

Exploring the Prevention and Treatment Strategies of Coronary Heart Disease in the Elderly Based on the Idea of "Treating the Future Disease"

Shiru Zhang^{1,*}, Xiaofang Ren²

¹Shaanxi University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Xi'an, Shaanxi, 712046, China

²Xi'an Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Xi'an, Shaanxi, 710021, China

*Corresponding author

Abstract: Under the impact of global population aging, coronary heart disease (CHD) in the elderly, as one of the major types of cardiovascular diseases, has become a public health challenge with high morbidity and mortality rates that cannot be ignored, and profoundly affects the health and quality of life of the elderly. As one of the essences of Chinese medicine theory, the core of "treating the future disease" emphasizes the importance of prevention, i.e., "prevention is better than cure", which can be applied throughout the whole dynamic process of disease development, guiding the prevention and treatment of diseases. Its connotation can be summarized in three aspects: preventing diseases before they occur, preventing changes in existing diseases, and preventing recurrence after disease. Based on the idea of "treating the disease before it becomes a disease" in Chinese traditional medicine, effective intervention and treatment for the occurrence, development and prognosis of coronary heart disease in the elderly can be carried out, with a view to providing scientific new ideas for the prevention and treatment of coronary heart disease in the elderly.

Keywords: Cure the Disease, Elderly, Coronary Heart Disease, Prevention and Treatment Strategy

1. Introduction

Coronary atherosclerotic heart disease, or CHD, is a heart disease in which the lining of the coronary arteries becomes narrowed or even occluded due to the gradual accumulation of atherosclerotic plaques. This pathology leads to a series of heart health problems as heart muscle cells are unable to receive an adequate supply of blood and oxygen. The incidence of CHD and the risk of death are closely related to age, and usually increase significantly with age. According to the 2022 China Health and Wellness Statistical Yearbook, the mortality rate of CHD in 2021 was 19.14% among China's urban population over 65 years old, and 21.65% among the rural population [1]. Chronic diseases such as hyperlipidemia, hypertension, diabetes, and others are common risk factors for CHD in the elderly [2]. Aging tends to cause thickening of the vascular endothelium, endothelial dysfunction and thrombosis. [3] In addition, older adults are often associated with multiple risk factors for CHD, including, but not limited to, dyslipidemia, hypertension, diabetes mellitus, physical inactivity, and poor lifestyle habits such as smoking. Under the combined effect of these factors, the pathological changes of the coronary arteries show the characteristics of multiple, significant calcification and diffuse, and are more likely to induce serious diseases such as lesions of the left main artery and even myocardial infarction. [1] CHD has now become the disease with the highest risk of death among the elderly, with an insidious onset, few obvious symptoms at the initial stage, and a longer evolution of the disease, with most patients showing symptoms only when the stenosis of the coronary artery lumen reaches 70%. When the coronary artery lumen stenosis reaches 70%, most of the patients will show symptoms such as panic palpitations, chest tightness, chest pain and shortness of breath. Therefore, it is especially important to take various effective measures to prevent the occurrence of CHD and block the development of CHD. The concept of "treating the future disease" is the embodiment of the concept of disease prevention in Chinese medicine, and it is of great significance to utilize the idea of "treating the future disease" to prevent and treat coronary heart disease in the elderly.

The treatment of the not-yet-diseased was first recorded in the Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine. The "Su Wen - The Great Treatise on the Regulation of the Four Airs and the Divine" emphasizes that "the sage does not treat the disease that has already been treated but treats the disease that has not yet been treated," highlighting the importance of treating the disease that has not yet been

