

Thinking about the Treatment of Female Breast Cancer based on the Theory of "Kidney Qi-Tian Gui-Chong Ren-Uterus" Axis

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Abstract: Purpose: To explore the treatment of female breast cancer based on the "Kidney Qi-Tian Gui-Chong Ren-Uterus" axis theory. Method: Based on the physiological and emotional characteristics of women such as kidney, Chong Ren, and uterus, as well as the understanding of female breast cancer under the modern medical theory, the pathogenesis and treatment ideas of female breast cancer were discussed using the "Kidney Qi-Tian Gui-Chong Ren-Uterus" axis theory. Results: In the treatment of female breast cancer, attention should be paid to the regulation of Qi in the whole body, the regulation of Chong Ren, the strengthening of body resistance to eliminate pathogenic factors, and the regulation of emotions at the same time, so as to achieve the purposes of strengthening body resistance, resisting cancer, and improving the survival and prognosis of the patients.

Keywords: Female breast cancer, Kidney Qi-Tian Gui-Chong Ren-Uterus

1. Introduction

According to the latest data of Globocan [1], the incidence rate of female breast cancer in the world in 2018 was 11.6%, and breast cancer still tops the list of female malignant tumors. At present, the treatment of breast cancer in China includes surgery, chemoradiotherapy, targeted therapy, endocrine therapy in the modern medical model, as well as TCM treatment. The advantages of traditional Chinese medicine in the treatment of female breast cancer lie in: (1) assisting vital Qi and eliminating cancer virus; (2) The existing western medical treatments have the effects of reducing toxicity and increasing efficiency, and enhancing the tolerance to western medical treatments. (3) Restore viscera function. Finally, the aims of prolonging the survival time and improving the life quality are achieved. In this article, we will discuss the treatment of female breast cancer under the theory of "Kidney Qi-Tian Gui-Chong Ren-Uterus" axis.

2. "Kidney Qi-Tian Gui-Chong Ren-Uterus" axis and female breast cancer

According to the report of China National Cancer Center, the incidence of breast cancer rises rapidly in women after they are over 20 years old, especially in the age of 55-60 years old, while the incidence will rise further after menopause. "Suwen · Shang Gu Tian Zhen Theory" mentioned: "For a woman, at the age of fourteen, Tian Gui begins to appear, Renmai and Chongmai are vigorous infunction. Then she begins to have menstruation and is able to conceive a baby... At the ages of forty-nine, as both the Renmai and Chongmai become deficient and menstruation stops, she becomes physically feeble and is no longer able to conceive a baby." Therefore, the incidence of breast cancer is closely related to the "Kidney Qi-Tian Gui-Chong Ren-Uterus" system [2].

TCM believes that female reproduction and endocrine regulation is mainly through the "Kidney Qi-Tian Gui-Chong Ren-Uterus" axis. This theory originated from the 1980s, when some scholars put forward this theory through the discussion on the generation and regulation of menstruation in "Suwen · Shang Gu Tian Zhen Theory". They think that the kidney plays a leading role in this reproductive axis, uterus is the main driving force, and Chong Ren adjust and restrict the dynamic balance of the whole reproductive axis by regulating the second meridian of liver and kidney. In addition, some physicians developed the theory of collateral diseases based on Ye Tianshi's theory of "chronic diseases transforming to collaterals", and put forward the theory of "Kidney Qi-Tian Gui-Chong Ren-breast". The

theory states that any problem in any link of the "Kidney Qi-Tian Gui-Chong Ren-Uterus" axis will lead to the breaking of the normal physiological balance of the female body. The kidneys, uterus, Chong Ren do their jobs and are the foundation of women's health.

2.1 Kidney and female breast cancer

"Suwen•Liu Jie Zang Xiang Theory" mentioned: "Kidney is the foundation of personal acceptance and collection function, and it is the place where essence is hidden, and essence is the foundation of human body", "Lingshujing•Jueqi" also records: "Yin and Yang of men and women intersect to form a new body, and the material before the new body is called vital energy nutriment and blood." Kidney essence is the most important basic substance constituting human body. Yin and Yang of kidney is the root of Yin and Yang of human body. Under the pathological condition, the miscellaneous diseases of female fetus are closely related to kidney. Patients with breast cancer suffer from weakness in somatic endowment, which is compounded with pathogenic factor, which leads to deficiency of kidney, loss of Yin essence, and inability to normally nourish viscera meridians.

