preferred and used by the TCM doctors might surprise you. Please see the list from the lessons learned in Wuhan, for condition progression and matching the most effective Herbal Formulas for that stage. Please call a licensed TCM Herbalist to know when to match the condition with these formulas. (8)

TCM Protection Formulas

Following the Infections in Wuhan the Chinese promoted prevention programs recommending Chinese medicine for prevention. After a review of literature in...’ *Can Chinese Medicine Be Used for Prevention of Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)?* The main principles of TCM use were to tonify energy (qi) to protect from external pathogens, disperse wind and discharge heat, and resolve dampness.

The following herbs are identified (9)

1. Radix astragali (*Huangqi*),
2. Radix saposhnikoviae (*Fangfeng*),
3. Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae (*Baizhu*),
 - Lonicerae Japonicae Flos (*Jinyinhua*),
 - Fructus forsythia (*Lianqiao*).
 - Radix glycyrrhizae (*Gancao*),

Jade Windscreen (*Yu Ping Feng San*) The first 3 herbs listed above consist of the Jade Windscreen Formula. This is probably the most famous prevention formula from TCM literature, for the prevention of respiratory infections and was handed out to Chinese healthcare workers in the SARS epidemic. Variations always included the Jade Windscreen Formula but add “anti-toxin” and other “heat-clearing” herbs such as my favorite...
Andrographis Paniculata (10)(17)

Lonicera, Scute & Forsythia Pills, (*Shuang Huang Lian Wan*,) The other two major ingredients from the literature review are included with Scute in this classic Formula, it’s a popular Chinese formula that Chinese use as a natural alternative to antibiotic for viral infection in colds and flu. This formula sold out in China online and in stores, after the official Xinhua News Agency published an article (in Chinese) that claims the herbal remedy offers hope as a COVID-19 treatment. Xinhua the news agency reported Friday that the Shanghai Institute of Materia Medica and the Wuhan Institute of Virology had discovered that the *Shuang huang lian* oral liquid -- a popular combined herbal remedy commonly used to relieve some symptoms such as fever, cough, and sore throat -- could be used to "inhibit" the deadly virus.(11)(17)

Formulas learned the SARS Outbreak

Minor Bupleurum Formula (*Xiao Chai Hu Tang*) + **Honeysuckle & Forsythia** (*Yin Qiao San*) – The first formula is extremely popular in Japan as a cold and flu preventative. It frees the chest, supports the qi, resolves phlegm, and drains heat from the lung. (12) *Yin Qiao* Formula is an anti-toxin/anti-viral formula with the two main herbs used to modify the formulas used to prevent SARS. (13)(24)

Astragalus & Ligustrum Formula, (*Huang Qi Dong Qing Pia*) is inspired by *Fu Zheng* therapy research in China. *Fu Zheng* means to “support the normal or righteous qi” to protect the body from adverse influences. Appropriate for supporting immune function when challenged by any illness where there is a weakened immune system or weakened immune response. (14)

The Chinese herbal formula that combats 2019 novel coronavirus pneumonia.

Lung Detox. (*Qing Fei Pai Du Tang*.)

There are a few Chinese herbal formulas that have risen to the top of the Chinese experience of treating this Coronavirus and its progression into the deeper and gravely serious COVID 19 pneumonia. One of the star formulas to emerge from this massive experience is the *Qing Fei*

Pai Du formula. The formula QFPDT was applied in the battle against COVID 19, but it's unavailable in the USA as a formula because the US FDA (Food & Drug Administration) has severe restrictions on the sale of Ma Huang and has made Xi Xin a banned herb. The formula with 2 substitutes (for the banned herbs) and all the rest of its other 19 ingredients can be separately sourced and blended.

According to Dr. Huang Huang at the most respected TCM school in China, Nanjing University of Chinese Medicine. "The National Health Commission of the People's Republic of China together with the National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine recommended "*Qing Fei Pai Du Tang*" for the treatment of COVID-19. *Qing Fei Pai Du Tang* consists of a combination of formulas that have been used for thousands of years and whose use has been supported both by classical texts and by the clinical experience of later physicians. "

There are four classic Traditional Chinese herbal formulas, that are combined into one (QFPDT) They all originated from the vast experience that Chinese Medicines have had with explosive epidemics ever since they were written about in the Shang Han Lun (A.D 219) which is among the oldest complete clinical textbooks in the world, TCM have been fighting epidemics and pandemics and recording them for thousands of years.