treated in the system of Chinese medicine. The "Su Wen - Prickly Heat" further elaborates, "When the signs of disease are not yet apparent, and when you see a red color, you apply needles; this is the method of treating the undiseased." This points out that before the onset of a disease, there will first appear some subtle signs or characteristic manifestations that may further develop into a certain disease, so it is important to take precautions and take effective measures to stop the progress of the disease, so as to make this potentially morbid state develop in a healthy and beneficial direction. In the "Ling Shu - Reversal and Conformity", it is stated that "the superior workman treats the disease before it develops", which also emphasizes the importance of treating the disease before it develops, and that a skillful doctor is more adept at preventing the disease or cutting off the developmental process of the disease at an early stage. All these three points contain the ideas of preventing illness before it occurs and preventing changes in existing illnesses [4]. Later generations of physicians have continued to pass on and develop the idea of "treating the future disease", for example, during the Han Dynasty, Zhang Zhongjing initially combined the idea of treating the future disease with acupuncture and moxibustion, vomiting, and guidance, and also put forward the idea that "when you see a disease of the liver, you know that the liver spreads to the spleen, so you should first stabilize the spleen" in The Essentials of the Golden Chamber, which incorporates the idea of treating the future disease into the treatment of internal organs. The idea of treating the disease before it develops is integrated into the theory of visceral transmission, which cuts off the path of disease transmission between the viscera to prevent further development of the disease. Hua Tuo created the five bird play also reflects the concept of treatment of the disease [5]. The treatment of the disease in the Ming and Qing dynasties began to apply in the clinical prescription, the Qing dynasty warm disease Ye Gui put forward the theory of "the first place not subjected to the evil" and applied in the clinical treatment of warm disease, the treatment of the disease for the first time the idea of the disease and the combination of the doctrine of warm disease. When the disease has not yet penetrated deeply, preventive treatment measures are taken to stop the disease from spreading deeply. Wu detailed in the clinical use of medicines focus on solid protection of yin and liquid and after the disease of nourishment, promote the development of the theory of treatment of the future [6]. The idea of "treating the future disease" in TCM has become the most basic rule of TCM after it has been perfected by successive generations of medical doctors, and has been continuously promoted and applied in clinical application. To this day, the theory of "treating the future illness" still plays a guiding role.

2. The Use of Cure in Coronary Heart Disease in the Elderly

Chinese medicine categorizes coronary heart disease within the pathological category of thoracic paralysis. Coronary heart disease in the elderly as one of the most common chronic diseases in the elderly, old age and frailty, lack of kidney energy is the most fundamental cause of this disease. The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine (HUNDI NEIJING) first recorded: "Kidney disease... the deficiency is chest pain", "Suwen - five organs generation" recorded: "the heart of the joint veins also... its main kidneys", "Jingyue quanquan" says Jingyue Quanshu said: "the heart is based on the kidneys...the heart gas is weak, there is not by the kidneys", all of the above discussions that the kidney and the formation of thoracic paralysis has a certain connection. Elderly kidney yang deficiency, can not fund the heart yang drumming, heart yang is not vibrant and triggered by thoracic paralysis; the elderly renal essence is gradually weakened, insufficient qi and blood biochemistry, and over time and lead to the channel of loss of nourishment, stagnant blood and blood stasis, stagnation of the heart veins into thoracic paralysis. Therefore, the core rule for preventing and treating coronary heart disease in the elderly is to replenish kidney yang and benefit essence. The idea of "treating the disease before it occurs" provides scientific guidance for the prevention and treatment of coronary heart disease in the elderly by cultivating and protecting the kidney yuan, supporting the positive qi, and regulating the functions of the body's internal organs. In the following, we will explore the prevention of coronary heart disease and clinical treatment in the following three aspects: preventing the disease before it occurs, preventing the disease from changing and preventing the disease from recurring after it occurs, so as to put forward a diagnosis and treatment plan with Chinese medicine characteristics for the prevention and treatment of coronary heart disease in the elderly.

2.1. Preventing Disease before it Occurs

Preventing disease before it occurs means that before certain diseases occur in the body, various preventive work and measures are carried out to avoid the emergence of diseases. Preventing diseases before they occur mainly includes two aspects, one is to enhance one's vitality through health care to

resist diseases and evils, and the other is to prevent the invasion of diseases and evils. Elderly people themselves kidney yuán insufficient, not onset of positive qi can still resist the evil, but vulnerable to a variety of internal and external disease-causing factors, easy to promote the evil and lead to the further loss of kidney yuán, will be induced coronary heart disease. Therefore, the basic principle of preventing coronary heart disease in old age is to cultivate and replenish renal energy. Specific measures are as follows.