2.2 Tian Gui and female breast cancer

"Suwen · Shang Su Tian Zhen Theory" mentioned: "For a woman, at the age of fourteen, Tian Gui begins to appear, Renmai and Chongmai are vigorous inflection. Then she begins to have menstruation and is able to conceive a baby... At the ages of forty-nine, as both the Renmai and Chongmai become deficient and menstruation stops, she becomes physically feeble and is no longer able to conceive a baby." It has been reported [3] that Tian Gui may be equivalent to gonadotropin in modern medicine, and it may also be closely related to gonadotropin-releasing hormone and sex hormone. The positive rate of hormone receptor in female breast cancer patients is over 60% [4], which indicates that endocrine system is closely related to breast cancer. Tian Gui is closely related to endocrine, autoimmune recognition, gene mutation and carcinogenesis. Therefore, the abnormality of uterus may break the steady state of endocrine and autoimmune mechanisms, and ultimately affect the incidence of female breast cancer.

2.3 Chong and Ren and female breast cancer

"Suwen •Gu Kong Theory" mentioned: "Chongmai, which originated from Qijie point and passed through Shaoyin meridian, with the umbilicus ascending, to the chest and scattered", which indicated that Chongmai was closely related to breast in anatomy. Chongmai is nourished by the innate true Yin and Yang in the kidney and the nutrients digested and absorbed by the spleen and stomach. Therefore, it is said that "the sea of twelve meridians", "Chongmai is the sea of blood". Renmai starts from uterus, intersects with Yin meridian, and at the same time communicates with the stomach meridian in Chengjiang point. Renmai plays a role in regulating Qi from Yin and blood in the whole body, and is also called "the sea of Yin pulse". "General record of Shengji" reminded: "women put Chong and Ren first. If they lose their general management and Chong Ren are discordant, their Qi will not disperse, gather in their breasts, or be hard or swollen". In view of the close relationship between breast and spleen, stomach, liver, kidney and Chong Ren, some doctors put forward the sexual axis of "Kidney Qi-Tian Gui-Chong Ren-Breast" based on the axis of "Kidney Qi-Tian Gui-Chong Ren-Uterus", and in their opinions, the development, growth and atrophy of breast are closely related to this axis, and Chong Ren two meridians are located in this sexual axis [5]. The profit and loss of Chong Ren will directly affect the normal physiological function of breast, and is closely related to the pathology of breast [6]. Professor Ma Bao Peng believes that the basic pathogenesis of female diseases is the injury of Chong Ren. He believes that both viscera and the diseases of menstruation, leukorrhea, embryo, childbirth and miscellaneous diseases caused by the imbalance of Qi and blood function are manifested by affecting Chong Ren (Du Dai) meridians, and their functions are all manifested by viscera and its metaplasia of Qi and blood [7].

2.4 Uterus and female breast cancer

Chong Ren Meridians originated from uterus, and the breast and uterus depend on the maintenance of Chong Ren to maintain the normal physiological state. Uterus physiological function depends on the normal function of kidney, uterus, Chong Ren. Breast abnormalities are usually manifested through menstruation and reproduction by uterus.

3. Therapeutic thinking

The total pathogenesis of breast cancer can be summarized as follows: external exposure to six evil spirits, Chong Ren imbalance, viscera functional imbalance, emotional imbalance, and the final combination of Qi obstruction, phlegm coagulation, blood stasis and evil mutual junction in the breast. Under the guidance of the "Kidney Qi-Tian Gui-Chong Ren-Uterus" axis theory, the treatment of female breast cancer needs to be based on the "chronic disease damages righteousness". The role of Qi in the pathogenesis and prognosis of breast cancer in women is emphasized. In the treatment, we should pay attention to regulate Qi, keep the Qi to be abundant and unobstructed. At the same time, due to the close relationship between Chong Ren and female physiology and pathology, attention should be paid to harmony Chong and Ren in treatment, which could be helpful to Qi and blood. In addition, the root cause of female breast cancer is the invasion of pathogenic toxin into the meridians and collaterals of the breast, treatment based on syndrome differentiation can be carried out concretely and comprehensively in view of assisting vital Qi by timely attacking pathogenic factors and regulating emotions.

