

Professor Xiaofeng's Zhang Experience in Treating Postpartum Body Pain

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Abstract: Postpartum physical pain is common in clinic, mostly manifested in pain, numbness or weight, swelling and so on of limbs and joints during puerperium, and some of them fail to heal over the years, becoming stubborn "puerperal fever." Mr. Zhang has been a doctor for more than 30 years. He has superb medical skills and has unique opinions on postpartum diseases. The author is lucky to follow-up. Now, his experience in syndrome differentiation and treatment of postpartum body pain is analyzed as follows, and the tested case is attached.

Keywords: Postpartum body pain; Syndrome differentiation and treatment; Xiaofeng Zhang

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1. Introduction

Postpartum body pain refers to the pain, numbness, heaviness and swelling of limbs and joints of pregnant women during the puerperium. The disease occurs for childbirth, postpartum blood loss, puerperium sweat more than, when infected with wind-cold, cold-dampness, and etc. Symptoms can be seen: limb joint pain, fear of cold, stiff joints, even body swelling. Physical examination: reduced range of motion, or joint swelling, disease for a long time to see muscle atrophy, joint deformation. Diagnosis basis: history, symptoms, combined with physical examination, if necessary, reference laboratory examination: blood routine, blood gas analysis, blood calcium, erythrocyte sedimentation rate, anti-chain "O," rheumatoid factor, etc. Western medicine in puerperium is due to rheumatism, whereby rheumatoid arthritis caused by arthralgia, postpartum sciatica, multiple myositis, postpartum thrombotic phlebitis similar symptoms, can cause this disease. This disease first appears in General Treatise on the Cause and Symptoms of Diseases. "Volume 34" of this book says: "Parturition hurts the blood and Qi, and strains the internal organs. If it does not recover and you wake up early to work, you will suffer from Qi deficiency, which gives pathogenic wind opportunity to infect the body, causing disease, so it is called stroke. If pathogenic wind makes Qi code, skin as well as meridians and collaterals will be numb ^[1]." If the wind is gentle, the limbs will not be retracted, or slow or urgent, and cannot be tilted. "He explained that the disease is due to the deficiency of Yin and Yang, the evil of the wind, the wind entering the Yang will be slow, and the limbs will not be retracted; when entering the Yin, it will be urgent, and cannot be tilted." Chao family refers to the pain after birth, which is caused by the multiplication of wind evil because of the loss of postpartum blood and Qi, the deficiency of Yin and Yang, which has not been recovered ^[2]. The school notes on women's good prescription says: "for those who suffer from postpartum pain, they start from Qi deficiency and blood flow to bone joints, resulting in heavy and unfavorable limbs and urgent muscles and veins ^[3]." "Medical heart understanding" said: "postpartum pain all over the body, good by the production of 100 sections open, blood empty, cannot Rong Yang, or abortion and injection in the meridians, all make pain ^[4]." The first

