

Discussion on the Understanding of Guizhi Decoction in Treatise on Cold-Attack

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Abstract: Guizhi Decoction is regarded as the top prescription in *Treatise on Cold-Attack* written by Mr. Zhang Zhongjing. Through studying the original text of the *Treatise on Typhoid* and the related literature, this paper elaborates the original prescription, similar prescription, main therapeutic mechanism and clinical application of Guizhi Decoction.

1. Introduction

Guizhi Decoction, first recorded in *Treatise on Cold-Attack* by Zhang Zhongjing in the Eastern Han Dynasty, is the first prescription in this famous book. It is recorded in the book that Guizhi Tang masters Sun stroke, Yang floating and Yin weak, Yang floating, heat from the hair, Yin weak, sweat from the sweat, fear of cold, foul wind, fever, nasal tinnitus and dry vomiting.^[1] This prescription is a prescription written by Mr. Zhang Zhongjing for the Taiyang meridian syndrome. Its compatibility is exquisite, the taste is simple, and the medicinal materials are easy to obtain. It is only composed of five drugs: pungent and warm Gui Zhi, sour and cold Peony, sweet and flat Licorice, pungent Ginger and sweet Jujube. It has been admired and sought after by later generations of physicians and is regarded as the top of the group of prescriptions. This article focuses on GuiZhi Tang and its analogues in the *Treatise on Cold-Attack* and its clinical application.

2. Prescription and application scope of Guizhi decoction

2.1 Analysis of prescription

GuiZhi Tang^[2] consists of five medicines: three taels of cinnamon sticks (peeled), three taels of peony, two taels of licorice (roasted), three taels of ginger (cut), and twenty dates (broken). In this formula, the ruling herb is Gui Zhi, which is pungent and sweet in taste and warm in nature. The pungency can make the evil dispersed on the surface, and the warmth can help Yang to transform Qi to warm the Wei Yang, thus achieving the function of resisting and dispersing. As an adjunct to GuiZhi, Peony has a sour and bitter taste and is slightly cold in nature. The acid has an astringent effect and can astringent sweat, and the cold nature can nourish Yin, nourish Blood and Ying. GuiZhi and Peony with, for sweating with the intention of astringent sweating, a dispersal and a collection. Peony with Gui Zhi is designed to harmonize the Ying and regulate the Wei, one opening and one

closing, one Yang and one Yin.^[3]The pungent and warm taste of ginger has the meaning of divergence, which can reduce the adverse reaction and stop vomiting, and has the function of relieving the exterior. The pungent taste of ginger not only assists the monarch drug to disperse wind and cold, relieve the exterior and help yang, but also assists the minister drug to astringe yin and harmonize ying, and can prevent jujube from being greasy, so that it can protect the spleen and stomach better. Jujube is sweet in nature and has a significant function in tonifying the middle, so it can be used in conjunction with peony to harmonize the middle. The use of ginger and jujube can nourish the spleen and stomach, so that the yin and yang of Ying and Wei Qi and blood are parallel and not contradictory, and the rigid and soft are in harmony with each other. Roasted licorice is flat and sweet in nature, which can harmonize all medicines and harmonize the exterior and interior.

These five drugs are used in combination, supporting the righteousness and relieving the symptoms, combining yin and yang, Qi, Wei, Blood and Ying, and have the effect of relieving the muscle and fixing the surface, harmonizing Ying and Wei, and regulating both yin and Yang^[4].

