



To News Editor
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Traditional Chinese Medicine Effectively Relieves Irritable Bowel Syndrome

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is one of the commonest digestive diseases, which affects approximately 310,000 people (about 5.4% of the adult population) in Hong Kong. Over 70% of IBS patients have troublesome abdominal pain and diarrhea that lead to major disturbance on daily activities and psychological well-being. Over 15% of IBS patients are suffering from various mood disorders at the same time.

Traditional Chinese herbal medicine (TCM) is widely used by patients with functional digestive problems. A Hong Kong study showed that it is probably more effective than conventional Western medicine for treatment of IBS. A pilot randomized placebo controlled trial study conducted by the Institute of Digestive Disease at The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) during 2005-2007 studied the effectiveness of TCM for treatment of IBS patients. It reveals that TCM is beneficial for these patients.

Professor Joseph Sung, Director of Institute of Digestive Disease, Faculty of Medicine at CUHK said, “Unfortunately, there is no effective remedy for IBS. Conventional Western medicine, such as anti-motility agent, cannot provide satisfactory and sustained relief of symptoms. Many patients even experience worsening of symptoms after taking these medicines. Newer drugs for treatment of IBS were withdrawn from markets because of serious side effects and even deaths related to the use of these medicines. Owing to the poor treatment response and the fear of underlying severe diseases, these patients often undergo repeated unnecessary investigations. The promising results of our pilot study may revolutionize the treatment of IBS in the future.”

This pilot randomized placebo controlled trial studied 84 patients with abdominal pain and diarrhea as predominant symptoms who fulfilled diagnostic criteria of IBS during 2005-2007. These patients were randomly assigned to receive one of the three different treatments: (1) 7-herb TCM decoction and placebo holopon, a conventional Western medicine for treatment of IBS; (2) placebo TCM and holopon or (3) double placebo. At the end of the 8-week treatment, 52% of patients treated with active TCM reported overall improvement in symptoms compared to 32% (holopon) and 43% (double placebo) for the other two treatment groups. This trend was maintained even after stopping treatment for 8 weeks (42% Vs 25% Vs 31%). Patients taking active TCM also had significant improvement in bowel movements.

“This pilot study suggests that TCM can be a promising treatment for IBS. A larger scale clinical trial is currently underway to test the efficacy of TCM,” Professor Joseph Sung added.



致新聞編輯
請即發放

中草藥有效治療腸易激綜合症

腸易激綜合症是本港其中一種最常見的消化道疾病，約 31 萬人受影響（即本港成年人口約 5.4%）。超過 70% 腸易激綜合症患者受到上腹痛和肚瀉的困擾，引起日常生活不便和影響心理健康；超過 15% 的患者甚至同時患有不同的情緒病。

中草藥廣為不少功能性消化道疾病的患者所使用。一項本港的研究指出，中草藥可能比傳統西藥治療腸易激綜合症更為有效。香港中文大學（中大）消化疾病研究所進行了一項導向性安慰劑隨機抽樣對照臨床研究，發現中草藥能有效治療腸易激綜合症。

中大消化疾病研究所所長沈祖堯教授指出：「現時醫學界還沒有藥物能有效地治療腸易激綜合症。一些傳統西藥，例如減慢腸道蠕動藥（Anti-motility agent），無法提供有效和令人滿意的舒緩；部分患者服用西藥後，病情反而更趨嚴重。一些較新可治療腸易激綜合症的藥物，因為引起嚴重的副作用，甚至導致死亡，產品需要在市場回收。基於西藥的治療效果欠佳，加上為確保患者沒有患上嚴重疾病，患者往往需要進行多次不必要的檢查。是次研究結果，為治療腸易激綜合症的一個革新里程。」

在 2005 至 2007 年間，84 位有上腹痛和腹瀉的患者參與了是次導向性安慰劑隨機抽樣對照臨床研究。他們被分為 3 組，每組 28 人。第一組使用含七種中草藥湯劑和腸蠕動抑制劑安慰劑（Placebo Holopon）；第二組服用腸蠕動抑制劑（Holopon）和中草藥安慰劑；第三組則使用中草藥安慰劑和腸蠕動抑制劑安慰劑。3 組病人分別接受八星期療程後，在第一組的患者中，有 52% 表示症狀有改善；而第二組及第三組則分別只有 32% 及 43% 的患者表示症狀有改善。另外，研究人員再跟進病人在停止用藥八星期後的情況，發現第一組有 42% 均表示排便狀況有明顯的改善。第二組及第三則分別只有 25% 及 31%。

沈祖堯教授指出：「這項導向性臨床研究顯示，中草藥能有效治療腸易激綜合症。我們正進行一項更大型的臨床研究，以進一步測試中草藥對治療腸易激綜合症的效能。」

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