(1) Eat and drink in moderation. On the one hand, we should eat reasonably, ensure adequate nutrition, and build a healthy dietary structure, so that the source of qi and blood biochemistry is sufficient. On the other hand, we should avoid eating too much. Salt enters the kidneys, and eating foods with high salt content will easily lead to over-salting and injure the kidneys, so it is necessary to keep the saltiness moderate to protect the kidney qi. The primary risk factor for coronary heart disease is abnormal lipid metabolism [7], so be sure to avoid over-eating fat, sweet, thick and greasy products, the old man's spleen and stomach transport capacity is insufficient, unable to putrefaction and transportation of fat, sweet and thick and greasy things, easy to lead to the blood turbidity, blood stagnation into blood stasis, and ultimately induced coronary heart disease. As recorded in the "Ru Men Matters pro": "the people of the cream sorghum..... wine and food injuries, bloating and plumping diaphragm, entertainment heart". In addition, the time of eating should also be kept regular, so as to comply with nature. At the same time, smoking cessation is also extremely important to prevent coronary heart disease in the elderly. Smoking is widely recognized as an important risk factor for coronary heart disease. Smoking can damage the normal function of the endothelium of the arterial blood vessels, but also easy to lead to abnormalities in lipid metabolism and oxidative stress and inflammation, thus accelerating the formation of atherosclerosis [8].

(2) Regulate emotions. Emotional activities are closely related to the function of the five viscera and six bowels, improper expression of emotions will disrupt the qi of the bowels, leading to the occurrence of disease. *Miscellaneous Diseases Source and Flow Rhinoceros Candle - Heart Disease Source and Flow* recorded: "seven emotional reasons for heart pain." Fei Bo Xiong "medical alcohol up to the right" said: "seven emotional injuries, although divided into five organs and return to the heart." Seven emotions cause disease, often first affect the heart, and then damage and other organs. Sadness injures the spleen, the spleen is not healthy and lead to water and dampness stagnation, phlegm stagnation in the heart and chest; anger injures the liver and yang, liver drainage dysfunction, stagnation of blood stasis and lead to chest paralysis. It can be seen that regulating emotions and moods, and enjoying emotions and nourishing sex has an important role in preventing the formation of coronary heart disease in the elderly. Modern medicine has revealed a profound association between psychological factors and cardiovascular health, especially pointing out that extreme mood swings are potentially important factors in cardiovascular disease. Studies have also shown that aggressive, impatient and irritable personalities are the main incidence of coronary heart disease [9]. According to a study on circulatory medicine, positive and healthy psychology can effectively prevent coronary heart disease, and optimism can reduce the risk of cardiovascular events to a certain extent [10]. Encourage the elderly to develop hobbies and interests, enhance communication with family and friends, and ensure good mood as much as possible.

(3) Living and rising should be regular. A person's daily routine should be in accordance with the laws of nature, i.e., the human being corresponds to heaven and earth. According to the geographical environment where the human body is located, the four seasons and climate change to develop the most reasonable time of rest and relaxation. The *Su Wen - Anger and Tong Tian Lun* mentioned in the chapter: "On the first day of the week, people are born, in the middle of the day, Yang Qi is strong, and in the west of the day, Yang Qi is weak." The growth and decline of Yang Qi corresponds to the rhythm of the day, and the human body should carry out daily living activities according to the law of Yang Qi growth and decline. Meridian flow injection theory will be divided into twelve hours a day, corresponding to the body's twelve meridians, if the night off can be regular according to the meridian flow injection theory, then it will make the health effect is optimal. Foreign countries have also done a lot of research on the relationship between sleep and coronary heart disease, Framingham offspring cohort study [11] shows that too much or too little sleep will have a certain impact on the increased risk of coronary heart disease.

(4) Proper exercise. Appropriate and scientific exercise is an indispensable condition for maintaining a healthy body. Positive exercise can promote the harmonization of Ying and Wei and the smooth flow of qi and blood, making the human body more sufficient positive qi, sinews and muscles more robust, more vigorous internal organs, can effectively avoid the generation of phlegm, dampness and turbid blood. Exercise training can improve the oxygen uptake capacity of skeletal muscles and

make full use of oxygen, but also improve the function of the vascular endothelium, so that the peripheral vascular tension is significantly reduced, to promote the blood supply of skeletal muscles, in order to reduce the risk of coronary heart disease [12]. Elderly people can choose a suitable form of physical exercise according to their actual situation, such as common tai chi, square dance, badminton and walking.