2.2 Precautions for the use of Gui Zhi Decoction

When Zhang Zhongjing decocts Gui Zhi Decoction, the amount of water used is seven liters, and after boiling three liters over a light fire, only one liter needs to be taken each time^[5]. Furthermore, it is extremely important to take care of the medication after it is taken, and it is very wise and characteristic that extra care should be taken. The essence is to sip hot porridge^[6] shortly after taking it to help the medicine. Because only the cinnamon branch and ginger in Gui Zhi Decoction can generate sweat. The role of its conservation is more significant. If you want to achieve the effect of sweating to dispel the evil out, you need to drink a bowl of hot thin porridge after taking Gui Zhi Decoction. It aims to strengthen the medicinal power of Gui Zhi Decoction and help sweat to get rid of evil Qi. Furthermore, the effect of drinking hot diluted rice is that the patient himself has sweating, unlike the absence of sweating in ephedra soup. Too much sweating will hurt the fluids, but fearing a lack of body fluids. Now and need its sweat to get rid of evil, so drink thin porridge. To make use of water and grain to enrich the middle jiao and produce sweat. In addition, why must drink hot porridge, because the heat in hot porridge, can be sufficient Yang Qi, stimulate and encourage Wei Yang to rise up against evil. So that "the evil that has entered cannot stay less, and the evil that will come cannot re-enter". Furthermore drinking porridge should be done slowly in small bites for two main reasons: firstly, the temperature of the porridge may be too high to burn your mouth, and secondly, drinking porridge slowly allows it to be fully absorbed in the spleen and stomach in order to have enough heat and energy for sweating.

It is also wonderful that it needs to be kept warm, meaning that it needs to be warmed to cover its body after sipping the porridge. Patients should keep warm while sweating, preferably with a blanket. When the whole body is slightly sweaty is the best, sweating is not urgent, not more, not less, do not sweat out, such as water dripping. If you sweat a lot, the Qi will be removed with the liquid, which in turn will damage the righteous Qi, so that the evil Qi will stay and the disease will not be removed. Slight sweating shows the restoration of the balance of yin and yang, the harmony of the Rong Qi and Wei Qi again, and the couples are restored and not sparse. The essence is to stop reintroducing the medicine as soon as the effect of the cure is achieved. It is specified that if the disease is cured by sweating as soon as Gui Zhi Decoction is taken, and the condition is mild, one should stop taking it, and the disease will be solved, to avoid overdoing it and hurting the positive. After the administration of drugs,^[7] care should be taken to avoid foods that are difficult to digest, bring damage to the middle jiao of the spleen and stomach, have some irritation to the gastrointestinal tract, etc. You should not eat foods that are cold and hurt Yang, nourishing and greasy meat and pasta made of wheat, sticky and thick, spicy and stimulating, etc. Because these foods will bring certain damage, resulting in

different degrees of damage to the Yang Qi of the spleen and stomach in the middle jiao, and will also add a burden to the body's digestive function, requiring more positive energy to digest food, resulting in the positive energy not being able to focus on eliminating the surface evil, and thus the surface evil will remain unresolved, and the disease must not be removed.

2.3 Indications for Gui Zhi Decoction

Anyone whose illness is in the solar meridian and whose symptoms include head and neck pain, fever, sweating, and evil wind and cold [8]. The original text mentions, "When the sun is sick, with headache, fever, sweating, and evil wind, Gui Zhi Decoction is the mainstay." This article is the highest summary and complement to the evidence and treatment of solar stroke. The effects of Gui Zhi Decoction are to detoxify the muscles and consolidate the surface, and harmonize the Ying and Wei. Sun disease refers to all superficial symptoms, so whenever there are symptoms such as typhoid fever, stroke, and those who sweat spontaneously without relief, etc. This formula can be used to relieve the symptoms of the exterior and promote sweating to harmonize the Ying and Wei. This formula is a representative formula for exterior wind-cold manifestations of deficiency, and because this formula is effective in harmonizing Ying and Wei, it is also the primary formula for harmonizing the Ying and Wei elements and maintaining the equilibrium of Yin and Yang. Therefore, this formula can be used for spontaneous sweating caused by strong Wei and weak Ying. This formula can also be used when the symptoms of disharmony between the Rongwei and the Wei are manifested when recovering from illness, after pregnancy, or when the body is weak.

