

# Current Status and Development of Chinese Dermatology Nursing

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**Abstract:** With the unique theory of evidence-based care, traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) has shown its unique advantages, especially in the treatment and care of dermatological diseases. When treating skin diseases, TCM dermatological care not only focuses on local lesions, but also pays more attention to overall conditioning. By means of external application of traditional Chinese medicine, acupuncture, cupping and tuina, combined with modern nursing techniques, TCM dermatological care significantly improves the recovery rate of patients, especially in the treatment of chronic skin diseases (e.g., eczema, psoriasis, urticaria, etc.), which demonstrates a strong advantage. In this paper, we will discuss the basic concepts, nursing tools, current status of clinical application, challenges and future development direction of TCM dermatological care, aiming to provide theoretical support and practical guidance for improving TCM dermatological care.

**Keywords:** Chinese Dermatology Nursing, Evidence-based Care, Chinese Medicine Nursing Model, Dermatological Treatment, Modern Nursing Technology, Nursing Outcome Assessment

## 1. Introduction

Dermatological nursing, as an important branch of the medical nursing field, is widely used in the diagnosis and treatment process of skin diseases [1]. In the modern medical system, Western medicine has an advantage in the treatment of acute and infectious skin diseases, but for chronic skin diseases, persistent diseases and those with immune system disorders, traditional Chinese medicine dermatological care plays a significant role. Traditional Chinese medicine theory emphasizes on 'seeking the root cause of disease' and promotes 'holistic view' and 'evidence-based treatment' [2], so in the treatment of dermatological diseases, Chinese medicine care pays particular attention to the overall health of the patient, and seeks to regulate the body's internal and external environments through the regulation of the body's internal and external environments. Therefore, in the process of skin disease treatment, Chinese medicine care pays special attention to the overall health of the patient, and strives to achieve the effect of treating the root cause by regulating the internal and external environment of the body [3].

TCM dermatology nursing combines the unique treatment methods of TCM with modern nursing techniques to form a more complete nursing system [4]. With the attention paid to Chinese medicine at domestic and abroad [5], more and more skin disease patients begin to try Chinese medicine treatment and have accumulated rich nursing experience in long-term practice [6]. Especially in the treatment of psoriasis, eczema and other stubborn skin diseases, TCM dermatological nursing has shown its better efficacy [7]. However, despite its unique advantages in treating skin diseases, the development of TCM dermatological nursing still faces many challenges, such as uneven professional competence of nursing staff, insufficient innovation of nursing models, and lack of patients' knowledge of TCM nursing. Therefore, this paper will analyze in detail the following aspects: the current status of TCM dermatology care, strengths, challenges, care tools, and future trends.

## 2. Current Status of Dermatological Care in Chinese Medicine

### 2.1 Core Concepts and Characteristics of TCM Dermatological Care

Chinese medicine dermatology nursing is not only a traditional nursing skill, it is based on the theoretical system of Chinese medicine, and uses nursing methods such as evidence-based care, holistic conditioning and non-pharmacological therapies [5]. Through a comprehensive analysis of the patient's condition, combined with specific TCM theories (e.g. yin and yang, five elements, internal organs and

meridians, etc.), individualized care plans are proposed to improve the effectiveness of care.

### **2.1.1 Evidence-based Care**

One of the core concepts of TCM care is 'evidence-based care', i.e. personalized care based on the patient's specific symptoms, constitution and cause of illness. For patients with skin diseases, caregivers need to combine the patient's condition to determine the best care program [8]. For example, patients with eczema are often suffering from dampness and heat, so the care program should be based on herbal remedies that clear away heat and toxins and eliminate dampness and toxins, while patients with psoriasis should focus on regulating the immune system and relieving inflammation [8].

### **2.1.2 Overall Conditioning**

TCM dermatological care emphasizes on the overall health of the body, focuses on the internal and external factors of disease, and stresses the healing of skin diseases by regulating the body's internal environment [1]. It helps regulate the patient's qi and blood and unblock the meridians and collaterals by means of Chinese herbs, tuina and acupuncture, thus promoting the healing of skin diseases [9].