syndrome differentiation of the disease is based on the location and nature of pain, combined with the tongue and pulse. If the body joint pain, numbness, with yellow complexion, dizziness palpitation, weak tongue, weak pulse, blood deficiency. If the body joint swelling, numbness, heavy, severe pain, like acupuncture, flexion or pain is not fixed, or heat is comfortable, with the fear of wind, white tongue coating, pulse moistening, is an external cold; If the pain is severe, the pain has a fixed place, numbness, stiffness, severe, adverse flexion and extension, less lochia, dark tongue, white moss, astringent pulse string, belonging to blood stasis. If postpartum lumbar acid, heel pain, accompanied by dizziness tinnitus, faint tongue, pulse heavy string, is kidney deficiency. Mr. Zhang believes that the disease is mostly caused by deficiency or exterior excess and interior deficiency. The one with deficiency has dual deficiency of Qi and blood or kidney deficiency, and has inadequate nutrition for meridian and collateral, muscles, and joints. The one with excess that has impeded meridian and collateral or blood stasis after being infected with wind-cold damp pathogen, and the treatment should focus on tonifying Qi and blood as well as moistening and nourishing meridian and collateral or tonify kidney and waist. For those with deficiency and excess, it can be combined with tonic, and must not be compared with general wind-cold and dampness arthralgia, as well as not use the prescription of expelling, non-obstruction or dispersing dryness and heat randomly. Mr. Zhang's clinical symptoms are mostly based on Huangqi Danggui Jianzhong Decoction or Huangqi Guizhi Wuwu Decoction. Huangqi Jianzhong Decoction contains five large amounts of polysaccharides, saponins, flavonoids, alkaloids, terpenes, volatile oils and phenols, as well as trace amino acids, organic acids and esters, essential oils, vitamins, coumarins, tannins, lignin and other trace elements. It also plays an important role ^[1]. Pharmacological studies have confirmed that Huangqi Guizhi Wuwu decoction can reduce blood viscosity, improve blood microcirculation, hinder platelet aggregation, anti-inflammatory and analgesic, and regulate immune function. Astragalus membranous can alleviate the damage of neurons, protect vascular endothelium from damage, reduce blood lipid, regulate blood flow velocity and prevent thrombosis; Guizhi Xiaore town has good analgesic effect. It can dilate blood vessels and hinder platelet aggregation and anticoagulant; Radix Paeoniae Alba has strong anti-inflammatory, analgesic and antioxidant effects. Astragalus Guizhi Wuwu decoction medicinal astragalus, cassia twig, paeoniae root, ginger, jujube, astragalus like a gentleman, sweet, warm and good for Qi, fills in the table of wei qi. Cassia branch warms wind-coldness and diffuses impediment, compatible with Astragalus, warming Yang and nourishing blood. Guizhi Astragalus makes Qi and activates ends of Yang. Astragalus supplements and doesn't make any pathogen. Two key roles of medicine, Peony that nourishes blood and Guizhi that defends blood. Ginger, dissipating wind, help Guizhi to work. Red date, that tastes sweet and is warm, tonifies qi and replenishes blood, having similar structure as Astragalus and similar effects as Peony. Astragalus Guizhi Wuwu decoction has the effects of nourishing blood, regulating essence and replenishing Qi, dredging collaterals and dispelling wind, dispelling dampness and relieving pain ^[6]. For those with Qi and blood deficiency, Radix Codonopsis, Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae, Caulis Spatholobi, radix rehmanniae, Caulis Polygoni Multiflori, etc., should be added. For those with wind-cold-dampness, Schizonepeta and Saposhnikovia, Herba Asari, Gentiana, etc. should be added. If there is significant pain above the waist, it should add Rhizoma et Radix Notopterygii, Ramulus Mori, and increase the dosage of Ramulus Cinnamomiand. If there is pain below the waist, they should add Fructus Chaenomelis, radix Stephaniae Tetrandrae and Radix Angelicae Pubescentis. If there is severe lower back pain, add dipsacus, mistletoe and Rhizoma Cibtii. For those with heel pain, they should add Dipsacus, Radix Rehmanniae Preparata, Rhizoma Drynariae, etc. Sometimes Duhuo Jisheng Decoction is used directly. Mr. Zhang believes that this prescription not only replenishes Yang Qi and blood, benefits liver and kidney, but also dispels wind-cold, remove cold-dampness. It can be used for purification and as a tonic, especially for those whose condition is stubborn and cannot be cured for a long time.

Mr. Zhang once treated a patient, Liu, 30 years old, with weak physique, more postpartum hemorrhage,

