

The clinical application of Yanghe Decoction

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Highlights

Based on the compatibility and clinical application of Yanghe Decoction, this paper explores the therapeutic effect of Yanghe Decoction on various blood deficiency and yang injuries, and aims to provide new ideas for clinical treatment of such diseases.

Abstract

Yanghe Decoction is a representative prescription of such prescriptions as warming up the yang and dissipating the cold. It has the functions of warming the blood and dispelling cold and stagnation. Yanghe Decoction has effects on many diseases. The principle of this kind of disease is blood deficiency and yang, and the clinical manifestation is cold stagnation. Such diseases often occur in multiple systems and in multiple aspects. This article summarizes the compatibility of Yanghe Decoction and its clinical application by reviewing the related literature analysis in recent years, and provides a broad idea for the application of Yanghe Decoction.

Key words: Yanghe Decoction, Prescription compatibility, Clinical application

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1. Introduction

Yanghe Decoction is from the Surgical Treatment and Complete Collection of Wang Hongxu in the Qing Dynasty. This prescription is the basic prescription for the treatment of sore and yin syndrome in traditional Chinese medicine. In the clinical aspect of medicine, most of them include chronic diseases, inhibitory diseases, systemic dysfunction diseases, metabolic diseases, degenerative diseases and so on. Clinical manifestations are pale, tired, weak breathing, shortness of breath, loss of appetite, and apathy. This prescription follows the principle of ancient Chinese of “Yanghe Tongcou, Wenbu Qixue, Sanhan Tongzhi”. It means improving the muscle nutrition environment, moderately compensating for blood and improving microcirculation.

2. Composition and efficacy

Yanghe Decoction consists of cooked *Radix rehmanniae*, *Gelatinum cornu cervi*, blast fried *Rhizoma zingiberis*, *Cortex cinnamoni cassiae*, *Herba ephedrae*, *Semen sinapis albae*, uncooked *Radix glycyrrhizae*. These seven herbs have their own positive effects in modern clinical research.

2.1 Cooked *Radix rehmanniae*

The dosage of cooked *Radix rehmanniae* is the first of all kinds of herbs in Yanghe Decoction. It has the effect of nourishing yin and blood and filling the marrow. The chemical constituents of cooked *Radix rehmanniae* are mainly polysaccharides, 5-hydroxymethylfurfural, amino acids and the like^[1]. The polysaccharide contained therein can enhance the

hematopoietic function, enhance the immunity, anti-oxidation and central inhibition. 5-Hydroxymethylfurfural enhances red blood cell deformability. In addition, the aqueous extract of cooked *Radix rehmanniae* has anti-anxiety, anti-tumor and promotes endothelial cell proliferation effects. The alcohol extract of cooked *Radix rehmanniae* has an anti-aging effect and promotes the regeneration of red blood cells.

2.2 *Gelatinum cornu cervi*

The *Gelatinum cornu cervi* warms up the blood, which can not only make the yin blood that has been lost, but also help the micro-yang in the kidney. The *Gelatinum cornu cervi* contains a variety of trace elements, colloids, calcium phosphate and a small amount of estrone, polysaccharides, chondroitin sulfate A, choline-like substances and the like^[2]. It has the function of preventing and treating osteoporosis, improving sexual function, anti-aging and protecting gastric mucosa.

2.3 Blast fried *Rhizoma zingiberis*

Blast fried *Rhizoma zingiberis* can not only supplement the yang but also clear the stagnant blood. Modern research has shown that blast fried *Rhizoma zingiberis* contains volatile oil. The main components are various kinds of anthraquinones such as 6-gingerol, zingiberene, hydrocelene, decene, citral and phenylalkylalkyl compounds^[3-7]. Its pharmacological action can significantly shorten the bleeding time^[8]. It has inhibitory effects on pyloric ligation gastric ulcer and acetic acid-induced gastric ulcer^[9].

2.4 *Cortex cinnamoni cassiae*

Cortex cinnamoni cassiae is very hot, in addition to supplementing yang, it can also clear the meridians. *Cortex cinnamoni cassiae* contains mainly chemical components such as

volatile oils, polysaccharides, polyphenols, coumarins and inorganic elements ^[10]. It has pharmacological effects against inflammation, anti-oxidation, anti-tumor, prevention of gastric ulcer and diabetes. In addition, there are treatment effects of calming, relieving phlegm, relieving heat and relieving cough ^[10].