3.1 Regulating Qi first

Qi has the functions of promoting, warming, defending, transforming, nourishing, and fixing. The breast is located in the intersection of many meridians. Qi ensures the dredging of these meridians and provides necessary nourishment for them. Therefore, Qi is able to maintain normal physiological characteristics of the breast. The main function of female breast is to maintain the circulation of Qi, blood and milk, with the characteristics of "excess but not discontent, and transferring nutrients but not storing" [8], thus keeping the Qi movement smooth also plays a vital role in the normal functions of the breast. "Su Wen Ju Tong Theory" mentioned that "all diseases are born of Qi". According to the compilation of surgeons, it is further pointed out that "for the treatment of breast disease, Qi in enough". Female breast cancer patients firstly suffer from Qi deficiency and toxin and stasis internal stagnation, which leads to the onset of the disease. Then they suffered chemoradiotherapy or targeted therapy, led to further damage of Qi and blood, on which basis the regulation of Qi of the whole body is further hindered. Therefore, treatment of breast should govern Qi.

3.1.1 Warming up kidney

The breast function depends on the warmth and promotion of kidney as well as the regulation of uterus and Chong Ren. TCM believes that breast cancer is the result of dysfunction of "Yin can promote morphogenesis", and in the final analysis it is the inevitable result of dysfunction of "Yang transforming Qi" [9]. Only when the functions of "Yang transforming Qi" and "Yin shaping" are coordinated, that is, the normal interaction of Qi and the normal function of breast are mutually coordinated, can Chong Ren be harmonized and Qi and blood flow smoothly. It has been reported [10] that the application of "Warming Yang and Tonifying Qi formula" in warming Yang and tonifying Qi, as well as attack and supplement therapy, has achieved good clinical efficacy in improving the quality of life of female breast cancer patients after surgery, as well as improving postoperative fatigue and insomnia.

3.1.2 Regulating and tonifying stomach Qi

Water and grain essence transformed by spleen and stomach is an important source of Qi in human body. Spleen and stomach disorders, lead to Qi deficiency, the body's ability to resist pathogenic factors decreased. At the same time, it can cause phlegm condensation, if that continues, tumor will form. Therefore, gastric Qi deficiency caused by the disorder of transformation of spleen and stomach is an important prerequisite for causing tumors and is closely related to the occurrence and outcome of tumors [11] [12]. The ancients said, "Life with stomach Qi, death without stomach Qi". Professor Lu Ming believes that attention should be paid to the regulation of the spleen and stomach in the treatment of cancer [13]. Patients with breast cancer have weakness of spleen and stomach, and stomach Qi is further damaged by western medicine treatment. Miao Zhongchun also puts forward the viewpoint that "if stomach Qi fails, it is difficult to apply all kinds of herbs". Therefore, caring for stomach Qi can not only improve the tolerance of patients to western medicine treatment for cancer, but also promote the body recovery and improve the quality of life. Some scholars emphasize that "regulating stomach Qi" should focus on different tumors according to their different stages: not damaging stomach Qi in the early stage, paying attention to protecting stomach Qi in the middle stage, and protecting stomach Qi first in the late stage [12].

3.2 Reconcile Chong Ren

Chong Ren are located at the hub of the "Kidney Qi-Tian Gui-Chong Ren-Uterus" axis. Under the common action of normal physiological function of "kidney storing essence, liver storing blood, heart controlling blood, as well as the spleen generating blood of lineage, and the lung transporting essence", Chong Ren are endowed with mutual benefits and the blood sea is full of benefits. Kidney, liver and spleen and stomach are the most important.

3.2.1 Invigorate Qi and blood

TCM holds that "women belong to Yin and are based on blood", and "liver is important to women". Female breast cancer enters the body due to external pathogens, and Qi and blood are damaged due to long-term illness. Because women have the characteristics of meridian, uterus, fetus and uterus, it causes the body to be in a state of "blood deficiency and Qi excess" for a long time [20]. Chao yuanfang believes that regulating and tonifying Chong and Ren's Qi and blood is the key to the treatment of female diseases. Liu fengwu also advocates the regulation of Chong Ren through "benefiting Qi and nourishing blood, relieving depression and resolving stagnation". For female patients, liver blood is liable to deficiency, so attention should be paid to nourishing liver blood. Clinically, it has also been reported that self-made "Formula for Increasing Qi, Nourishing Blood and Generating Fluid" can effectively improve bone marrow suppression of female breast cancer patients undergoing postoperative chemotherapy [21].