(5) Moderation of labor and leisure. Labor belongs to the yang, yi belongs to the yin, moderate labor is to maintain a dynamic balance between yin and yang. Excessive exertion will lose the function of internal organs, resulting in the depletion of blood and qi, excessive labor easy to deplete the heart and blood palpitations, excessive housework easy to cause the depletion of kidney essence. Excessive rest and relaxation can easily lead to stagnation of qi, abnormal metabolism of blood and fluid, stagnation of qi and blood stasis, and may also lead to lack of yang qi and deficiency of positive qi. Appropriate labor can increase the body's metabolic rate, active visceral functions, and accelerate the flow of qi and blood. At the same time, proper rest is also essential to restore physical energy and relax the body and mind. Elderly groups should scientifically and reasonably arrange the time of labor and leisure, so that the spirit of the full, vigorous metabolism, to prevent the occurrence of coronary heart disease.

(6) Acupuncture, tuina, and medication. Acupuncture and moxibustion have been widely used in clinical practice to prevent and treat coronary heart disease. Wang Yu [13] et al. summarized the commonly used and effective acupoints for the prevention and treatment of coronary heart disease, including Shenmen, Qiemen, Xinyu, Qingyinyu, Neiguan, Jueque, and Tanzhong, by collecting the literature on the prevention and treatment of coronary heart disease by acupuncture in the past ten years. Acupuncture can improve left ventricular diastolic function, reduce cardiac load, increase coronary blood flow, and enhance myocardial function [14]. Nudging the relevant meridians and acupoints can also regulate the function of qi and blood in the internal organs, support positive qi to resist evil, and reduce the likelihood of coronary heart disease. You can also choose some antihypertensive and lipid-lowering health tea to improve coronary microcirculation. Elderly people are losing their bodies and are more suitable for this kind of gentle health care methods.

2.2. Disease Prevention

Pre-existing disease prevention refers to the fact that the patient has already developed the disease, but in its early stage, certain treatment means are taken to prevent the further transmission and development of the disease, effectively slowing down or even cutting off the process of disease development. In the early stage of coronary heart disease, early diagnosis is made through electrocardiogram, arterial ultrasound, CTA, etc. If thickening of blood vessel wall, atherosclerosis, myocardial ischemia or narrowing of blood vessels are found, treatment should be carried out in time to address the causative factors of the disease, so that the evils of the disease can be nipped in the bud. From the perspective of Chinese medicine theory, the core mechanism of coronary heart disease in the elderly can be summarized as caused by kidney deficiency, which is not only the source of the disease, but also the key pathological basis for the deepening and transformation of the condition. In the early stage of the disease, patients often manifested as dizziness, lumbar and knee soreness and weakness, nocturnal enuresis, ringing in the ears, fatigue and weakness, and hair and teeth shaking, etc. Typical clinical symptoms are dizziness, waist and knees soreness and weakness, tinnitus, fatigue, and hair and teeth shaking. With the development of the disease, on the basis of kidney deficiency, there is a dysfunction of the internal organs and an imbalance of qi and blood yin and yang, which is prone to phlegm and blood stasis and other pathological products, which further block the meridians and channels and form a complex and varied picture of the disease. In view of this, Chinese medicine emphasizes the importance of early intervention and evidence-based treatment. For elderly patients with coronary artery disease, the treatment strategy of tonifying the kidneys and regulating lipids with traditional Chinese medicine is timely adopted, aiming at fundamentally improving the state of kidney deficiency, adjusting the functions of internal organs and promoting the discharge and absorption of pathological products, so as to effectively improve the quality of life of patients. Specific usage prescription can be considered from the following four directions.

(1) Nourishing the kidney and filling up the essence, activating blood circulation and removing blood stasis. Essence in the kidney is the source of qi and blood biochemistry. When the kidney essence is deficient in the elderly, there is a lack of source of qi and blood biochemistry, the heart veins are deprived of nourishment, and the qi and blood stagnate and stagnate, resulting in thoracic paralysis. Clinical symptoms include stabbing pain in the chest, fixed position, dizziness, tinnitus, forgetfulness, lumbar pain, dark tongue or petechiae, thickening of the veins under the tongue, and astringent pulse. It

is often used to tonify the kidney and fill the essence with ripened dihuang, wolfberry, cuscuta, and bajitian, and to invigorate blood circulation and eliminate blood stasis with peach kernel, safflower, and chuanxiong. National medical master Liu Zhiming believes that kidney deficiency and blood stasis is the core pathogenesis of coronary heart disease, and often uses shouwu yanshou dan combined with gua gua allium cepa agent with additions and subtractions to achieve a better therapeutic effect [15].