2.5 *Herba ephedrae*

Herba ephedrae can promote blood circulation in the skin and muscles, allowing the cold to escape from the body. The main active ingredients in ephedra are various alkaloids and a small amount of volatile oil. It was discovered by pharmacological experiments that ephedrine can excite the central nervous system. Ephedrine exhibits positive inotropic and positive frequency effects by excitatory adrenergic nerves and myocardial and vascular smooth muscle receptors, and can contract blood vessels and raise blood pressure ^[11]. The volatile oil of *Herba ephedrae* has an antipyretic effect on experimental febrile animals and has obvious inhibitory effect on influenza virus ^[11].

2.6 *Semen sinapis albae*

Semen sinapis albae contains white glucosinolates and their derivatives, fatty acids, vitamins and terpenes. Modern research shows that *Semen sinapis albae* has antitussive, expectorant, antiasthmatic, anti-inflammatory and analgesic, inhibits prostatic hyperplasia, anti-tumor, radiation protection, anti-androgen and antibacterial effects ^[12].

2.7 Uncooked *Radix glycyrrhizae*

The main active ingredients of uncooked *Radix glycyrrhizae* are triterpenoid saponins and flavonoids. In addition, uncooked *Radix glycyrrhizae* also contains various other ingredients such as coumarin, fatty acid,

polysaccharide, glucose, sucrose, starch, and alcohol compounds. Numerous studies have shown that uncooked *Radix glycyrrhizae* has many effects such as anti-inflammatory, anti-viral, anti-oxidation, anti-cancer, anti-plasmin, protection of the central nervous system, protection of cardiovascular and cerebrovascular system, treatment of respiratory diseases, regulation of endocrine, and enhancement of immune function ^[13].

3. Addition and subtraction compatibility

Cooked *radix rehmanniae* is mainly used in Yanghe Decoction. Blast fried *Rhizoma zingiberis*, *Cortex cinnamoni cassiae* and *Herba ephedrae* are auxiliary herbs for cooked *Radix rehmanniae*. The ratio of cooked *Radix rehmanniae* and blast fried *Rhizoma zingiberis* and *Herba ephedrae* is 15 to 1. The ratio of cooked *Radix rehmanniae* and *Cortex cinnamoni cassiae* and uncooked *Radix glycyrrhizae* is 10 to 1. The amount of *Semen sinapis albae* is only one-fifth of that of cooked *Radix rehmanniae*. The combination of various herbs will restore the Yanghe. Modern clinical studies have shown that Yanghe Decoction can strengthen diuresis, increase coronary flow, dilate blood vessels, inhibit platelet aggregation, and increase white blood cells. In addition, it also has a hormone-like effect, antibacterial action, anti-thyroid hyperfunction and regulation of gonadal function.

Because the indications for Yanghe Decoction are aimed at less blood and less yang, cold gas invades the body. Therefore, first of all, it should be a big yin and blood. A large amount of cooked *Radix rehmanniae* is used to produce blood and yang, which is clearly aimed at blood

deficiency. At the same time, taking into account the lack of nutritional effects of herbal medicine, the use of *Gelatinum cornu cervi* to replenish the marrow, improve the blood and strengthen the bones. This is based on the principle of Chinese medicine that for those with insufficient yang and qi, medicinal materials supplementing yang and Qi should be used; for those with yin and blood loss, yin and nourishing medicinal materials should be used.

Because the kidney produces essence, the liver produces blood. The liver and kidneys are healthy with sufficient blood and vitality. In addition, the kidneys can strengthen the bones and the liver can strengthen the muscles. When the liver and kidneys are healthy, the cold will not invade the body. The cold is yin pathogen. Because the cold that the party disperses is not in the internal organs, but in the muscles, bones and blood. Therefore, the use of blast fried *Rhizoma zingiberis*, *Cortex cinnamoni cassiae*, *Herba ephedrae*, *Semen sinapis albae* and other properties of the hot herbs as an auxiliary herb.

Among them, blast fried *Rhizoma zingiberis* and *Cortex cinnamoni cassiae* can be used together to enter the blood. Thereby warming the meridians and dispelling the cold. The spleen can strengthen the muscles, and ginger can act on the spleen. So the muscles get warm, and the cold disappears on its own. *Herba ephedrae* can act on the skin to dispel the cold of the body surface. *Semen sinapis albae* is often used to dispel the symptoms of mucus blockage caused by cold. The combination of *Herba ephedrae* and *Semen sinapis albae* can make blood and gas smooth, so that the yang effect of cooked *Radix rehmanniae* and *Gelatinum cornu cervi* will not be stagnant. Therefore, from the perspective of the compatibility group, there are drug effects from the bones, blood vessels, muscles, meridians, and skin membranes to the skin surface, so that

there is no possibility of cold. Raw licorice is used as a guide for prescriptions to regulate the effects of various herbs.