Mid way through the Coronavirus crises in Hebei, came the recommendation that a TCM prescription of QFPADT, be used for lung clearance and detoxication to treat coronavirus patients. Nearly all confirmed patients in Shanxi in the coronavirus COVID 19 pandemic have taken it.

Reported February 23rd 2020 the "State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine carried out clinical observation of QFPADT in the four provinces of Hebei, Shanxi, Heilongjiang and Shaanxi for the treatment of confirmed patients. The results showed that the total effective rate of clinical treatment of 214 patients was more than 90%.

(15)(16)(17)(18)(19)(20)(21)(22)(23)(24)

What else can we do to make the most inhospitable environment possible for this virus?

(Both in our inner and external environment) There's the Virus and then, there's the Host. So much has been said by the media and experts about the virus and little about the other factor in this equation...the Host! How can we boost our immune response?

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- **Get good sleep** and prioritize your self-care. Sleep is critical to optimal immune function. If you are sleep-deprived, you are not at your peak immunity.
 - **Eat nutrient-rich food and hydrate.** The best dietary advice Traditional Chinese Medicine has to offer involves the cultivation of deep, nourishing hydration. This cannot be accomplished merely by drinking more water. Deep, nourishing hydration comes from eating clean foods that are cooked, "wet," and relatively easy to digest, such as broth soups and porridges-- for breakfast. Vietnamese pho is a good example of a food that provides deep, nourishing hydration.

Foods and beverages best to avoid: Dehydrating drinks like alcohol (some say caffeine and carbonated beverages) Phlegm-producing and inflammatory foods like sugar and

gluten, dairy products. Eating between meals is discouraged in order to give the digestive system a rest and “strong qi,”

- **Vitamin D, Zinc, NAC** (mucus thinner) (25) **and Vitamin C.**(26) Talk to your Doctor about optimizing these nutrients that are particularly important supplementation for optimal immune function.
- **Progressive Relaxation** for 20 minutes Daily. An outbreak is scary, but most people will experience COVID-19 as a mild illness. Prolonged, toxic stress inhibits immune function, here’s the free relaxation audio... https://www.darcynat.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Body_Scan_Stress_Relief.mp3
- **Exercise**, acupuncture, nutritional and herbal supplements recommended by your healthcare practitioner, qigong/tai chi, yoga, meditation, or whatever your “go-to” to unwind must take priority now. These are not luxuries! Take care of yourself.
- **Humidifiers.** Studies have shown that homes kept at 40-60% relative humidity- the optimal range-are likely to have fewer flu viruses lingering in the air and on surfaces. (26).

Is the Coronavirus (COVID 19) Seasonal, Cold-Damp Air Related?

It’s still unknown, but a recent study suggests it might be. The “virus is highly sensitive to high temperature,” which could prevent it from spreading in warmer countries, while the opposite appeared to be true in colder climes”, the study said. With luck, this sensitivity to warmth may make it disappear when the cold damp leaves and the warm weather arrives.(27)

The lessons from TCM teach this virus was born into a very cold-damp Wuhan Winter the climate is damp and it easily mixed with the internal dampness attacking the Lung’s defenses, particularly in patients who have weak digestion and lung energy wore down by a pre-existing conditions or smoking.

In TCM the Coronavirus (Covid 19) is considered a “Damp Evil” pathogen. The China Daily reports Zhang Boli a TCM Doctor with experience of treating SARS said "This time, we are here to replicate the experience of Tianjin (SARS) and give full play to the role of Chinese medicine in fighting the epidemic," he said. "My inner clothing was completely soaked in sweat after I carried out checks at the hospital, but I felt very happy, as it meant the indoor temperature was more than 25 C,(75f) which is highly beneficial for patients 'recovery," he added. (28)

This would also connect with the TCM experience, to recent research into seasonal heat breaking down the virus on surfaces, when warmer weather arrives but also connecting to recent research into humidifiers, that keeping rooms at 40-60% relative humidity the leads to fewer flu viruses lingering in the air and on surfaces. Many buildings may become very dry during Winter. (26)

Another connection is when we breathe in cold air, the blood vessels in our nose may constrict to stop us losing heat. This may prevent white blood cells (the warriors that fight germs) from reaching our mucus membranes and killing any viruses that we inhale, allowing them to slip past our defenses unnoticed.(27)

CDC Prevention Advice

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
 - We recommend that all households also have a working thermometer.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
 - Stay home when you are sick.
 - Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash
 - Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
 - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
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