2.4 Contraindications of Gui Zhi Decoction

External wind-cold superficial evidence and warm-heat diseases need to be avoided^[9]. This formula is mainly used for treating the disease of disharmony between Rong and Wei. It is used for relieving muscles and dispelling wind, harmonizing Ying-Yin and Wei-Yang. This formula has less sweating power, but more protective and nourishing function. And the formula is equipped with Paeonia lactiflora to benefit Yin and astringent camp, nourishing Yin and brewing sweat. Then this formula needs to be contraindicated in those with purely superficial evidence of solar typhoid such as Ephedra Decoction and Da Xiao Qing Long Decoction. If this formula is mistakenly used, then the evil energy will not be dispersed and will be depressed on the surface of the muscle, making the disease difficult to heal. Then again, people with damp heat in their bodies should not use this formula. Article 17 of the Treatise on Cold-Attack shows that people who drink a lot of alcohol have damp-heat in their bodies, and that it is often stored in the middle jiao. If this formula is misused, the body is more damp-heat, the cure is not effective. This is because Gui Zhi Decoction is characterized by a combination of pungent, sweet and warm, with the pungent warmth being able to help heat and the sweetness adding to the dampness in the body. Finally, Gui Zhi Decoction should not be taken if the body condition is congested with poisonous heat. The original article 19 of the Treatise on Cold-Attack takes the example of vomiting pus and blood. When a patient spits out pus and blood, it is a sign of internal carbuncle. The body of a person suffering from internal carbuncle is always in a state of heat and toxic congestion. If misused, it will cause the body to sweat and damage the body's fluids because the pungent warmth can help heat, and the body's yin and yang will be out of harmony, which will definitely lead to the deterioration of the disease. Therefore, this formula should not be used for diseases with inherent warming characteristics^[10].

3. Overview of GuiZhi Tang and its analogues and its clinical application

In Guizhi Decoction, Guizhi is pungent and warm, sweating, and peony acid is sweet and yin-

stirring. The two complement each other, and there is convergence in the powder, and the elimination of evil takes into account the righting; the combination of ginger, jujube and licorice has the function of protecting the middle Jiao, and has the effect of harmonizing Ying and Wei as a whole. Therefore, if the body's internal disharmony between Ying and Wei leads to illness, it can be treated with Guizhi Decoction^[11]. It can nourish and protect the spleen and stomach of the middle energizer, reconcile qi and blood, and enable the normal function of the viscera in the human body to achieve the purpose of maintaining the balance of yin and yang in the human body and maintaining good health^[12]. Viewing the full text of *Treatise on Cold-Attack*, Zhongjing added and subtracted on the basis of Guizhi Decoction. If Huangqi Danggui was added, it was biased towards qi and blood; if the addition of Pueraria or Magnolia, almonds, so that the party biased towards the lifting of the nature. Therefore, on the basis of Guizhi Decoction, the addition and subtraction, harmony prescription or similar prescription are all based on the treatment of harmonizing the yin and yang of ying-wei qi and blood^[13].

3.1 Application of in rheumatoid arthritis

Rheumatoid arthritis is an immune systemic disease with unknown pathogenic factors and mainly arthritis.^[14]The main clinical manifestations are symmetrical swelling and pain of small joints such as hands and wrists, abnormal state presentation, joint swelling, morning stiffness and other clinical manifestations. If it occurs repeatedly, it will eventually cause articular cartilage or bone destruction, and further induce immune inflammation of the heart, lung, blood vessels and peripheral nerves, eventually leading to the loss of labor.^[15] From the point of view of traditional Chinese medicine, rheumatoid arthritis belongs to “arthralgia syndrome”.^[16] The cause of the disease is exogenous cold evil, damp heat and cold stasis. It stays in the joint site, resulting in meridian obstruction and pain, thus inducing lesions. Li Xiaodan^[17] conducted a controlled trial on patients with active rheumatoid joints. The experimental group was given Guizhi Shaoyao Zhimu Decoction, and it was found that the gastrointestinal injury rate of the experimental group was low. It shows that under the treatment of western medicine, although the pain of joints has slowed down, long-term use of western medicine leads to the break of intestinal colony environment balance, gastrointestinal injury and other side effects, which reduces patient compliance. Due to the redness, swelling, heat and pain of patients in the active stage and the accumulation of damp-heat, it is necessary to give the treatment method of clearing damp-heat drugs and relieving joint contracture. Therefore, in the treatment of medication, it is necessary to relieve pain, clear heat and dampness, and soften tendons. Guizhi Shaoyao Zhimu Decoction is used in the method of slowing down the patient's condition. The results show that the erythrocyte sedimentation rate, C-reactive protein, and anti-CCP antibody levels are reduced, and the intestinal injury rate is reduced. It shows that after using Guizhi Shaoyao Zhimu Decoction, the toxic and side effects are significantly reduced, the intestinal tract is protected, and the inflammatory symptoms are improved after medication.

