

# *Experience in Treating Postpartum Body Pain and Sweating*

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**Abstract:** Postpartum body pain and sweating refer to the symptoms of limb and joint soreness, numbness, heaviness, and persistent sweating that occur in postpartum women. It is a common postpartum disease. Professor Zhang Xiaofeng, the mentor, is skilled in using classic formulas such as Huangqi Guizhi Wuwu Tang, Yuping Feng San, and Duhuo Jisheng Decoction as the basic formula. At the same time, he flexibly adjusts medication according to the specific clinical symptoms of patients to treat postpartum body pain and sweating. Through the induction, summary, and analysis of such cases, clinical efficacy data were obtained, and two classic medical cases were used to further elaborate Professor Zhang Xiaofeng's dialectical thinking and prescription medication for treating postpartum body pain and sweating. Clinical practice has confirmed that Professor Zhang Xiaofeng is indeed effective in treating postpartum body pain and sweating. Summarizing the experience of renowned doctors is beneficial for broadening clinical diagnosis and treatment ideas, better guiding the treatment of postpartum diseases, and further promoting postpartum recovery.

## **1. Introduction**

Postpartum body pain and sweating refer to the symptoms of limb and joint soreness, numbness, heaviness, and persistent sweating that occur during the postpartum period. There is a distinction between postpartum sweating and night sweating, and this article only discusses the former. Professor Zhang Xiaofeng is a renowned traditional Chinese medicine practitioner in Shaanxi Province and the director of gynecology at Xi'an Traditional Chinese Medicine Hospital. He is also a graduate supervisor. He is skilled in treating diseases such as menstrual disorders, dysmenorrhea, postpartum diseases, premenopausal and premenopausal symptoms, and female pelvic inflammatory disease. This article discusses Professor Zhang Xiaofeng's experience in treating postpartum body pain and sweating for the benefit of readers.

## 2. Clinical Data

### 2.1 Clinical Case

Select a parturient who was diagnosed with "postpartum body pain", "postpartum sweating", and simultaneous symptoms of body pain and sweating at Xi'an Traditional Chinese Medicine Hospital from June 2022 to June 2023. The traditional Chinese medicine syndrome differentiation was characterized by "insufficient qi and blood, disharmony between camp and health, and recurrent external pathogens". There are 20 patients in each group. The patient's basic information is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Basic information of patients

	Average age (years)	Primiparous women (examples)	Menstrual women (examples)
Postpartum body pain	27.55±2.95	4	16
Postpartum sweating	26.09±2.16	7	13
Postpartum body pain and sweating coexist	28.68±2.57	8	12

### 2.2 Diagnostic Criteria

Referring to the relevant chapters on "Postpartum Body Pain", "Postpartum Spontaneous Sweat, Night Sweat", etc. in the 10th edition of "Gynecology of Traditional Chinese Medicine" published by China Traditional Chinese Medicine Press [1], the specific criteria are as follows:

Main symptoms: During the postpartum period, the mother may experience systemic pain, numbness in the limbs, discomfort in the joints, or excessive sweating; Secondary symptoms: The patient is accompanied by symptoms such as fatigue, shortness of breath, lazy speech, pale complexion, and aversion to wind and cold. These symptoms may worsen after fatigue or exposure to cold. Tongue pulse: The tongue is light with thin coating, and the pulse is thin or weak. Combined with tongue and pulse, the main symptom is essential, and a diagnosis can be made if the secondary symptom meets two or more criteria. All patients are excluded from the following diseases, such as trauma, joint deformities, rheumatoid arthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, and other immune system diseases.

