

Collection of Professor Lihong Zhu's Experience in Treating Postpartum Hypogalactia of Blood Deficiency and Liver Depression Type

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Abstract: Professor Lihong Zhu proposed the syndrome type of “blood deficiency and liver depression” in the clinical treatment of postpartum hypogalactia, and discussed its main etiology and pathogenesis as Yin blood deficiency and liver Qi stagnation, with blood deficiency as the basis and liver depression as the standard. She self-made “Shugan Shengru prescription,” which was added and subtracted with symptoms, with remarkable clinical effect, and widened the thinking of diagnosis and treatment of postpartum hypogalactia.

Keywords: Postpartum hypogalactia; Blood deficiency and liver depression type; Clinical experience

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1. Introduction

According to the “DOHaD theory,” the “first 1000 days of life” from gestation to 2 years after birth is the plastic window period for reducing chronic diseases through nutritional intervention ^[1]. Breast milk can provide newborns with comprehensive, high-quality and sufficient nutrition to meet their needs in the process of growth and development. Postpartum hypogalactia refers to those who have little or no postpartum milk, which are not enough to feed the baby. Compared with western medicine, TCM syndrome differentiation treatment has obvious advantages because of its remarkable curative effect. Professor Lihong Zhu of Shaanxi University of Chinese medicine put forward the syndrome type of “blood deficiency and liver depression” and self-made” Shugan Shengru prescription with remarkable effect. Its experience is summarized as follows.

2. Explore the etiology and pathogenesis

Modern medicine points out that the hypothalamus secretes prolactin inhibitory hormone under the stimulation of endocrine dyscrasia, bad emotions and other factors, resulting in the reduction of prolactin synthesis and secretion, which is the main pathological mechanism of postpartum milk deficiency ^[2]. Traditional Chinese medicine believes that milk is sexual function of both sexes, which acts on Qi and blood, so that its postpartum with the pulse of the stomach ascending metaplasia, with the blood originated from the middle energizer spleen and stomach, depends on the regulation of liver Qi. Professor Zhu thinks there are two reasons for postpartum hypothalamus: First, the source of responsibility is insufficient, as stated in the General Treatise on the Cause and Symptoms of Diseases: “If you give birth, you will lose both blood and water, your body fluid will be exhausted, and your menstruation blood will be insufficient.” Modern women take thin as beauty, are deficiency of spleen and stomach elements and do not have enough

food. In case of postpartum water and blood coming out with the infant during labor, it consumes Qi and hurts blood, thoroughfare and controlling vessels deficiency and damages, and determines the source of lack of energy; Second, the obstruction of collaterals, breast collaterals, liver collaterals, labor anxiety, cesarean section wound pain, postpartum life changes and so on are easy to cause emotional injury of collaterals, and the blockage of Qi overflow leads to the failure of breast collaterals. In clinic, most parturients rely too much on breast pump, which can also damage liver collaterals. As Su'an Chen of Song Dynasty said: "If the milk is not good, it is mostly blood deficiency and hurt by worry and anger."

3. Differentiation of signs and symptoms of viscera and flexible medication

From the perspective of viscera, postpartum hypogalactia involves liver, spleen and stomach, which is consistent with the views of Su'an Chen, Wuze Chen and Qingzhu Fu ^[3]. Professor Zhu believes that this type is based on blood deficiency and marked by liver depression, which are cause and effect of each other. Blood deficiency is prone to imbalance of Qi mechanism, and poor blood circulation is blood stasis. Blood stasis makes poor Qi circulation and stagnation of liver Qi worse, forming a vicious circle of liver depression and blood deficiency, affecting the generation and secretion of milk. Due to the particularity of pregnancy, the demand for blood substances increases, and the body is in a state of relative blood deficiency. When blood and water are lost during delivery, the blood deficiency is even more serious. The liver loses enough blood to nourish and reach the nature of catharsis. Due to the influence of emotion, it is difficult to lower the milk due to the stagnation and occlusion of Qi function; Liver collateral injury and Qi stagnation are easy to turn blood stagnation into blood stasis, reduce the available blood in the pulse, and blood deficiency will cause no milk.

Based on the principle of "don't be constrained by postpartum, don't forget postpartum," Professor Lihong Zhu treats Qi and blood, soothes liver and dredges milk. Self-made Shugan Shengru prescription is: Radix Codonopsis 9g, fried Radix Astragali seu Hedysari 9g, Radix Angelicae Sinensis 9g, Tmedulla of stachyurus 9g, Armand's clematis 9g, Fructus Liquidambaris 9g, Radix Rhapontici 9g, Bran-fried Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae 9g, fried hizoma Dioscoreae 9g, Poria cocos 9g, Radix Aucklandiae 9g, fried Nidus Vespae 9g, Flos Rosae Rugosae 9g, Radix Bupleuri 8g, roasted Radix Glycyrrhizae 5g. Radix Codonopsis, roasted Radix Astragali seu Hedysari and Radix Angelicae Sinensis are used to replenish Qi and nourish blood; Tmedulla of stachyurus, Armand's clematis, Fructus Liquidambaris and Radix Rhapontici can dredge the meridians and collaterals to secrete milk, among which Tmedulla of stachyurus is good at dredging stomach Qi, reaching up and making milk generate, and Fructus Liquidambaris soothes the liver, regulates Qi and passes the meridian; Fried Atractylodes macrocephala, fried yam and poria cocos to strengthen the spleen, together with wood incense and fried beehives to promote Qi, so that the medicine for tonifying Qi and blood will not hinder the stomach, but not stagnate, and the regulation of Qi and blood will lead to blood circulation; Radix Bupleuri, Flos Rosae Rugosae and Radix Aucklandiae incense can relieve Qi depression, soothe the liver and neutralize the stomach; Roasted Radix Glycyrrhizae can moderate the property of herbs; The whole prescription is combined with tonifying and dredging, treating as a whole, the combination of dredging and nourishing, the tonifying of the liver and the recovery of the liver function, and the regulation of Qi and blood, so as to make the milk generate with source and flow smooth.