3.2 Application in Neurosis

Neurosis refers to the generalization of neurofunctional diseases. Through various auxiliary examinations, there are no organic lesions, mainly including anxiety, phobia, obsessive-compulsive disorder, neurasthenia, etc. Yan Xiao and them,^[18] got guidance in the clinical application of Gao Shuzhong. The patient developed abdominal distension and abdominal pain due to anger 10 years ago, which gradually aggravated systemic pain. Therefore, it is considered to give Chaihu Guizhi Decoction for treatment. Xiaochaihu Decoction can relieve the evil of Shaoyang semi-superficies, so that the stagnation of qi can be catharsis, lifting and using; guizhi decoction can reconcile Yingyin Weiyang Qi and blood, the combination of the two can be combed, and gas hemostasis. In

pharmacology ^[19], Chaihu Guizhi Decoction can increase the content of monoamine neurotransmitters, has obvious antidepressant effect. If combined with acupuncture injection in the treatment of gastric neurosis, it can significantly reduce the anxiety and depression of patients, and the recurrence rate is significantly reduced, so that the clinical treatment effect can be significantly improved ^[20].

3.3 Application in abdominal pain

Abdominal pain is the main symptom of pain below the stomach and above the pubic hairline under various pathogenic factors. The basic pathogenesis is divided into deficiency and excess, the actual is not the pain, the deficiency is not the pain. The common deficiency syndrome in clinical practice is the deficiency cold syndrome of the middle viscera, but there is also abdominal pain of spleen yin deficiency syndrome, which cannot be ignored. Chen Ying^[21] in the clinical treatment of patients with spleen yin deficiency syndrome, has a good effect. The patient had abdominal pain deficiency syndrome, but other symptoms showed that it was not Taiyin deficiency syndrome or Yangming disease. Although he was old, he had undergone lung cancer chemotherapy, spleen qi deficiency and yin fluid injury. The previous administration only took care of the yin fluid, and did not cure the spleen yin injury. Now give cassia twig and peony decoction to treat, peony^[22] bitter flat, can treat evil abdominal pain, cold and heat hernia, analgesic effect. Compared with Guizhi Decoction, the dosage of peony changed from three to six, which had the effects of nourishing yin and blood, converging yin and business, relieving pain and relieving urgency. Guizhi was acrid and warm, helping yang to transform qi, warming and dredging meridians. The compatibility of the two made the spleen yin be transmitted and the abdominal pain relieved. Then add Schisandra, Astragalus, Codonopsis, Jiangzao and other substances to play a beneficial role in spleen and stomach yin. Due to perennial cough, body has phlegm heat, combined with Wendan Decoction, remove phlegm heat. The combination of the two can not only protect the spleen yin, but also eliminate the effect of phlegm heat. Considering the patient's condition in all aspects, from the perspective of the patient. During the follow-up visit, the patient's condition was significantly improved. Therefore, in clinical treatment, the treatment of abdominal pain due to spleen yin deficiency is to harmonize yin and yang, qi and blood, protect spleen yin, and not too much, so as not to hurt the body, and then add drugs to sort out the qi movement, so as to help the overall efficacy beside and around.