### **2.1.3 Non-pharmacological Therapy**

In addition to medication, TCM dermatological care also widely uses non-pharmacological therapies such as tuina, acupuncture, cupping, medicated baths and dietary therapy [6]. These therapies can exert great therapeutic effects without relying on drugs. For example, acupuncture can regulate qi and blood by stimulating specific acupoints to relieve skin inflammation; medicinal baths can relieve symptoms of eczema, acne and other skin diseases [1].

### **2.1.4 Applying Externally with Chinese Medicine**

External application of Chinese herbs has a long history in TCM dermatological care. Many herbs, such as cypress, bitter ginseng and gentian herb, have the effect of clearing heat and removing toxins, dispelling dampness and relieving itching. Through external treatment, these herbs can help relieve the symptoms of skin diseases and promote the skin's self-repair [6].

## **2.2 Current Status of Clinical Application of Traditional Chinese Medicine Dermatological Care**

TCM dermatological care has achieved remarkable results in the treatment of several skin diseases, especially in the treatment of some chronic skin diseases showing unique advantages. The following are a few examples of application of nursing care for common skin diseases:

### **2.2.1 Nursing Applications for Eczema**

Eczema is a kind of inflammatory skin disease characterized with itchy skin, often accompanied by redness, swelling, oozing, crusting and other symptoms. Traditional Chinese medicine dermatological nursing for eczema treatment, using heat-clearing and detoxifying, dampness-removing and detoxifying traditional Chinese medicines for external application and medicinal baths, along with appropriate acupuncture and tuina treatment, has achieved good results. A hospital carried out TCM nursing interventions for 100 eczema patients, and the results showed that about 85 per cent of the patients' symptoms were relieved and their skin recovered well [10].

### **2.2.2 Nursing Applications for Psoriasis**

Psoriasis is a chronic skin disease often accompanied by scaly, dry and itchy skin. Due to the limited effectiveness of Western medicine and its tendency to recur, many psoriasis patients choose Chinese medicine treatment. TCM dermatology care can effectively alleviate the condition and prolong the period of remission through dialectical treatment, the use of herbal medicines that regulate the immune function, acupuncture and other means, together with TCM nursing programs [11]. Studies have shown that patients with psoriasis who have undergone TCM dermatological nursing interventions have experienced significant improvement in their symptoms, with a reduction in the scaling of the skin and control of itchiness [12].

### **2.2.3 Nursing Applications for Acne**

Acne is a common skin disease among adolescents and adults, which often brings greater psychological pressure to patients as it directly affects their appearance. Chinese medicine dermatology care treats acne through evidence-based treatment, using herbal medicines that clear heat and detoxify the skin and regulate the endocrine system, and supplemented with acupuncture and tuina. Data show that more than 70 per cent of acne patients have their skin's oil secretion and inflammatory response

effectively controlled after receiving TCM care <sup>[13]</sup>.

#### ***2.2.4 Nursing Applications in Allergic Skin Diseases***

Allergic skin diseases are mostly manifested as red, swollen and itchy skin, and commonly include urticaria and contact allergy <sup>[14]</sup>. Chinese medicine dermatology nursing focuses on clearing heat and removing toxins, activating blood circulation and removing blood stasis, and helps patients reduce allergic reactions and alleviate symptoms by means of external application of traditional Chinese medicine and medicinal bath. The results of the study showed that patients with allergic dermatological diseases who used TCM nursing interventions had significant symptom reduction and lower recurrence rates <sup>[15]</sup>.

### ***2.3 Challenges in Chinese Dermatology Nursing***

Despite the unique advantages of TCM dermatological care in the treatment of skin diseases, it still faces several major challenges in its development:

#### ***2.3.1 Inadequate Professional Competence of Nursing Staff***

TCM dermatological care requires nursing staff to have not only solid nursing skills, but also a certain theoretical foundation in TCM. However, many nursing staff are currently inadequately trained in TCM theory and skills, resulting in uneven quality of care.