### 2.3 Analysis of Therapeutic Effects

The relationship between the severity of the patient's condition and the efficacy is shown in Table 2

Table 2: Relationship between severity of illness and efficacy in two groups of patients

	heal	Significant effect	effective	invalid	Good improvement rate(%)	Total effective rate(%)
Postpartum body pain	3	6	10	1	45	95
Postpartum sweating	2	7	9	2	45	90
Postpartum body pain and sweating coexist	2	8	9	1	50	95

### 3. Experience Cases

#### 3.1 "Postpartum Sweating"

Patient, female, 34 years old, initial diagnosis on September 18, 2022: 3 months postpartum, general fatigue, self sweating, significantly aggravated after activity, good appetite, poor sleep, irregular bowel movements, pale tongue, thin white coating, and weak pulse. Prescription: 10g Angelica sinensis, 15g stir fried white peony, 30g Astragalus membranaceus, 15g parched white atractylodes rhizome, 20g Caulis spatholobi, 10g pericarpium citri reticulatae, 15g Poria cocos, 20g vine of multiflower knotweed, 6g radix bupleuri, 10g cassia twig, 20g Pueraria lobata, 30g floating wheat, 6g prepared licorice, and 2 Jujube. A total of 7 doses. On September 25, 2022, the second diagnosis was: sweating profusely, prone to external infections, pale tongue with thin and white coating, and weak pulse. Prescription: On the basis of the front, add 6g of stir fried Fangfeng, 15g of Codonopsis pilosula, 12g of Ophiopogon japonicus, and 30g of calcined oysters. A total of 7 doses.

#### 3.2 "Postpartum Body Pain"

Patient, female, 29 years old, visited on October 25, 2022. After 2 months postpartum, she experienced numbness in her fingers, pain in her knees and heels, lumbar fatigue, slight sweating, good appetite, moderate bowel movements, red and yellow tongue coating, and thin pulse strings. Prescription: 10g Angelica sinensis, 15g stir fried white peony, 30g Astragalus membranaceus, 15g parched white atractylodes rhizome, 20g Caulis spatholob, 10gpericarpium citri reticulatae, 20g ramulus mori, 6g radix bupleuri, 10g Platycodon grandiflorum, 9g cassia twig, 15g Pueraria lobata, 15g teasel root, 15g mistletoe, 12g Caulis Lonicerae, and 12g large-leaved gentian. 6 doses. On November 1, 2022, second diagnosis: numbness in the fingertips, pain in the knee joints and heels, significantly aggravated by cold, redness in the palms and palms, pale tongue with moss, and thin and stringy veins. Prescription: Add 15g of prepared rehmannia root, 12g of Clematis chinensis, and 3g of Asarum to the front. 12 doses.

Of course, some patients also experience symptoms of postpartum pain and sweating. Professor Zhang Xiaofeng will add or subtract medication from the basic treatment prescription based on the specific symptoms of the patient, in order to achieve better treatment goals.

### 4. Experience Analysis

Professor Zhang Xiaofeng, the mentor, believes that postpartum body pain and sweating are often caused by insufficient qi and blood, disharmony between the camp and health, and a resurgence of external pathogens in postpartum women. In the book "Treatise on the Origins and Stages of Women's Postpartum Diseases", it is said: "When giving birth, it harms the circulation of blood and qi, and labor damages the organs..." [2]. Pregnant women may experience qi deficiency during childbirth due to prolonged labor, excessive exertion, or premature postpartum labor; Qi deficiency is due to lack of solid absorption, coupled with trauma and bleeding during childbirth, resulting in blood deficiency. "Qi is the commander-in-chief of blood, and blood is the mother of Qi." The two influence each other, resulting in the deficiency of Qi and blood. However, in the "Complete Book of Jing Yue", there is a saying that "non wind numbness and non benevolence... covering Qi deficiency leads to numbness, while blood deficiency leads to numbness.[3]" Therefore, it manifests as numbness in the limbs; Qi deficiency promotes weakness, leading to blood stasis. If there is no obstruction, pain will occur. Blood deficiency lacks nourishment, resulting in soreness and discomfort in the limbs and joints. Postpartum mothers may experience damage to their vitality