4. Western medical conditions involved in Gui Zhi Tang

Some studies have shown that Gui Zhi Tang involves diseases of 10 systems in Western medicine, among which the respiratory system, digestive system and orthopedic system are the most numerous. See the following table 1 for details ^[23]:

Table 1: Summary of Diseases Related to Western Medicine

Disease classification	Western medicine disease name and frequency	Category	Total frequency
Respiratory system	Tuberculosis 1 Bronchiectasis 1 Asthma 1 Upper respiratory Infection 7 Allergic cough 1 Cough and wheeze 1 Pregnancy cough 1 Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease 1 Cough 1	9	15
Digestive System	Indigestion 1 Acute diarrhea 1 Functional abdominal pain 1 Constipation 3 Vomiting 3 Esophagitis 1 Superficial gastritis 1 Gastric decompensation 1 Irritable bowel syndrome 2 Ulcerative colitis 1	10	15
Circulation System	Cardiovascular neurosis 1 Cardiac x syndrome 1 Angina pectoris 1 Aortitis 1 Cardiac neurosis 1 Coronary heart disease 3 Frequent premature beats 1 Sinus bradycardia 1 Varicocele 1	9	11
Immune	Allergic violet addiction 1 Allergic royalitis 8 Somatoform autonomic dysfunction	2	9

System	1 Insomnia 2		
Nervous System	Stroke 1 Restless legs syndrome 1 Peripheral facial nerve Palsy 1 Vertigo 2 Pediatric tics 1 Phytodyfunction 3 Pediatric ADHD 1 Neurasthenia 1 Neurosis 1	11	14
Dermatology	Rubella 2 Itchy skin cancer 2 Rosacea 1 Zoonoses 4 Itchy skin spasms 1 Spasmodic sores 1 Common ichthyosis 1 Eczema 2	8	14
Orthopedics	Rheumatoid arthritis 1 gouty arthritis 1 cervical spondylosis 4 acute soft tissue contusion 1 periartthritis of shoulder 2 scarring 3 fallen pillow 1 lumbar disc herniation 1 arthritis 1	9	15
Gynecology	Postpartum heel pain 1 Postpartum wind fear 2 Dysmenorrhea 3 Postpartum spontaneous sweating 1 Postpartum stroke 1 Postpartum cold stool syndrome 1	7	10
Male Medicine	Seminal emission 1	1	1
Pediatrics	Pediatric nocturnal enuresis 1 Pediatric anorexia 1 Night terrors 1 Enuresis 1	3	3
Other	Postoperative pituitary tumor cold and fever 1 headache 1 body pain 1 body cold 1 sweating evidence 16 hypothermia 3 polysomnia 1 alopecia 2 acute radiculitis 1 cancer pain 1 summer temperature 1 sweating closed 1 cold limb syndrome 1 hypokalemia 1 numbness of extremities 1 night sweating 1 red eyes and lacrimation syndrome 1 fever 2	18	37
Total		87	144

5. Summary

Guizhi Decoction is a recipe in *Treatise on Cold-Attack* written by Zhang Zhongjing. It contains a combination of prescriptions and herbs with various meanings, and is served with ginger and jujube and roasted licorice. Simplified five medicinal materials, with can eliminate superficial evil, harmonizing the effect of nourishing Qi and blood. This can be inferred that the treatment of disease is also two aspects, external symptoms and physical weakness, Yin and Yang disorders related to the disease.^[24] On this basis, doctors of later generations have carried out various experiments or clinical applications of Guizhi decoction, and found that it can get a good effect in the case of different diseases but the same symptoms. In rheumatoid arthritis, urticaria above, can let the person's own immune function is strengthened to cure. There are also neurological syndrome and abdominal pain, doctors flexible use of this formula, so as to reduce the pain of patients. After grasping the ratio of drugs, Guizhi decoction can not only treat these diseases, but also be used in the treatment of the five viscera and six organs. Make good use of Guizhi decoction, grasp the proportion of the center, can treat more diseases.

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