

***Xue Fu Zhu Yu Tang* for Migraines**

abstracted & translated by

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On page 28 of issue #1, 2007 of *Gan Su Zhong Yi (Gansu Chinese Medicine)*, Yang Guan-rong published an article titled, “ Observations on the Therapeutic Effects of Treating 43 Cases of Migraine with *Xue Fu Zhu Yu Tang Jia Wei* (Blood Mansion Dispel Stasis Decoction with Added Flavors).” *Xue Fu Zhu Yu Tang* is a very famous formula created by Wang Qing-ren as found in his 19th century *Yi Lin Gai Cuo (Correcting the Errors in the Forest [or Field] of Medicine)*. While this formula is most commonly thought of as a main formula for cardiovascular and psychiatric diseases presenting a pattern of blood stasis in the chest, when modified slightly, it can also be used for other conditions as this article shows. A summary of this article is presented below.

Cohort description:

Among the 43 patients enrolled in this cohort study, there were 14 males and 29 females 16-64 years of age, with most of these patients being 20-40 years old. All had suffered from migraine headaches for from six months to 12 years. Attacks were mostly caused by emotional stress, contraction of cold, taxation fatigue, insufficient sleep, and premenstrual syndrome. At the time of an attacks, patients were photophobic, had visual displays of one sort or another, and difficulty thinking clearly. All 43 cases experienced nausea, vomiting, and dizziness with their headaches, and these headaches lasted anywhere from two hours to three days. Twenty-four cases (55.8%) had somber white facial complexions, fear of cold, chilled limbs, and other such signs and symptoms of cold congelation, qi stagnation, and blood stasis. Another 16 cases (37.2%) exhibited fear of cold, chilled limbs, profuse sweating, long, clear urination, a dark, purplish tongue, and either a bowstring, tight or deep, slow pulse. If they were female, they also presented with delayed menstruation with pale red blood and/or blood clots. These patients were diagnosed as presenting a pattern of vacuity cold with blood stasis. Six cases (13.9%) had a family history of migraines, while three cases (6.9%) had a history of brain injury. Seven cases (16.3%) were excessively conscientious, diligent, or persevering.

Treatment method:

The formula used in this study consisted of:

Dang Gui (Radix Angelicae Sinensis), 15g
Tao Ren (Semen Persicae), 10g
Hong Hua (Flos Carthami), 10g
Zhi Ke (Fructus Aurantii), 10g
Sheng Di Huang (uncooked Radix Rehmanniae), 10g
Chai Hu (Radix Bupleuri), 10g
Chuan Xiong (Rhizoma Chuanxiong), 20g
Niu Xi (Radix Achyranthis Bidentatae), 15g
Jie Geng (Radix Platycodi), 10g
Xi Xin (Herba Asari), 10g
Gui Zhi (Ramulus Cinnamomi), 10g
Huang Qi (Radix Astragali), 30g

If frontal headache was severe, 15 grams of *Bai Zhi* (Radix Angelicae Dahuricae) and 20 grams of *Ge Gen* (Radix Puerariae) were added.

If occipital headache was severe, 10 grams of each of *Man Jing Zi* (Fructus Viticis) and *Qiang Huo* (Radix Et Rhizoma Notopterygii) were added.

If vertex pain was severe, 10 grams of *Gao Ben* (Radix Ligustici Chinensis) and six grams of *Wu Zhu Yu* (Fructus Evodiae) were added.

During the time that patients took these medicinals, they were instructed to stop taking any other medications for their migraines. It is assumed that all patients took one packet of these medicinals per day after being decocted in water.

Study outcomes:

Basic control was defined as no obvious headaches for one year after taking the above Chinese medicinals. Marked effect was defined as obviously fewer headaches and/or less severe headaches in the year after taking these medicinals. These headaches did not negatively affect the patient's work or lifestyle, and their vomiting and concurrent symptoms disappeared. Some effect was defined as fewer occurrences of headache for one year after taking the medicinals along with less severe pain. In addition, what headaches there were lasted for a shorter period of time. Nausea, vomiting, and other concurrent symptoms either got less or disappeared. No effect meant that there was no improvement in symptoms or that improvement in symptoms only lasted for as long as the patient took these medicinals. Based on these criteria, 17 cases (39.5%) experienced basic control of their condition, 21 cases (48.9%) experienced a marked effect, three cases (6.9%) got some effect, and two cases (4.7%) got no effect. Therefore, the total effectiveness rate was given as 95.3%. The number of packets of the above medicinals these patients took before seeing an effect was 7-16. The average number of packets before patients saw an effect was 10.

Discussion:

As Dr. Chen points out, there are numerous drugs which treat migraine and most of these are relatively effective. However, many of these also have a lot of side effects. *Xue Fu Zhu Yu Tang Jia Wei* also gets relatively good effects in the treatment of migraine and does so without any side effects.

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