4. Examples

Zheng, female, 32 years old, G₂P₂. First visit (to the hospital): April 24, 2020. Postpartum milk is less than 47 days. 47 days ago, after delivery with forceps, there was less milk, the quality was clear and thin, and didn't feel fullness. Her facial complexion was lusterless, she often felt tired and weak, palpitation, impatient and irritable, and signed frequently. She had poor food intake, poor sleep, normal urine and stool

as well as thin body. Her tongue was light red, the moss was thin and white, and the pulse was thin. TCM diagnosis was: Postpartum hypogalactia (blood deficiency and liver depression type). Treatment was: Tonifying Qi and nourishing blood, soothing liver and nourishing milk. Prescription was: Radix Codonopsis 9g, roasted Radix Astragali seu Hedysari 9g, fried Rhizoma Dioscoreae 9g, Radix Aucklandiae 9g, Armand's clematis 9g, Tmedulla of stachyurus 8g, Radix Rhapontici 9g, Fructus Liquidambaris 9g, Flos Rosae Rugosae 9g, fried Nidus Vespae 9g, Bran-fried Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae 9g, Flos Albiziae 9g, Radix Bupleuri 9g, Poria cocos 9g, Radix Angelicae Sinensis 9g and roasted Radix Glycyrrhizae 5g. 9 doses of Chinese medicine granule, 1 dose per day, taken in morning and evening. Guide her breast-feeding, ask her to be careful in daily life, keep pleasant and has balance diet. Second diagnosis is: The symptoms were alleviated, the breast was slightly full, the milk was significantly increased, the quality was clear and thin, she sweated spontaneously and felt palpitations. She could eat and sleep well, had sticky stool and general mood. Her tongue was light red, her moss was thin and white, and the pulse was thin. Adjusted prescription was: Remove Radix Aucklandiae and Radix Bupleuri, add fried Rhizoma Atractylodis 9g, Radix Saposhnikovia 9g, Fructus Tritici Levis 9g, mulberry 9g and Fructus Lycii 9g. The dosage was the same as before. Third diagnosis: Her milk was sufficient, didn't add milk at night and had sticky stool. The diagnosis and treatment are the same as above, but the effect is not better. Follow-up was conducted 2 weeks later, the patient complained of breast filling and no specific discomfort.

According to, the patient's postpartum thoroughfare and controlling vessels was not full of Qi and blood, the source of milk was insufficient, and the quality was clear and thin; The liver blood is insufficient. The Qi and blood are not up to, so the Yang Qi will be sluggish, and the spleen fails to move and transform, so she will feel tired and weak at that time; Liver depression is lost and she signs frequent. Palpitation is nothing more than loss of Qi and blood, loss of support for the heart, depression of the liver generates pathogenic fire, which can also disturb the mind and become palpitation. Combined with tongue and pulse, it is diagnosed as postpartum milk deficiency and syndrome differentiation as blood deficiency and liver depression. At the first diagnosis, Professor Zhu took tonifying Qi and nourishing blood as the first, and course the liver and promote lactation as the basis. She used the self-made Shugan Shengru prescription as the basic prescription to make the milk active and smooth. During the second diagnosis, the patient's milk increased and her mood improved, but she still had palpitations, sweating and sticky stool. The treatment focused on tonifying Qi and nourishing blood, strengthening spleen and calming heart, which was added and subtracted with the disease on the basis of the original prescription. The third diagnosis showed breast milk full, and it should be made slowly and slowly, and the defender should advance in order to consolidate the foundation, cultivate the origin and search for the primary cause of disease in treatment.

5. Summary

At present, the rate of exclusive breastfeeding in one month postpartum is 47% ~ 62%, and the rate of exclusive breastfeeding in four months postpartum is 16% ~ 34.4% [4]. Obstetricians should pay attention to and popularize the advantages of breast-feeding to pregnant women as soon as possible, and guide pregnant women to breast-feeding and scientific and balanced nutritional diet after delivery. Professor Zhu's experience in treating postpartum milk deficiency of blood deficiency and liver depression focuses on tonifying Qi and nourishing blood, but tonifying in combination with dredging and nourishing in combination with diet and life conditioning. The curative effect is quite good and worth popularizing.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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