#### ***2.3.2 The Monolithic Nature of the Care Model***

Most TCM dermatological care relies on traditional treatments, such as topical application of drugs, acupuncture, and tuina, while the application of modern nursing techniques is still relatively rare. Innovation and diversification of nursing models need to be further explored, especially in the field of information-based and intelligent nursing.

#### ***2.3.3 Low Patient Awareness of Chinese Medicine Care***

Many patients have limited knowledge of TCM care and are generally prejudiced or even sceptical about the effectiveness of TCM treatment. Therefore, there is a need to strengthen the publicity and popularisation of TCM dermatological care to improve patients' awareness.

#### ***2.3.4 Insufficient Scientific Support and Evidence***

At present, most of the clinical effects of TCM dermatological care come from empirical summaries and lack the support of a large amount of scientific experimental data. In the future, scientific research in the field of TCM dermatological care should be strengthened to provide more clinical data and empirical findings to enhance the trust in TCM care.

## **3. Advantages and Features of Chinese Dermatology Nursing**

### ***3.1 Personalized Care Program***

Chinese medicine dermatology nursing pays great attention to individual differences, especially in the treatment of chronic and persistent skin diseases, and is able to formulate personalized nursing programs according to the different symptoms, constitution and course of the disease of the patients. For example, for patients with eczema, for different types of eczema (e.g. acute, sub-acute and chronic eczema), Chinese medicine nurses will regulate their condition according to their causes, course of disease and specific manifestations. Through evidence-based care, it ensures that the treatment means are highly compatible with the patient's specific situation.

### ***3.2 Combining Traditional and Modern Nursing Techniques***

The application of modern nursing techniques <sup>[9]</sup>, especially the support of psychological care and disease management for dermatological patients, has greatly enhanced the effectiveness of nursing care. By combining traditional Chinese medicine treatment methods and modern nursing techniques, Chinese medicine dermatology nursing not only focuses on the physiological problems of patients, but also pays attention to the regulation of their psychology and emotions, helping patients to better cope with the stresses and disturbances brought about by their diseases <sup>[5]</sup>.

### ***3.3 Optimizing the Effectiveness of Treatment Programs***

TCM dermatology care is able to optimize the treatment plan through a comprehensive assessment and the combination of Chinese and Western medicine. For example, in the treatment of psoriasis, modern Western medicine treatment may require long-term dependence, whereas TCM nursing can effectively reduce patients' dependence on medication through non-pharmacological means (e.g., dietary therapy [2], acupressure, medicated baths, etc.), alleviate the disease, and fundamentally improve the condition by enhancing the patient's self-immunity.

## **4. Future Directions for Chinese Dermatology Nursing**

### ***4.1 Strengthening the Training of Nursing Staff***

In the future, specialized training for TCM dermatology nursing staff is particularly important. Through the development of relevant training systems and standardized teaching plans, nursing staff can be helped to improve their theoretical knowledge and practical skills.

### ***4.2 Promoting the Chinese Medicine Dermatology Care Model***

In order to increase the popularity of TCM dermatological care, public awareness of TCM care should be raised through various means such as academic exchanges, case sharing and patient education. Especially in primary care and rural areas, the popularity of TCM dermatological care may play an important role in improving local dermatological care.

### ***4.3 Enhancing Research Innovation and Technical Support***

Scientific research on TCM dermatological care should be strengthened. Providing strong evidence support for the effectiveness of care based on the data. At the same time, combination of modern medical technologies (such as artificial intelligence, telecare, smart devices) and other traditional technologies will significantly optimize the innovate the care model and improve the efficiency of care and treatment effect [9].

## **5. Conclusions**

Skin, as the largest organ of the human body, not only protects our inner organs, but also shows our outer beauty. However, skin disease is a common problem for many people. In the eyes of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), the health of the skin is closely related to the function of internal organs, the operation of qi and blood, and the balance of yin and yang.

