

An Analysis of the Experience of Treating Chronic Atrophic Gastritis Based on "Liver and Stomach Treatment"

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Abstract: Chronic atrophic gastritis (CAG) is a refractory disease of the digestive system. The basic pathogenesis is the weakness of the spleen and stomach. Although the deficiency can be manifested as a deficiency of qi, blood, yin and yang, the deficiency of qi is the first and foremost, and the liver and stomach are located under the diaphragm and belong to the middle jiao, which are physiologically related and pathologically connected, and are closely related to the movement of qi. CAG caused by liver and stomach can be divided into the following four stages of the disease: liver and stomach qi stagnation if the spleen and stomach qi deficiency is weak to push the liver; liver qi surplus will become fire, liver and stomach heat; liver fire for a long time to hurt the yin spread to the stomach, liver and stomach yin deficiency; CAG onset for a long time, liver blood deficiency, qi and blood deficiency, qi stagnation and blood stasis, then the stomach ligament stasis. Therefore, based on the inheritance and innovation of Ye Tianshi's theory of "liver and stomach treatment", Professor Wang Jiehong took the four syndromes of liver and stomach as the breakthrough point, adhered to the pathogenesis, and used the self-made prescription Zuojin Liujunzi Decoction to add and subtract according to the disease, focusing on From soothing liver qi, reducing stomach turbidity, clearing liver fire, and stomach qi, nourishing liver yin, nourishing stomach yin, nourishing liver blood, and dredging stomach and collaterals, the four methods of treating CAG finally achieve the purpose of treating liver and stomach, and harmonizing qi and blood, in order to effectively reverse The performance of gastric mucosal atrophy under the microscope can be prevented before the disease, and the risk of canceration can be reduced.

Keywords: Simultaneous treatment of liver and stomach; Experience of famous doctors; Chronic atrophic gastritis; Zuojin pill; Liujunzi decoction

Chronic atrophic gastritis (CAG) is a gastric disease characterized by atrophic thinning of the gastric mucosal epithelium and reduction of intrinsic glands on gastroscopy and pathology, often accompanied by intestinal epithelial hyperplasia and intraepithelial neoplasia, which significantly affects people's quality of life [1]. Currently recognized as the most predominant cause of H. pylori infection [2] and as an important link in the cancerous process of gastric cancer, CAG is defined as a precancerous lesion by WHO [3] and therefore receives much clinical attention. The Correa cascade response, which is now a more recognized model of gastric carcinogenesis, clarifies the progression of gastric cancer as a stepwise progression pattern that begins with non-atrophic gastritis due to inflammatory factors, followed by atrophic gastritis, intestinal epithelial hyperplasia, and heterogeneous hyperplasia, and eventually progresses to gastric cancer [4]. Therefore, it is crucial to clarify the pathological mechanisms associated with CAG and take active measures for the prevention and treatment of gastric cancer [5]. Nowadays, Western medicine mainly focuses on promoting gastrointestinal motility, accelerating gastric mucosa repair, and inhibiting gastric acid secretion, which can only relieve symptoms and has poor effect on eradication, and has defects such as large side effects and easy recurrence [6-7]. CAG fits into the category of "fullness", "gastric distension" and "stomach pain" in Chinese medicine. According to Chinese medicine, the root cause of CAG is weakness of the spleen and stomach and stagnation of Qi [8-9]. Therefore, traditional Chinese medicine has unique advantages in the treatment of this disease, which can greatly reverse the atrophy of gastric mucosa and plays an important role in the treatment of this disease [10].

1. Theoretical basis for the idea of "treating the liver and stomach together"

In the Qing dynasty, Ye Tianshi innovatively proposed "treating the liver and stomach together" based on Zhang Zhongjing's theory of "treating the liver and spleen together". According to Ye, the liver wood should be sparse and the stomach earth should be descending, and too much liver wood and too little spleen will affect the stomach earth [11]. This has provided a theoretical basis for the treatment of the untreated diseases and clinical treatment of CAG in later generations of TCM.