3.2.2 Nourish the liver and kidney

The kidney is the foundation of congenital. With the promotion of kidney, Chongmai can reserve a certain degree; Kidney essence is infused with Renmai, all of which nourishes all the organs. The liver meridian and Renmai intersect at the curved bone, and intersect with Chongmai at Sanyinjiao point.

Professor Wu [6] believes that the onset and prognosis of breast cancer are closely related to Chong Ren, as well as liver and kidney. He advocates the restoration of liver and blood storage and dispersion through tonifying the kidney of Yin and Yang, as well as promoting the movement and changes of internal Qi in the body, and thus achieving the purpose of harmonizing Qi and blood as well as viscera. He emphasizes "nourishing liver and kidney, harmonizing Chong Ren". Luo Yuankai [22] believed that Chong Ren failure would lead to Yin sperm deficiency, kidney deficiency, and finally to uterus deficiency. Luo believed that kidney was the foundation of Chong Ren, so he advocated to regulate the body fundamentally by regulating the kidney's Yin and Yang. Professor Han Bing [23] also believes that Chong Ren are the odd meridians, and the odd meridian "Clear is key". Moreover, the pathogenesis of the odd meridian is mainly due to deficiency syndrome or excess in deficiency, and the principle of tonifying kidney and regulating Chong should be taken as well.

3.2.3 Harmonizing spleen and stomach

The two meridians of spleen and stomach are connected in the Qijie point, and the Chongmai "appears in the Qijie point", so there is a saying that "Taichong meridian belongs to Yang ming". The water and grain essence of the spleen and stomach is enough, can make the Chong and Ren meridians function properly. Lan Shi Mi Cang also mentioned the saying "Women's Spleen and Stomach Deficit for a long time, can make the blood dried up and menopause", which shows that the spleen and stomach are closely related to Chong Ren. Cai Xiaosun [7] believes that Chong Ren have similar functions with spleen and stomach, the stomach Qi is adequate can make the Qi of Chongmai flows upward and reverses. The Qi of Spleen is weak, and subsidence of Zhongqi leads to subsidence of Renmai. Therefore, Dr. Cai mainly used drugs for the treatment of spleen and stomach to regulate Chong and Ren.

3.3 Strengthening body resistance and eliminating evil

"When evil is condensed, its Qi must be weak". Modern medical treatments for breast cancer further consume Qi, blood and body fluids. Therefore, the term "Tonifying Deficit" should be used throughout the treatment of breast cancer. Paying attention to deficiency, strengthening the body resistance and consolidating the essence, and actively regulating and treating viscera are the key strategies. At the same time, we should timely attack pathogenic factors to eliminate them and radically reform them [24].

"Jin Gui Yao Lue22" mentioned: "Women's diseases take advantage of deficiency, cold, depression... Even for many years, blood to be cold and clotting, uterus meet the cold evil, meridians to be soildfication and stagnation." Later generations of physicians believed that female breast cancer also caused liver, kidney and spleen damage by "deficiency, cold accumulation and Qi stagnation" [2]. Professor Pan Minqiu believed that the etiology and pathogenesis of female breast cancer were "toxin", "stasis" and

"deficiency" [25]. Professor Lu [5] believes that the pathogenesis of female breast cancer is deficiency-excess in complexity, and deficiency in origin (deficiency of both Qi and yin, disorder of Chong Ren) and excess in superficiality (cementation of Qi, blood, phlegm and toxin). Professor Lu Ming emphasizes that the early treatment of female breast cancer should focus on eliminating pathogenic factors supplemented by strengthening Qi. In the medium term, both attack and supplement should be adopted. In the late stage, the disease should be treated with "strengthening the body resistance to eliminate pathogenic factors, so as to eliminate pathogenic factors without impairing integrity" [13]. At the same time, "preventive treatment of disease" should be emphasized in TCM treatment of breast cancer. Normally, attention should be paid to regulating life and emotions. Since the premenopausal female patients "Kidney Qi-Tian Gui-Chong Ren-Uterus" have both moderate and severe profit and loss, and the axis is dysfunctional after menopause, we should pay attention to distinguish before and after menopause in drug use.