(2) Nourishing the kidney and benefiting qi, dispelling phlegm and removing dampness. Kidney is the main water, can regulate the whole body water metabolism, the kidney is the innate nature, Zhang Jiebin said: "phlegm in the spleen, phlegm is not in the kidney." In elderly people with insufficient kidney qi, the inability to perform the Jin Jin lead to the transmission of liquid distribution is not normal. Over time, this can transform into dampness, which then turns into phlegm, obstructing the heart veins and leading to chest paralysis. Clinical symptoms can be seen in chest pain, tiredness, fatigue, breathlessness and laziness, self-sweating, dizziness like wrapping, limbs and sleepiness, pale tongue, fat body, white greasy moss, edge of the teeth marks, slippery pulse and so on. The prescription is often used in Epimedium, Cortex Eucommiae, Astragalus, Radix et Rhizoma Ginseng, etc. to tonify the kidney and benefit the qi, and Gua Piper, Allium sativum, Semixia, and Bamboo Roots are used to dispel phlegm and remove dampness. Prof. Shen Shaogong [16] believed that coronary heart disease in middle-aged and old people is mainly due to kidney deficiency and phlegm obstruction, and selected the formula of Qi Chrysanthemum and Rhizoma Dioscoreae Tang with subtractions, supplementing the yin and yang in the kidneys with Radix Rehmanniae Praeparatae, Fructus Lycii, Semen Morinda Citri Reticulatae, Cortex Eucommiae, Rhizoma Polygoni Multiflori and Rhizoma Polygoni Multiflori to disperse phlegm in the chest, and supplementing it with Cinnamon Branches, Dangshen to clear the vein and eliminate blood stasis.

(3) Nourishing kidney yin and dredging liver qi. Kidney yin can nourish liver yin to restrain liver yang. In the elderly, kidney yin is deficient, water does not contain wood, resulting in liver blood deficiency, yin deficiency turns into fire, leading to liver loss of excretion, poor qi, stagnation of qi and blood stasis as chest paralysis and cardiac pain. Clinical symptoms are chest pain, irregular position, occasionally accompanied by distension and pain in the ribs, shortness of breath, moodiness, irritability, sighing, hot flashes and night sweats, lumbar and knee pain and weakness, red tongue with little fluid, thin moss, and a thin pulse. Clinically, He Shouwu, Agaricus blazei, Chasteberry, Murraya japonica, Ophiopogon, Lycium barbarum and Cornu Cervi Pantotrichum are commonly used to tonify the kidney and nourish yin, while Chaihu, Xiangshu, Yujin, and Muxiang are used to detoxify the liver and regulate qi. Zhou Xiaolu [17] et al. explored the application of the method of sparing the liver and regulating qi in the treatment of coronary heart disease, and their results showed that this method not only effectively relieved the clinical symptoms of the patients, but also improved the relevant indexes of blood rheology, and significantly enhanced the function of the vascular endothelium. It should be noted that the elderly should add a little qi tonic to avoid chest tightness and shortness of breath caused by moving too much qi.

(4) Nourishing the kidneys and assisting the yang, and promoting yang and dispersing cold. In the elderly, when kidney yang is insufficient, the vitality fire diminishes. As a result, heart yang lacks its source, leading to the heart losing its warmth. Chest yang does not vibrate, causing internal cold to give rise to yin cold stagnation in the chest blood, which can result in chest paralysis [18]. Clinical symptoms include cold pain in the chest, lack of warmth in the limbs, depression, swelling of the limbs, long and clear urine, unformed stools, pale tongue, white moss, and a weak and sunken pulse. Clinically, it is often used to tonify the kidney and help yang with ripened dihuang, bajitian, cistanchis, cinnamon, etc., and to pass yang and disperse cold with gui zhi, dry ginger, and epimedium. Xing Fenglei [19] et al. demonstrated through clinical experiments that the treatment of coronary heart disease with cold condensation and blood stagnation with the use of the annexed ginger and cinnamon soup has a significant efficacy, and it can also regulate the plasma levels of ET-1, NO, hs-CRP, and MMP-9.