4. Clinical application

The seven medicinal materials that make Yanghe Decoction are traditional Chinese medicines, mainly treating crane-knee arthritis (tuberculous arthritis), sputum (anxious and chronic suppurative osteomyelitis), and all yin-ulcer. This is caused by the reduction of qi and blood and the chills are retained in the body. According to the therapeutic characteristics of Yanghe Decoction, modern medicine has continuously expanded its clinical application range and is widely used to treat various diseases.

4.1 Malignant tumor

Yanghe Decoction has a good effect in the treatment of malignant tumors. Yanghe Decoction is the basic prescription for treating a variety of tumors, and according to the different syndromes of patients with syndrome differentiation and treatment, the curative effect is exact^[13-16]. Yanghe Decoction also inhibits tumor metastasis and reduces cancer pain. In addition, the combination of Yanghe Decoction and chemotherapy drugs plays a role in reducing toxicity and increasing efficiency.

Huang Lizhong^[17] believes that yang deficiency and blood loss are the causes of neoplastic pain. After treatment with Yanghe Decoction, the effect is remarkable. *Lu Xia* et al.^[18] treated 30 patients with indolent lymphoma with Yanghe Decoction and CHOP regimen (Cyclophosphamide, Doxorubicin, Vincristine, Prednisone), showing obvious attenuation and synergy. *Shao Junqun* et al.^[19] randomly divided 92 patients with advanced prostate

cancer into two groups. The treatment of maximal androgen blockade and the treatment of Yanghe Decoction on the basis of conventional treatment showed that the treatment of advanced prostate cancer with Yanghe Decoction was effective, which can relieve pain and improve the quality of life [20-21].

4.2 Respiratory diseases

If the kidney's yang deficiency, the lower yuan is not solid, the kidneys will not discharge water in time. Excess water can damage the lungs, causing qi disturbances in the lungs and developing asthma. *Shen Zhiyong* showed that [22] using Yanghe Decoction to treat asthma can improve lung function to some extent. *Li Dajun* et al. [23] found that in the moderate attack period of asthma, the use of Yanghe Decoction and added peach kernel, staghorn gum, *Schisandra*, saponin, *Codonopsis*, *Angelica* and other herbs have obvious therapeutic effects. Yanghe Decoction also has a certain effect in the treatment of other respiratory diseases. *Lu Ming* [24] used Yanghe Decoction combined with closed drainage to treat empyema, which is quite effective. *Li Shuling* [25] used Yanghe Decoction to treat chronic bronchitis in the elderly, and found obvious relief of cough, expectoration and wheezing.

4.3 Digestive diseases

The digestion and absorption function of the spleen and stomach is inseparable from the support of the yang of the kidney. Insufficient yang in the kidney can cause dysfunction of the spleen, which can cause digestive diseases. *Guo Yuhao* et al. [26] used Yanghe Decoction and Tonga Sishen Pill to treat ulcerative colitis, which can significantly improve the symptoms of patients. *Wang Yanfei* et al. [27] used Yanghe Decoction combined with mesalazine

sustained-release tablets to treat Crohn's disease with clinically significant effects. *Wei Yanbi* [28] uses Yanghe Decoction, according to the patient's symptoms plus or minus Chinese medicine, can be found to prevent recurrence of colon adenomatous polyps.

4.4 Endocrine system diseases

The spleen and kidneys are yang-deficient, leading to qi disorders and abnormal water metabolism. The endocrine system is disrupted as time increases. *Hu Yiqi* et al. [29] used Yanghe Decoction and added Huang-qi, *Codonopsis*, *Epiphysis*, *Tripterygium wilfordii*, saponin, seaweed and other treatments for chronic lymphocytic thyroiditis, which can effectively improve the clinical symptoms of patients and regulate pathological conditions such as metabolic disorders.