1.1 Liver and stomach correlation

1.1.1 The liver and stomach are connected to the meridian system

The Difficult Classic - Thirty-one Difficulties [12]: "The middle jiao is in the middle and upper stomach." It is clear that the stomach belongs to the middle jiao. The correlation between the liver and the spleen and stomach in terms of anatomical location was further clarified. The anatomical form of the liver and stomach has been theoretically understood in some detail by the ancients, with the liver and stomach living together under the diaphragm, belonging to the same middle jiao, and located next to each other. The liver and stomach meridians are connected: *Suwen* says: "Yangming, the longest of the twelve meridians", Yangming stomach meridian goes from the head to the foot, the circulation parts are extensive, for more gas and blood meridians, its and "the sea of the five viscera and six bowels" known as the punch pulse intersects in the gas street, nearly strengthen the The stomach meridian to the twelve meridians of qi and blood moistening, so the fructus yin liver meridian in circulation depends on the qi and blood of the stomach meridian punch nourishment. This shows that the liver and stomach are not only directly related in meridians, but also complement each other and serve each other.

1.1.2 Hepatogastric physiological interdependence

The physiological correlation between the liver and stomach organs is mainly reflected in the regulation of both qi and blood volume. One of them: the clinical guide to medical cases [13] contains: "the spleen should rise is healthy, the stomach should descend is harmonious." The liver and spleen are the two main organs of the liver and spleen, and the stomach is the main organ of descent. The ascending of the liver maintains the ascending and descending of the body's qi, and the spleen and stomach are in the middle jiao, one ascending and one descending, the hub of qi ascending and descending. The three organs rise and fall together to regulate the qi of the whole body. Secondly, there is also a correlation between the liver and the stomach in the regulation of blood volume. The liver collects blood, and if the liver blood is sufficient, the stomach yin will not be deficient; the spleen and stomach produce qi and blood, and if the stomach functions normally, the liver has blood to collect. If the liver and stomach are normal in regulating blood volume, the spleen and stomach will not be deficient and will function normally. In summary, the liver and stomach are both part of the middle jiao, and together they promote the digestion and absorption of food and water, influence the flow of qi and blood, and regulate the qi of the whole body.

1.1.3 Pathological interconnection

In pathological conditions, the liver and stomach interact with each other. First of all, the liver and stomach are internal organs, Chinese medicine believes that the five organs of the human body and the six internal organs of mutual contact, five organs and six internal diseases through the meridians of mutual transmission. Secondly, the five elements of the liver are wood, and the stomach is Yang earth, the two organs of the five elements are mutually exclusive, too much liver drainage or not enough drainage can make the liver and stomach together. Finally, in terms of qi and blood, if liver blood is insufficient to nourish stomach yin, the food and water cannot be properly absorbed and decomposed, which is manifested as symptoms of liver and stomach yin deficiency, such as burning and hidden pain in the stomach and epigastrium, incomplete transformation of grain, and hunger and lack of desire to eat; In short, the liver and stomach are mutually influential, causative and closely related.

2. Four methods of "treating the liver and stomach together"

Based on the theory of "treating the liver and stomach together", Prof. Wang believes that the key cause of CAG lies in the disharmony of the liver and stomach. His treatment of CAG based on the liver and stomach theory mainly focuses on four types of symptoms: liver and stomach qi stagnation, liver and stomach heat, liver and stomach yin deficiency, and stomach ligament stasis. She also formulated his own Zuo Jin Liu Jun Zi Tang, with remarkable clinical efficacy.

2.1 Drain liver qi and lower stomach turbidity

According to Wang, the root cause of CAG is the weakness of the spleen and stomach, and its pathological factors are closely related to "qi stagnation". As *Jing Yue Quan Shu* contains: "the spleen and stomach injury in labor and weariness, more than the diet cold and summer heat for more". In clinical practice, Wang often uses Zuo Jin Liu Jun Zi Tang with addition and subtraction. Wang believes that the liver-stomach qi stagnation type is often not accompanied by obvious heat and cold, so he adds Huang Lian and Wu Zhu Zhu to the original formula, plus Buddha's Hand, Citron and White Peony to soften the liver and regulate the qi. Therefore, for this type of stagnant liver and stomach qi, the original formula is supplemented with Huang Lian and Wu Ju Ju, and other liver softeners, citron, peony, and so on, and Huang Qi 30g is added to strengthen the qi of the spleen and stomach, and Wang Shi believes that ginseng is more suitable for long-term use because of its calming nature.