after childbirth, which can lead to external infections of six harmful and evil energies. Wind, cold, and dampness invade the body, and the cold evil mainly attracts and coagulates. The dampness evil has a sticky nature, causing discomfort in the muscles and meridians, manifested as limb pain and joint heaviness; When Qi deficiency occurs, the meridians are not dense, the yang is not fixed, the camp yin is lost, and the guard qi is lost in defense, resulting in the leakage of camp yin, which is manifested as continuous sweating. In Volume 19 of the "School Annotations on Women's Good Prescriptions", it is said that "postpartum sweats are caused by the deficiency of yang qi, the lack of dense striae, and the excessive discharge of body fluids.[4]" Therefore, Professor Zhang Xiaofeng, the mentor, established the main treatment principle of "tonifying qi and nourishing blood, harmonizing yin and wei", while dispelling wind, dispelling cold, removing dampness, relieving pain, and generating fluids and regulating sweat. So the mentor used Huangqi Guizhi Wuwu Tang, Yuping Feng San, and Duhuo Jisheng Decoction as the basic formulas, and made clinical modifications. Huangqi Guizhi Wuwu Tang is derived from "Jin Kui Yao Lue". Research has shown that Huangqi Guizhi Wuwu Tang is widely used in clinical practice [5] and can effectively treat sweating [6] and postpartum body pain [7]. Yuping Feng San is used for those who have weak and unstable appearance, sweating bad wind, or are susceptible to physical weakness. Yuping Feng San is commonly used in respiratory medicine, but it has significant therapeutic effects in treating gynecological diseases, especially postpartum sweating [8-9]. Duhuo Jisheng Decoction has the effects of dispelling wind and dampness, relieving pain, benefiting the liver and kidneys, and nourishing qi and blood, which can effectively treat postpartum body pain [10]. It is worth noting that *Pueraria lobata* is used in the treatment prescriptions for postpartum body pain and postpartum sweating, but the meaning is different [11]. In the prescription for postpartum sweating, *Pueraria lobata* is used to produce saliva and quench thirst, and its effect is like the irrigation of mist and dew. The prescription for postpartum body pain is to use *Pueraria lobata*, combined with cassia twig, to treat stiffness and pain in the neck and back joints [12]. The combination of cassia twig and Stir fried white peony in two prescriptions not only disperses but also astringes and tonifies, which is the essence of Guizhi Tang [13]. Women are born with the liver, which is responsible for relieving stress, promoting good health, and promoting depression [14]. Therefore, Professor Zhang Xiaofeng used *radix bupleuri* in all his prescriptions. The spleen and stomach are the foundation of postnatal development and the source of qi and blood biochemistry [15]. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the spleen and nourish the stomach, so *pericarpium citri reticulatae* parched white *atractylodes rhizome* and *Poria cocos* were chosen; And drugs such as *Angelica sinensis* Stir fried white peony *Caulis spatholob* have the effect of nourishing blood and promoting blood circulation, making them nourishing but not stagnant [16]. Professor Zhang Xiaofeng is able to accurately diagnose and flexibly prescribe medication based on the specific symptoms of patients in clinical practice, and has achieved good clinical efficacy.

## 5. Summary

Postpartum body pain and sweating belong to postpartum diseases in traditional Chinese medicine. After giving birth, due to severe damage to the vital energy of the uterus, deficiency of qi and blood, and weakened defense function of qi deficiency, the mother may experience postpartum pain and sweating; if blood deficiency is lacking in nourishment, then the meridians, muscles, and bones are empty. At this time, the patient's striae are not solid, with insufficient blood and yang qi, causing sweating and fear of wind and cold. They are also prone to external evil taking advantage of the deficiency, resulting in muscle and joint pain, soreness, and heaviness. This is a common and difficult to treat disease in obstetrics and gynecology. However, some postpartum women sweat more than usual after childbirth, especially after sleeping, eating, or working. This is because

postpartum qi suddenly becomes weak and does not become pathological. It is important to pay attention to differentiation in clinical practice. Secondly, the age of the mother and the number of deliveries may also be influencing factors for the occurrence of such diseases [17]. The older the mother is, the more times she gives birth. The physical condition of postpartum women will deteriorate, and the deficiency of qi and blood will become more and more severe. The process of postpartum recovery will also be longer. Moreover, postpartum women should not only pay attention to physical discomfort during the postpartum period, but also pay attention to emotional changes. Because postpartum women have significant hormonal fluctuations [18], they are prone to postpartum depression. So while regulating the body's discomfort, it is even more necessary to do emotional counseling to promote the comprehensive recovery of postpartum women.

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