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A Theory for Covid Treatment through Natural Interventions

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Abstract

A recent study has shown that the rate of Covid re-infection, including instances with vaccinated individuals, is high in areas where the vaccination rate is high (Subramanian, S. V., & Kumar, A., 2021). Based on the results of a large-scale global study, it is possible that the current approach of prioritizing only vaccines should be reconsidered (Subramanian, S. V., & Kumar, A., 2021). The need for preventive measures including a healthy lifestyle has been studied to both prevent and heal health issues, and may be applicable in this area. While most research is focused on how disease enters the body as an external pathogenic factor, it is also important to also study the endogenous cause, or internal connection to the disease. There is even evidence that herbal formulas can help promote the effects of Western medical treatments (Ang, L., et al., 2020, Takayama, S., et al., 2020).

Keywords

Covid, Oriental medicine, Natural medicine, Lifestyle medicine, Acupuncture, Herbs

Introduction

Healing Through Kanpo Herbal Medicine

While the world is searching for new medicines to treat Covid symptoms, an alternative method may be to test the utility of already recognized treatments for other issues. Natural medicines such as Kanpo (traditional Chinese herbal medicine) and other herbs and enzymes, with the help of essential oils, can help regulate and boost the immune system (Benarba, B., & Pandiella, A., 2020, Boozari, M., & Hosseinzadeh, H., 2021, Kuchta, K., et al., 2021). It is possible that this immune system boost will help

prevent Covid infection, or minimize Covid symptoms and duration. There is even evidence that certain formulas may lower mortality rates (Zhang, L., et al., 2021).

Despite many perceptions of natural medicine as "unscientific" much of modern pharmaceuticals have been derived from natural ingredients. Many people prefer the idea of taking strong drugs that "defeat germs and viruses". This ignores the advantages of activating natural immunity, during which the immune system neutralizes the foreign virus (McKeating J., 1992).

Natural medicines can tap into the body's natural immunity (Boozari, M., & Hosseinzadeh, H. (2021). Kanpo herbal formulas work on the immune system rather than acting directly on bacteria and viruses, as they encourage the body's core function to promote healing and alleviate symptoms (Kiyohara, H., et al., 2006), and has been shown to be effective in treating respiratory symptoms caused not only by Covid, but also influenza and chronic asthma (Kuchta, K., et al., 2021, Nishi, A., et al., 2021, Takayama, S., et al., 2021, Tanno, Y., et al., 1988). For example, a Kanpo formula called Seihai-Haidoku-Tō (Qingfei Paidu Tang in Chinese) is undergoing the first round of FDA clinical trials as a treatment for Covid (Gordon Saxe, 2022). There is even evidence that herbal formulas can help promote the effects of Western medical treatments (Ang, L., et al, 2020, Takayama, S., et al., 2020).

Background

Blood Conditions and Onset of Disease

Lifestyle medicine is a simple process that can easily be practiced to correct fundamental health. There is evidence that the degree of symptoms caused by Covid is directly correlated to an individual's underlying health conditions (Bansal M., 2020, Cavalcanti, I. & Soares, J., 2020, Du, Y., et al., 2021, Gazzaz Z. J., 2021, Ho, J., et al., 2020, Kompaniyets, L., et al., 2021, Mohabbat, A. B., Mohabbat, N., & Wight, E. C., 2020). While there have been many deaths attributed to Covid, it is also important to remember that there are many more cases of asymptomatic or mild illnesses (Petersen, E., et al., 2020).

What has emerged from the large-scale statistics is that health is related to the condition of their intestine and blood, and a patient should never be judged by exterior observation alone (Walton, G. E., Gibson, G. R., & Hunter, K. A. 2021). The consideration of gut and blood status as a barometer of health is a concept based on Oriental medicine, but it is gaining attention in Western medicine as well with the current pandemic (Walton, G. E., Gibson, G. R., & Hunter, K. A. 2021). It has been theorized that a decrease in "good bacteria" in the intestines is linked to severe illness (Vignesh, R., et al., 2021). A paper was also published on the relationship between Covid and worsening blood condition due to increased blood viscosity leading to an increased risk of thrombosis (Joob, B., & Wiwanitkit, V., 2021).

In addition to the Covid virus, the severity of disease caused by viral infections is often related to obesity, hypertension, heart disease, chronic fatigue, diabetes, and other

underlying diseases, now called comorbidities in case of death (Bansal M., 2020, Du, Y., et al., 2021, Gazzaz Z. J., 2021, Ho, J., et al., 2020, Mohabbat, A. B., Mohabbat, N., & Wight, E. C., 2020). Oxidative stress, inflammation, and immune abnormalities have all attracted been linked to these diseases, and studies have suggested that underlying causes include intestinal disorders (Hullar, M. A., Burnett-Hartman, A. N., & Lampe, J. W., 2014, Yang, T., et al., 2015, Sharma, S., & Tripathi, P., 2019), and high-viscosity blood (Letcher, R. L., et al., 1981, Tamariz, L. J., et al., 2008). Improving the intestinal environment requires correcting the intestinal microflora. If the intestinal flora is corrected by diet, the blood quality should improve (Fu, J., et al., 2015), which should have a beneficial effect on the immune system. This should improve the prognosis, as well as strengthening the effects of other interventions, such as Kanpo herbal formulas.