2.2 Clearing liver fire and harmonizing stomach qi

The liver is the organ of wind and wood, and the internal fire is sent to the phase, the body is yin but with yang, easy to liver depression and qi stagnation, depression and fire, liver fire crosses the stomach, the stomach earth is suppressed, the middle jiao is out of harmony, then the liver and stomach heat, clinical appearing burning pain in the stomach, fullness and distension, irritability, dry mouth and bitterness, acid reflux and heartburn, red tongue with yellow coating, and string pulse. The symptoms are red tongue with yellow fur and a stringent pulse. For the treatment of CAG with liver and stomach heat, Wang often follows the principle that in order to wake up the stomach, the liver must be treated first, so that the source of the disease can be cleared, and then combined with products that harmonize the stomach and stop vomiting, the liver and stomach heat will be removed. Wang Shi believes that this type is mostly due to liver and stomach gas stagnation improper treatment of depression and fire progress, and often heat in the damp, Zuo Jin Wan since ancient times for the liver fire offending the stomach of the classic formula, *medicine* praised it as "stammering sour water of the miracle formula". Therefore, in the original formula of Zuojin Liu junzi Tang, Wang Shi often used Wu Zhuyu and Huang Lian as the ruling medicine, because this type of acid reflux is more significant, so the ratio of the two drugs according to the ancient formula 6:1, and related studies have shown [14] that the ratio of Huang Lian - Wu Zhuyu 6:1 can significantly inhibit gastric acid secretion. Huang Lian is bitter and cold in nature, which can clear the fire and heat in the liver, stomach and heart, thus balancing the symptoms and the root cause; Wu Zhu Yu is pungent and hot in nature, entering the liver meridian, opening liver depression with pungency and lowering stomach rebellion with bitterness. The two drugs used together, one main and one auxiliary, one cold and one hot, so that the liver fire clear without cold hinder the stomach. On the basis of the original formula, Wang Shi Chang changed ginseng to the colder western ginseng, and added Chai Hu, Paeonia lactiflora, cuttlebone, bamboo rhizome and Citrus aurantium shell to clear the heat of the liver and stomach. Chai Hu is good at relieving depression in the liver, while Bai Shao is good at softening the liver and relieving urgency, so the two drugs used together can nourish the body of the liver and benefit the liver. Modern pharmacological studies have shown [15] that Bupleurum can regulate human carcinogenic genes, thus achieving the purpose of anti-tumor. The combination of the two herbs works together to suppress acidity and protect the stomach. The stomach is the six internal organs to pass as smooth, so the addition of Citrus aurantium and other regulating qi, the combination of all drugs, liver heat can be cleared, the stomach and internal organs to pass down, directly to the disease, the spleen and stomach can be protected.

2.3 Nourish liver yin and stomach yin

The Guide to Clinical Medical Cases mentions, "The stomach is Yang earth, with Yin for use, wood and fire without control, are the withering of gastric juice." The patient is depressed and angered, the wood fire is hyperactive and uncontrolled, the Yang Ming stomach and earth, the body Yang and use Yin, so the power of the wood fire is rebellious, need Yang Ming stomach and earth to resist, the stomach Yin is insufficient, the liver Yang is not restrained even more, the liver Yang is hyperactive, and damage the stomach Yin, then the liver and stomach Yin deficiency, the clinical manifestation is the stomach and epigastric burning vague pain, hunger does not want to eat, false annoyance less sleep, dry mouth and eyes dry, less food thin, red tongue with less coating, thin pulse, etc. symptoms. According to TCM, "Yang transforms qi and yin forms", so flattening of gastric mucosal folds under CAG microscopy can be considered a sign of deficiency of gastric yin [16]. According to Wang, this type is the further development of liver and stomach heat, and the deficiency of liver yin is its root. Based on the principle of "deficiency is tonic, dryness is moistening", Master Wang made the original

formula of "Six Gentlemen of Gold" and replaced the original formula of "Dang Ginseng" with "Prince Ginseng". The heat potential of this type is not very significant, so adjust the ratio of Huang Lian - Wu Ju Ju two drugs to 3:1 or 2:1, to prevent cold more injury to the yin liquid. Wang Shi often adds sweet and cool products such as maitong, smallpox powder, dendrobium, lady's mantle and white peony with the symptoms. White peony nourishes blood and softens the liver, and with licorice can relieve stomach cramps. Some scholars [17] have shown through clinical studies that peony-glycyrrhiza has better efficacy in gastrointestinal disorders. Mai Dong, Smallpox Powder, and Dendrobium nourish stomach yin, while Lizhenzi enters the liver meridian and nourishes the yin of the liver and kidney. The combination of the two drugs is a combination of hard and hard, which can descend and pass, so that the heat evil will be eliminated from the lower jiao. In order to prevent excessive nourishment of yin from making the stomach and internal organs too nourishing and greasy, Wang often adds qi-regulating products at his discretion, so as to nourish yin without defeating the stomach, so that liver yin can be nourished and stomach yin can be moistened.