3.4 Regulate emotions

Although breast cancer patients continue to benefit from the integrated Chinese and Western medicine treatment, they still show anxiety, depression and fear of death, as well as inferiority, disappointment, helplessness, and even suicide.

Chen Shigong proposed that "depression hurts the liver, contemplation hurts the spleen, and accumulation in the heart. If you don't get what you want, it will lead to swelling and dampness in the meridians and collaterals and agglomeration into nuclei". Therefore, regulating emotions plays an important role in the treatment of female breast cancer.

3.4.1 Clear heart, remove anxiety, nourish heart and tranquilize mind

The heart dominates all life activities of human body and the functions of spirit, thinking and consciousness. Suwen recorded that "the blood and spirit is so important to somebody, must be seriously nurtured". Blood is the material basis for the production of mental and thinking activities. The deficiency of painstaking effort will easily cause insomnia, forgetfulness, listlessness, slow thinking, depression and anxiety. Therefore, "Leijing" mentioned: "although the five internal organs have their own road, while seek their headstream, all from heart". The anxiety and depression of female breast cancer patients are considered in modern medicine to be caused by the regulation disorder of the "neuro-endocrine-immune" system due to the long-term emotional stimulation. Studies have shown that the heart can affect the brain through atrial natriuretic peptide, brain natriuretic peptide, and cardiac magnetic field to regulate the mental consciousness and thinking activities [28]. In addition, female breast cancer patients also need to endure the pain caused by postoperative pain in the operation area and cancerous pain caused by tumor progression, which have seriously affected the quality of life of the patients and finally led to physical and mental illness. "Neijing" says: "all pain, itching and sores belong to the heart". Therefore, the effects of tranquilization can be achieved by warming and open the Yang of heart, invigorating Qi and nourishing blood. The spirit is tranquilizing and meridian is clear, can promoting the circulation of Qi and blood, the meridians will flow without causing pain [29]. Radix Angelicae Sinensis, Cortex Cinnamomi, Rhizoma Ligustici Chuanxiong, Os Draconis, and Concha Ostreae are mainly used in clinic.

3.4.2 Soothing liver, regulating qi, nourishing liver and nourishing blood

In women, liver is the congenital condition, and liver likes regulation but dislikes depression. Affection-related injuries are the most vulnerable to liver meridian. The female belongs to liver, and negative is the most likely to cause coagulation and depression [20]. Some scholars believe that liver stagnation is the key to the etiology and pathogenesis of female breast cancer [26] [27]. Combined with women's physiological and emotional characteristics, women have been in a state of "blood deficiency and Qi excess" for a long time. Since the body is in a state of Yin and blood deficiency for a long time, the liver failing to be nourished will govern its dispersion and dispersion. Therefore, herbs that soothe the liver and regulate Qi are emphasized in treatment, supplemented with herbs that nourish liver blood.

4. Summary

The onset and prognosis of female breast cancer are closely related to meridians and collaterals, viscera, uterus, and emotions. Due to the special physical and psychological characteristics of women, under the guidance of the "Kidney Qi-Tian Gui-Chong Ren-Uterus" axis theory, attention should be paid to the coordination of viscera function, the harmony of Qi and blood, the dredging of meridians and collaterals, the fullness of uterus and the regulation of emotions in clinical treatment, so as to achieve the

purpose of internal and external treatment as well as body and mind treatment. At the same time, treatment is carried out based on syndrome differentiation according to the stage the patient is, the disease trend and both symptoms, in order to achieve the purpose of strengthening the body resistance to eliminate pathogenic factors, improve the prognosis and improve the quality of life of the patient. However, in practical clinical work, patients' conditions are more complex, so we should comprehensively grasp the condition from the holistic view. On this premise, the theory of "treatment according to three factors" in traditional Chinese medicine should be applied flexibly in combination with viscera syndrome differentiation, six meridians syndrome differentiation, meridian syndrome differentiation, and so on, in order to exert the effect. One need not stick to Qi and blood, Chong Ren, Kidney Qi, uterus, and emotions.

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