Theory

Purification of Blood and Acquired Immunity

Recent studies have shown that in the case of Covid, natural immunity does respond and should still protect the individual if the immune system is properly supported (Yang, X., et al., 2020). Therefore, in the face of the pandemic it is important for individuals to maintain strong immune systems. There is also evidence that naturally acquired immunity from prior Covid infection also covers variant exposure, with multiple prior infections increasing the breadth of immunity (Kim, P., et al., 2021, Laurie, M. T., et al., 2022).

There are many methods to naturally maintain health and a responsive natural immune system, such as proper hydration (Stookey, J. D., et al., 2020), Vitamin D from the sunlight (Grant, W. B., et al., 2020), and Earthing (Grounding) (Menigoz, W., et al., 2020). Many studies suggest that utilizing interventions that support overall health, such as diet and meditation, it is then possible to support the immune system and improve the effectiveness of an immune response (Alkhatib A., 2020, Chaari, A., et al., 2020, Chandran, V., et al., 2021).

They also show that this can specifically help individuals with a Covid infection (Alkhatib A., 2020, Chaari, A., et al., 2020, Chandran, V., et al., 2021). It is possible that utilization of these combined interventions can support a decrease in the amount of stress placed on both society as a whole and the medical system specifically.

Kanpo Herbal Medicine for Covid

Herbal medicines are used according to symptoms, which means that while multiple formulas may work on the same issue they should not be mixed and taken at the same time. Covid has been observed to present in three different symptom patterns, or stages. While there is usually a progression from the first stage to the second this is not always the case. Presentations may jump stages, or individuals may not recognize the early symptoms. It is also possible to relieve symptoms without the individual progressing through all of the stages. This means that it is important to clearly identify an individual's symptoms and not simply start giving them the formula for the first stage.

The stages, their symptoms, and the appropriate formula are listed below.

Stage 1: Kakkon-Tō

This stage is from onset to early stages of recognizable symptoms. Kakkon-Tō is generally used as cold remedy for runny nose, sore throat, and chills. If symptoms disappear, treatment is done at this stage.

Stage 2: Maō-Tō

This stage begins with the person experiencing a fever. If the symptoms progress to a fever, it is time to switch to Maō-Tō which is used for the middle stage when chills and fever start, but sweating is not frequent. After a Maō-Tō treatment, sweating will occur, and symptoms will generally improve. As the person experiences sweating, they should change clothes often.

Stage 3: Seihai-Tō

The late stage begins with a cough, phlegm, and potentially pneumonia. When the person starts to cough and have tangled phlegm, feel discomfort in the bronchial tubes and lungs, or develop pneumonia this is the time to use Seihai-Tō.

Herbal treatment can also be used with a series of other options which may support natural immunity. Though this is not a comprehensive list, examples include:

Therapeutic Effects of Essential Oils

Essential oils are natural medicine that can be used as a preventive measure on a regular basis but can also be effective as a treatment. For example, lavender and peppermint oils have been clinically proven to increase blood oxygen levels, which can help you breathe easier (Hedayat K. M., 2008). Essential oils have also been shown to possess antiviral effects, just like Kanpo medicine (Kiyohara, H., et al., 2006).

Fermented Foods and Intestinal Microflora

Diet has an effect on the intestinal bacteria, both positive and negative. Beneficial intestinal bacteria can be promoted by incorporating fermented foods into the daily diet (Bell, V., et al, 2018). There is reason to believe that reinforcing intestinal and pulmonary immunity with fermented foods would be an effective, or at least supportive, means of fighting Covid (Antunes, A., et al., 2020). There is also evidence supporting a link between eating fermented vegetables and lower Covid mortality rates (Bousquet, J., et al., 2021). Fermented foods include natto (fermented soybeans), Japanese *Tsukemono* (pickled vegetables), pickles, and sauerkraut, Hawaiian sour poi (Taro), miso and many other. *Nukazuke* pickles, in particular, are excellent fermented foods that contain diverse types of beneficial bacteria, including lactic acid bacteria, bacillus subtilis and butyric acid bacteria.

Conclusion

This paper explores the relationship between Covid and the innate immune system, as well as multiple possible pathways to support a healthy immune response. With this paradigm, it is important to improve our diet and eat fermented foods to support a healthy and complex gut microbiome. This in turn supports both the general health of the body and specifically the immune system. Further, it is important to utilize natural medicines such as Kanpo and other herbal and natural remedies, integrated with western medicine.

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