2.4 Nourish liver blood and open stomach channels

According to Chinese medicine theory, stomach and epigastric pain is mainly due to blood stasis blocking the stomach ligament. Among the five organs of the human body, the liver is the main reservoir of blood and the spleen and stomach are the sources of blood production. On the one hand, the liver collects blood and the spleen and stomach produce blood complementarily, on the one hand, the liver collects blood regulated by its draining, so that the blood collected runs to the whole body to moisten the organs and regulate the amount of blood it collects, on the other hand, the liver and stomach are connected, and the meridians are connected, if the liver blood is insufficient, the stomach and internal organs will lose the moistening of liver blood, the stomach and internal organs will be deficient, Yin deficiency will lead to stasis, stagnation of the stomach ligament, and if it does not pass, it will pass; on the other hand, if the spleen and stomach are weak and the source of transformation is lacking, the liver will have no blood to collect, which will On the contrary, if the spleen and stomach are weak and the source of chemistry is lacking, the liver has no blood to hide, which will aggravate the stagnation of blood in the stomach, which will lead to stasis in the stomach ligament. Clinical manifestations are stabbing pain in the stomach and epigastrium, fixed pain and refusal to press, or accompanied by dizziness and dizziness, purple and dark tongue, or petechiae and petechiae, with astringent pulse. Therefore, based on the original formula, Wang often increases the dosage of qi-supporting herbs such as Radix et Rhizoma Ginseng, Radix Astragali and Chen Pi to achieve the effect of blood flow when qi is flowing. To prevent the deficiency of yin and fluid from refining the fluid into phlegm and resolving the stasis, Wang also did not forget to add some products that nourish yin and resolve phlegm. In this type of stomach ligament stasis, therefore, eliminating stasis is the most important thing. By nourishing liver and blood and eliminating stomach stasis, Wang Shi often added Dan Shen, Chuan Xiong, Bai Shao, Angelica Sinensis, Yan Hu Suo and other products that nourish liver and eliminate stasis. Dan Shen combined with blood stasis drugs to nourish blood and blood. Radix Angelicae Sinensis is sweet and warm in nature and enters the liver meridian. It is a sacred medicine to nourish the blood and invigorate the blood, so that it can nourish the blood without stagnating it and move it without harming it. Related pharmacological studies [18] proved that angelica has antithrombotic, hypolipidemic and hepatocyte-protective effects. With the combination of these drugs, liver blood is nourished and the stomach ligament is opened.

3. Case examples

Zhang, female, 58 years old, resident of Xianyang City, visited our outpatient clinic on September 22, 2020 with the chief complaint of intermittent gastric and epigastric distension and discomfort with acid reflux for 10 years, aggravated for 1 month.

The patient had a history of gastric disease for many years and complained of gastric and epigastric discomfort due to irregular diet 10 years ago, with no significant relief from long-term Chinese and Western treatment. On November 16, 2019, he underwent electrogastroscopy in our hospital, which showed chronic atrophic gastritis with mild erosion. Pathology showed: mild intestinal epithelial metaplasia. The symptoms are aggravated after meals, with occasional distention and discomfort in the chest and hypochondrium, acid reflux, nausea, occasional heartburn, dry mouth and bitterness, especially in the morning, aggravated by heat, poor mood, impatience and irritability, good at rest, little food and dullness, difficult stool, one line per day, dry quality, urine, slightly yellow color, poor night rest, red tongue with thin yellow coating, visible peeling moss, and slightly counted pulse. The