4.5 Immune system diseases

Immune diseases are mostly caused by genetic factors. The ability of these patients to resist cold is lower than that of the average person. Cold is easy to invade the body and stay in muscles and bones. *Tao Maocan* et al. [30] used Yanghe Decoction and added atractylodes, tangerine peel, tortoise shell, armor, peach kernel, safflower, salvia, angelica and other medicinal materials to treat systemic sclerosis, which plays a role in promoting blood circulation and removing blood stasis. *Xu Bo* et al. [31] used Yanghe Decoction and added hive, solo, mulberry, *Eucommia*, Qing-feng-teng, and *sylvestre* to treat ankylosing spondylitis. The activity index score and functional index score increased, indicating that the treatment was effective. *Meng Linhe* et al. [32] used Yanghe Decoction and added systemic aconite, *Astragalus*, *Angelica*, Chi-shao, Di-long, Chuan-xiong, etc. to treat systemic lupus erythematosus. The clinical symptoms were

relieved, and white blood cells and immunoglobulins returned to normal.

4.6 Skeletal system diseases

The kidneys produce vitality and can strengthen bones. If the kidney is not produced enough, the marrow cannot be full, so the cold invades the bone. *Yang Guoqiang* et al. [33] used Yanghe Decoction combined with anti-tuberculosis drugs to treat bone tuberculosis, and the clinical effect is remarkable. *Wang Changhong* [34] used Yanghe Decoction and added Si Miao San to treat chronic osteomyelitis with obvious curative effect. *Duan Yuting* et al. [35] used Yanghe Tang and added papaya, spatholobus, Han Fangji, etc. to treat knee osteoarthritis with remarkable curative effect, and the long-term effect was stable. *Liu Wenyuan* [36] used Yanghe Decoction to treat the elderly with primary osteoporosis. *Yang Haibo* [37] used Yanghe Decoction and Western medicine to treat ischial tuberosity bursitis, and the curative effect is exact. *Wu Jianfang* et al. [38] used Yanghe Decoction and added a large number of aconites to treat lumbar disc herniation, which is safe and reliable.

4.7 Nervous system diseases

Chemotherapy drugs are easy to injure human yang. Insufficient yang causes cold stagnation at the extremities of the extremities, which is stinging. After chemotherapy, the qi and blood are empty, showing numbness of the limbs. *Zhou Yibing* et al. [39] used Yanghe Decoction to treat peripheral neurotoxicity caused by oxaliplatin, which can eliminate the side effects of chemotherapy drugs. *Zhang Dongdong* [40] used Yanghe Decoction and added Buyang Huanwu Decoction to treat diabetic peripheral neuropathy, which has good curative effect.

4.8 Other diseases

Yanghe Decoction can also treat other systemic diseases caused by physical weakness and cold invasion. *Zhu Kai* [41] took Yanghe Decoction for the treatment of breast hyperplasia, endometriosis and chronic pelvic inflammatory disease, and achieved good results. *Cheng Xianxiang* et al. [42] used Yanghe Decoction combined with Awei A capsule in the treatment of pustular psoriasis, and found that the efficacy and safety were good. *Chen Bo* et al. [43] used Yanghe Decoction and added Seaweed Licorice Decoction to treat mumps in children, which has high efficiency and is not easy to relapse.

5. Summary

In recent years, with the deepening of research on Chinese medicine, the research on clinical TCM treatment has also been greatly developed. Yanghe Decoction is used to treat a class of diseases that manifest as blood deficiency, yang deficiency, and cold invasion. However, such diseases are complex processes involving multiple factors, multiple stages, multiple targets, and multiple steps. Different from the single idea of Western medicine treatment, Chinese medicine emphasizes the role of treating diseases by improving the overall environment and improving the internal environment. As a representative agent for supplementing yang and repelling cold, Yanghe Decoction has curative effects on multiple systems and various diseases. For example, malignant tumor diseases such as prostate cancer and breast cancer, respiratory diseases such as asthma and chronic bronchitis, digestive diseases such as ulcerative colitis and disease, endocrine diseases such as thyroiditis, ankylosing spondylitis and systemic erythema Immune system diseases such as lupus, bone tuberculosis, chronic osteomyelitis and other

skeletal diseases. In addition, it also involves various diseases such as internal medicine, surgery, obstetrics and gynaecology, and pediatrics. This reflects the traditional Chinese medicine treatment of different diseases and the same treatment.

However, because modern medicine does not pay enough attention to the importance of Chinese herbs and Chinese medicine, the research on Yanghe Decoction has not been fully and thoroughly understood. Compared with medicine research, the study of traditional Chinese medicine often involves the study of multiple factors, which are often difficult to control for a single active ingredient. Based on the compatibility and clinical application of Yanghe Decoction, this paper explores the therapeutic effect of Yanghe Decoction on various blood deficiency and yang injuries, and aims to provide new ideas for clinical treatment of such diseases.

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