Qi and blood damage, and gradually appeared soreness and pain in joints, numbness in muscles, and fear of wind-coldness. At the first diagnosis, her husband helped her to come. It was midsummer, and she was dressed thick and tight, with low voice and timid breath, sweating constantly. She complained that she felt hot with a body temperature of 37.2~37.5, dizziness and fatigue, and walking with difficulty. According to the investigation, the tongue is light red, the moss is thin and white, and the pulse is weak. Mr. Zhang diagnosed her as postpartum body pain, postpartum spontaneous sweating, and postpartum fever, which was due to that Qi is deficiency and blood is loss, yin did not converge on yang, and meridians were atrophy. It is necessary to Nourish Qi and blood, collect Yin and Yang, soften meridians, and treats with Huangqi Guizhi Wuwu Decoction and Buzhong Yiqi Decoction, with 30g raw Radix Astragali seu Hedysari, 15g Radix Codonopsis, 15g Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae, 9g Ramulus Cinnamomiand, 15g Radix Paeoniae Alba, 6g vinegar Radix Bupleuri, 9g roasted Rhizoma Cimicifugae, 12g Radix Angelicae Sinensis, 30g Caulis Spatholobi, 15g Cornus, 12g Schisandra chinensis and 30g calcined Longmu respectively. Astragalus membranous, Dangshen and Attylodes macrocephala nourish Qi and spleen, the so-called “tangible blood cannot be born, invisible gas immediately solid.” Angelica greatly tonifying Qi and blood, cassia twig WenTong meridians, radix paeoniae alba pain soft rib, explored both in the us, reconcile camp guard. Five doses of medicine can reduce body heat and sweat, relieve body pain and increase spirit. More than 20 doses were taken and all symptoms were eliminated. Since then, the patient has been very convinced of traditional Chinese medicine. Another patient surnamed Zhao, 32 years old, complained of postpartum joint pain for 5 years and aggravated for 2 years. He lost a lot of blood during delivery, and after postpartum wind, he had general joint pain and numbness with concealed head pain. He got out of bed for several months, his lower limbs were tense, his flexion and extension were not functioning as usual, his walking was difficult, his coating on the tongue was thin and white, and his pulse was low. It is diagnosed as postpartum physical pain, which is characterized by deficiency of Qi and blood, invasion of wind, stasis resulting from cold-dampness, and imbalance of Chong and Ren. The treatment is to replenish qi, nourish blood, relax muscles and activate collaterals. It is made of Bazhen decoction, Angelica 15g, fried white peony 15g, Chuanxiong 10g, Astragalus 30g, fried Atractylodes macrocephala 15g, motherwort 15g, fried Fructus aurantii 15g, tangerine peel 15g, roasted licorice 6G, Dipsacus 15g, Eucommia ulmoides 15g, mulberry parasitic 15g, 15g pueraria root, 10g cinnamon branch, 12g Duhuo, 15g Achyranthes bidentata and three flavors of kidney. After 6 doses of medicine, the lower limb pain was slightly reduced, followed by the upper addition and subtraction for more than months, the whole body pain was eliminated, and the lower limbs moved freely. In the prescription, Angelica sinensis, Astragalus membranaceus, Atractylodes macrocephala replenish Qi, replenish blood and Qi, dispel wind, disperse cold and strengthen muscles and bones, Caulis Spatholobi and cassia twig warm and dredge meridians, Dipsacus, Eucommia ulmoides and mulberry parasitic dispel wind, overcome dampness and relieve pain, tonify kidney and strengthen tendons. Mr. Zhang believes that the so-called postpartum disease refers to the diseases related to childbirth or puerperium that occur in the new postpartum or puerperium. The womans’ postpartum veins are empty. The wind evil takes advantage of the deficiency and stays in the joints and meridians. Therefore, the limb contracture, pain, Qi machine block and poor blood flow are caused. In addition, due to the postpartum deficiency of Qi and blood, the loss of nourishment of meridians and the postpartum imbalance of camp and health, the reason is not close. She feels the wind cold and dampness evil, which hinders the operation of Qi and blood^[7]. A pregnant woman who gave birth to a baby after 10 months as the saying “it is a nature principal to ripen the melon and make the pedicle drop.” However, to deliver the pregnancy, the abdomen to relief, the physiological state suddenly changes, and the balance of Yin and Yang is difficult to recover for a while. In addition, labor consumes Qi, bleeding and blood injury, and the excretion of postpartum residual blood turbidity and sweat makes Yin blood suddenly empty, and Yang Qi is very easy to float. Due open of hundreds of channels, vulva, and sweat pore, it's very likely to be infected with pathogen to develop

disease, that is characterized by multiple deficiency and blood stasis. Postpartum body pain can be due to different factors such as environment, constitution and adjustment, the starting point of treatment is also different, blind analgesia and palliative, therefore, starting from the etiology and pathogenesis, specimen consideration, Qi and blood treatment, traditional Chinese medicine has unique advantages in the treatment of this disease. In view of this feature, the deficiency should be supplemented, mainly to supplement Qi and blood. Just as “Shen’s Female department Zhiyao Zheng” said: “Postpartum pain all over the body, more blood deficiency, or having wind, coldness and dampness the same time. Nourishing blood is the treatment, with slightly diffusing collaterals, not using wind-extinguishing medicinal. Also, the stasis should be eliminated, focusing on promoting blood circulation and removing blood stasis, which is the main end of the treatment. Secondly, the disease in particular needs to pay attention to the prevention of care, to prevent severity. Nursing of puerpera before and after giving birth should be taken seriously. Puerpera should be careful in daily life, avoiding to catch cold. Pay attention to staying warm and avoid living in cold and wet environment. At the same time to strengthen the nutrition level, enhance physical fitness with appropriate activities and keep a good mood. In *Fu Qing Zhu Nu Ke* by Fu Shan, the deficiency of spleen and stomach is the origin of Qi and blood biochemistry, and the deficiency of Qi and blood causes the disease. It is pointed out that “all diseases arise from the appearance of blood and Qi, spleen and stomach deficiency, especially after childbirth^[8].” Danxi Zhu advocated that “do not make get after childbirth. The mother should first be supplemented with Qi and blood for her. Although there are other minor diseases, we will treat them at the end^[9].” Obviously, though emphasizing on controlling the deficiencies, it is biased. Therefore, Mr. Zhang highly appreciates Jingyue Zhang’s view, “postpartum, Qi and blood go away, there are many deficiencies syndrome. However, there are those who have nutrient deficiency, those who are not deficient, and those who are excess. For these three, however, we should distinguish their deficiency and excess with the evidence and treat them with the usual method. We should not be sincere and do great control, to finally eliminate the pathogenic factors^[10].” It emphasizes syndrome differentiation and treatment. In short, we should abide by one principle, that is: “Don’t stick to postpartum, don’t forget postpartum.”

Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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