diagnosis of TCM is gastric gangrene, and the evidence belongs to the type of liver and stomach stagnation and heat. Treatment: Clearing the liver and draining heat, harmonizing the stomach and relieving pain. The formula should be combined with Zuo Jin Wan and Liu Jun Zi Tang, plus or minus. Herbs: Huanglian 6g, vinegar aromatic herb 10g, vinegar yujin 10g, raw white peony 15g, Radix Codonopsis pilosulae 10g, dry ginger 6g, poria 15g, made dogwood 3g, Qingxia 10g, Huangbai 10g, Chenpi 10g, raw atractylodes 30g, licorice 6g, vinegar yanhuosuo 10g, Chuanxiong 10g, sedum 3g. 14 doses, 1 dose/d, 400mL in water, take warm in the morning and evening. On the second consultation on October 6, 2020, the symptoms were as follows: the distention and fullness in the stomach and epigastric region was reduced, acid reflux and nausea were reduced, the mouth was occasionally dry and bitter, the stomach was poor, phlegm in the throat was not easy to be expelled, still easy to be irritable, the stool was regulated, the urine was yellow, sleep was possible, the tongue was slightly red, the moss was yellow and greasy, the pulse was string. On October 15, 2020, the third consultation was held and all the symptoms were relieved, only occasional fullness of the stomach, occasional acid reflux, occasional bitterness in the mouth, increased food intake, stool regulation, sleep, and the same tongue and pulse as before. The above prescription was effective, and then he insisted on outpatient treatment, following the previous treatment and fine-tuning the prescription as appropriate. 3 months later, the gastroscopy was repeated in our hospital, showing chronic superficial gastritis and disappearance of intestinal epithelial metaplasia. There was no recurrence at six months follow-up.

Press Release: The patient is a middle-aged and elderly woman with many years of gastric and epigastric disorders and a weak spleen and stomach; she has been eating irregularly and her diet has injured her stomach, resulting in loss of nourishment of her stomach ligaments. Secondly, the patient is often in a bad mood and is easily agitated, resulting in liver depression and fire in the spleen and stomach, so she sees discomfort in the stomach and epigastric region, intermittent vague pain, dry mouth and bitterness, acid reflux and heartburn, which, combined with her tongue and pulse, can be diagnosed as liver and stomach heat. Therefore, the treatment should be to de-heat the liver and harmonize the stomach to relieve pain. Zuo Jin Liu Jun Zi Tang is a common formula used by Professor Wang Jie Hong to treat liver and stomach stagnation heat. The combination of the two drugs can not only eliminate the cold and heat resistance, but also reach the liver meridian to clear the liver and remove the fire, which is the effect of treating the liver and stomach together and treating both the symptoms and the root cause. In this formula, Radix et Rhizoma ginseng tonifies the spleen and stomach qi and protects the middle earth; Fu Ling and Atractylodes macrocephala remove dampness and phlegm; Han Xia and Chen Pi regulate qi and harmonize the middle, stop vomiting and subdue rebellion. The addition of dry ginger to strengthen the spleen and warm the dampness; Chuanxiong and vinegar Yanhuosuo to activate blood circulation and regulate qi to relieve pain; vinegar Xiangxiang and vinegar Yujin to move qi and relieve depression; white peony to astringent yin and soften the liver to relieve pain. At the second consultation, the patient's symptoms were all alleviated, but phlegm was not easily discharged, so Zhe Bei Mu was added to clear heat and resolve phlegm; at the third consultation, the patient's symptoms were stable and the efficacy of the medicine was remarkable, so the original formula was adhered to and the treatment continued to be consolidated. The formula is characterized by the combination of heat-clearing and fire-removing herbs with spleen-healthy and dampness-transforming herbs, so that the heat can be cleared and the dampness can be transformed.

4. Summary

The pathological mechanism of chronic atrophic gastritis is complex and variable, with a long course and high risk of cancer, which seriously affects people's physical and mental health. Professor Wang Jiehong's clinical practice is based on the theory of "liver and stomach treatment" of Ye Tiansh, and he has continuously innovated, believing that the liver and stomach play an important role in the course of CAG, and that the main pathological mechanism of CAG lies in "deficiency", which leads to actuality and a mixture of deficiency and actuality, eventually leading to qi stagnation, fire, yin deficiency and blood stasis. He believes that the main pathogenic mechanism of CAG lies in "deficiency", which leads to actuality and intermingling of deficiency and actuality, eventually leading to Qi stagnation, fire, Yin deficiency, blood stasis, etc. He always keeps in mind the treatment principle of "abiding by the pathogenic mechanism" and treating both the symptoms and the root cause to achieve the treatment goal of preventing and reducing cancer before it occurs. In Chinese medicine, it is believed that spleen and stomach diseases are "three parts treatment, seven parts nourishment" [19], so Professor Wang Jiehong's clinical treatment focuses on guiding patients' emotions, instructing them to regulate their diet, not to stop medication in the middle term, and to have a sufficient treatment course. If the CAG patient is also infected with H. pylori, the combination of quadruple therapy,

following the holistic concept, the identification and protection of the body to achieve self-healing. The treatment of gastric disease should not only focus on the internal organs of the stomach, but also treat the liver and stomach together, often with excellent clinical results.

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