2.3. Post-Montrealization Prevention

As an important part of the Chinese medicine theory of "treating the disease before it gets better", the core of the disease prevention program lies in the prevention of recurrence or deterioration of the disease through a series of measures to regulate the disease after it has been healed for the first time. The term "after disease" refers to the transitional period between the initial recovery of the disease and the complete restoration of the body to a state of health. At this time, the patient's internal organs and qi and blood have not been fully restored, the positive qi is still weak, the remaining evil is not yet exhausted, latent in the body. The "prevention of recurrence" is to prevent the recurrence of old

diseases or the growth of new diseases due to improper recuperation, Zhengqi has not been recovered, and the residual evil has not been removed. For elderly patients with coronary heart disease, this link is particularly important, because elderly patients are often accompanied by a variety of underlying diseases, relatively weak, more prone to recurring conditions. "The disease fever less healed, eat meat will be restored, eat more will be lost, this is also prohibited." This sentence profoundly elaborates the concept of "preventing recurrence after disease". When a patient has just recovered from a disease, although the symptoms of the disease have been alleviated, the body has not yet fully recovered. If you don't pay attention to your body's recuperation during this period, it is easy for the disease to recur or even worsen. The Ming Dynasty physician Wu Yike's "Treatise on Warm Epidemic" also mentions the methods of conditioning after an epidemic, emphasizing the importance of stomach qi and pointing out the possible cases of labor recovery, food recovery, and self-recovery, as well as the corresponding methods of conditioning.

Coronary heart disease in old age is mainly characterized by deficiency during the remission period, and the prevention of recurrence after disease should focus on tonifying the spleen and kidney to strengthen the foundation. Kidney is the main innate body, spleen is the main innate body, the spleen and kidney are mutually supporting each other, promoting the generation and transportation of qi and blood, providing sufficient blood and nutrients for the heart, and also enhancing the overall function of the body, thus contributing to the further recovery of coronary heart disease. Secondly, phlegm and blood stasis should be eliminated to treat the symptoms. It improves blood fluidity and reduces blood viscosity, thus increasing coronary blood flow. It also eliminates pathological products such as phlegm and blood stasis in the body and reduces the damage they cause to the heart and blood vessels. This helps the heart to reduce its burden and accelerate functional recovery [20]. At the same time, we need to strengthen the psychological counseling for patients in the healing stage, to reduce the psychological pressure and tension they have to endure due to the disease, and then help them build up a firm belief and confidence in long-term treatment and disease prevention.

3. Conclusions

To summarize, coronary heart disease in the elderly is affected by a variety of factors, especially with the aging kidney deficiency and poor living habits are closely related. In view of the irreversibility of the disease development, the prevention strategy should focus on the early prevention of the disease and the effective delay of the disease. First of all, we should prevent coronary heart disease before it occurs, through regulating diet, mood, daily life, labor and leisure, appropriate exercise and health care operations to prevent the occurrence of coronary heart disease in the elderly, medical personnel should actively do a good job in education and publicity to enhance the awareness of the disease in the elderly group, the elderly should be regularly related to the checkups; secondly, early onset of the disease should be done in the early elderly to prevent the disease and emphasize the importance of early diagnosis and treatment to prevent coronary heart disease from further deterioration, in order to improve the patients' life and improve their health. The importance of early diagnosis and early treatment is emphasized to prevent further deterioration of coronary heart disease and to improve the quality of life of patients. The profound concept of "treating the disease before it occurs" is a valuable summary of Chinese medical practitioners of all generations in exploring the path of preventing and treating diseases. The core of the concept lies in the fact that "nourishment" is the first and "cure" is the second, advocating the strengthening of the body's intrinsic resistance and self-healing power through active regimen and timely medical interventions, so as to effectively resist the invasion of external evils and to maintain the state of health. It is not only a medical strategy, but also a scientific theory that conforms to the laws of nature and human life activities. Under the guidance of the idea of "treating the future disease", actively preventing and treating coronary heart disease in the elderly is of great significance to improving the health status of the elderly and saving social medical resources, and it provides certain innovative ideas of clinical treatment and development prospects for the development of prevention and treatment of coronary heart disease in the elderly.

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