According to Chinese medicine, the skin is a window that reflects the function of internal organs. The condition of the skin often reflects the health of the internal organs. When the body of qi and blood does not run smoothly, the imbalance of yin and yang, toxins can not be discharged properly, it will be manifested in the skin as a variety of diseases. Chinese medicine emphasizes internal and external cultivation. In order to achieve the effect of both symptoms and root causes, the treatment of skin diseases is not only a superficial effort, but also from the internal conditioning.

In the process of treating skin diseases in TCM, the principle of evidence-based treatment is followed. Chinese medicine classifies skin diseases into various types of evidence, such as blood-heat evidence, blood deficiency evidence, dampness-heat evidence, wind-dryness evidence and so on. For different types of evidence, corresponding treatment methods are used, either clearing heat and detoxification, or nourishing Yin and blood, or eliminating dampness and relieving itching, in order to achieve the purpose of treating the disease.

Eczema is a common skin disease with a complex etiology related to dampness and heat in the body and external wind. Eczema is usually treated by clearing away heat and dampness, dispelling wind and relieving itching. Commonly used medicines are bitter ginseng, Huanglian, *Scutellaria baicalensis* and so on, and at the same time with external ointment, such as Qingdai cream, eczema cream.

Acne, commonly known as pimples, is mostly related to endocrine imbalance, dampness and heat in the spleen and stomach. Chinese medicine treats acne by clearing away heat and detoxifying the toxins and regulating the spleen and stomach. Commonly used Chinese medicines include honeysuckle,

forsythia and danshen. In addition, dietary and living habits can be adjusted, such as eating less greasy food and maintaining a good work and rest routine to assist in the treatment.

Urticaria, which is called “rubella” in Chinese medicine, is mostly caused by the attack of wind, blood deficiency and wind dryness. Treatment of urticaria, Chinese medicine adopts the method of eliminating wind and relieving itching, nourishing blood and moistening dryness. Commonly used medicines include windbreak, cicada slough, and dibutyl. At the same time, patients should avoid contact with allergens and maintain emotional stability.

Psoriasis, also known as psoriasis, is a chronic skin disease. According to Chinese medicine, its cause is related to blood heat, blood dryness and wind. To treat psoriasis, Chinese medicine adopts the methods of clearing heat and cooling blood, dispelling wind and moistening dryness. Commonly used medicines include raw dihuang, mudanpi, red peony and so on. In addition, external treatments such as medicinal baths and cupping can also be used to assist in the treatment of psoriasis.

TCM treatment of skin diseases is widely recognized for its remarkable effectiveness and low side-effects, and it is dedicated to a holistic approach to regulate and address the root causes of skin problems. Key steps in the process include precise identification, which requires meticulous diagnosis by a professional Chinese medicine practitioner to determine the cause of the disease and the type of evidence, and then plan an appropriate treatment plan. Meanwhile, the road to treatment is often a long one, and patients need to show patience and consistently follow the doctor's instructions. In addition, diet, work and rest, and emotional management in daily life are also crucial, and these lifestyle modifications are complementary to the treatment and can effectively enhance its effectiveness. Overall, TCM treatment of skin diseases focuses on the whole and internal/external balance, and through evidence-based treatment, tailor-made treatment plan for each patient, bringing new hope to people pursuing skin health. Therefore, we should give full play to the advantages of Chinese medicine and make it a reliable guarantee for skin health.

As an important part of dermatological treatment, TCM dermatological care has shown remarkable results in numerous clinical treatments [16]. Through evidence-based care, personalized care and the combination of Chinese and Western medicine, TCM dermatology nursing provides comprehensive and detailed care for patients with dermatological diseases [8]. However, some challenges are still faced at present, especially the professional training of nursing staff, the innovation of nursing model and the enhancement of patients' knowledge of TCM nursing. With the continuous development of Chinese medicine and the deepening of scientific research, TCM dermatological care is expected to be more widely applied globally in the future and to bring benefits to more dermatological patients.

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