



Analysis of the Chinese and Western Medical Academic Theory of Thyroid Disease and Zhi Qi Dao Lingli Moxibustion Regulation System

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Abstract: Thyroid diseases fall under the category of "goiter, goiter tumor, and goiter qi" in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). The core pathogenesis primarily involves liver qi stagnation, with phlegm coagulation and blood stasis as the clinical manifestations, and spleen-kidney yang deficiency as the root cause. Qi stagnation, phlegm coagulation, and blood stasis interconnect at the cervical liver meridian pathway, accompanied by emotional stagnation, dual deficiency of qi and yin, and alternating cold and heat, constituting a common chronic visceral and meridian dysfunction disorder in clinical practice. Zhiqidao Lingli Moxibustion is grounded in TCM's holistic view and meridian theory, integrating the essence of emotional regulation to innovatively establish a systematic physiotherapy system: "energy oil acupoint massage+graphene energy patch penetration+compound moxa stick medicinal moxibustion+Wuji differentiation tablet precision energy guidance+physician-patient mental resonance+constant-temperature controlled-time deep moxibustion therapy." This system, based on standardized physiotherapy, adheres to the principle of fixed main acupoints and syndrome-differentiated complementary points, achieving effects of "warm without scalding, penetrating without injury, precise energy accumulation, and mind-body coordination" through standardized procedures. Concurrently, it constructs a tripartite regulation plan combining moxibustion therapy, nutraceutical intervention, and healthy lifestyle correction. Moxibustion is administered in three progressive treatment courses, while nutraceutical intervention employs a fixed foundation of "Ganqing Bao+Changwei Bao+Shenqin Bao" combined with syndrome-differentiated matching, supplemented by lifestyle correction and health exercise guidance. This multidimensional approach addresses core pathogenic mechanisms to achieve regulatory goals such as soothing liver qi and activating blood circulation to resolve stasis. This article systematically explores its academic theory and physiotherapy system, providing comprehensive academic support and practical references for external TCM treatment of thyroid diseases, as well as novel insights for complementary regulation between TCM and Western medicine.

Keywords: Zhi Qi Dao Ling li Moxibustion; Thyroid diseases; Goiter; Traditional Chinese Medicine theory; Moxibustion therapy; Syndrome differentiation and moxibustion; Meridian dredging; Mind-body harmony; Food and medicine sharing the same origin; Course of treatment regulation

1. Introduction

TCM has a long-standing understanding of goiter. The Huangdi Neijing (The Inner Canon of the Yellow Emperor) establishes a core connection between goiter in the anterior neck and liver qi stagnation, while ancient texts such as the Zhu Bing Yuan Hou Lun (Treatise on the Causes and Manifestations of All Diseases) further elucidate the core pathogenesis of "qi stagnation, phlegm coagulation, and blood stasis," laying a theoretical foundation for TCM external therapies. Moxibustion, as a classic external therapy in TCM, has a pure yang nature that highly aligns with the pathogenesis of thyroid diseases; however, conventional moxibustion suffers from issues such as shallow penetration and low precision.

The Western medical diagnostic and therapeutic system focuses on local lesion intervention and hormone level regulation, demonstrating significant advantages in acute care but exhibiting limitations in the long-term management of chronic thyroid diseases. Zhiqidao Spiritual Energy Moxibustion is not a simple application of traditional moxibustion but rather a comprehensive upgrade and systematic construction guided by TCM theory. Its core "spiritual energy" embodies multidimensional advantages, including precise syndrome differentiation and thorough meridian unblocking, and it establishes a complete system of "external treatment + internal nourishment + holistic mind-body regulation" to address the root causes and pathological issues of thyroid diseases.

2. Core Cognition and Academic Differences in Thyroid Diseases between TCM and Western Medicine

2.1 Core Cognition and Pathogenesis in Western Medicine

Based on modern medical theories such as anatomy, Western medicine adopts a core perspective of "local organ

pathology + endocrine hormone imbalance," considering thyroid diseases as essentially local organic lesions or functional abnormalities of the thyroid gland that subsequently lead to systemic metabolic disorders. The pathogenesis primarily includes organic lesions such as hyperplasia of thyroid follicular cells; functional disorders resulting from abnormal synthesis and secretion of thyroid hormones; and clear predisposing factors such as genetics and abnormal iodine intake, all of which ultimately affect the local thyroid gland. The cognitive logic follows a "local-to-systemic" approach, consistently focusing on the thyroid gland itself.

2.2 Mainstream Treatment Modalities and Characteristics in Western Medicine

Western medical treatment fully aligns with the cognitive logic of "local lesions as the core," aiming to resolve local issues and regulate hormone levels. It has formed three mainstream approaches: pharmacological intervention, surgical treatment, and radiotherapy, characterized by precise targeting and rapid onset of action. However, significant limitations exist: treatment focuses on the local area, neglecting systemic imbalances and emotional and lifestyle factors, providing symptomatic relief rather than addressing the root cause; interventions are often symptomatic, requiring long-term or even lifelong medication, while surgery and radiotherapy carry the risk of irreversible damage; and there is an exclusive focus on physiological indicators, overlooking patients' emotional and physical discomfort, making it difficult to achieve holistic mind-body regulation.

3. "Trinity" Holistic Regulation Protocol for Thyroid Disorders in Zhiqidao

3.1 Standardized Moxibustion with Staged, Course-Based Treatment

Given the chronic and stubborn nature of thyroid disorders, a standardized three-course, staged protocol is implemented, totaling 30 sessions:

First Course (Nodule Dispersal Phase): 10 daily sessions aimed at rapidly dispersing nodules and alleviating liver depression, laying the foundation for subsequent regulation.

Second Course (Repair and Foundation-Strengthening Phase): 10 sessions every other day focused on warming and nourishing the spleen and kidney and restoring organ function, avoiding excessive moxibustion that may deplete yin fluids.

Third Course (Consolidation and Recurrence Prevention Phase): 10 sessions every other day aimed at harmonizing yin and yang and preventing recurrence, achieving a balanced physiological state.

3.2 Syndrome-Based Nutritional Intervention Using Medicinal and Edible Homologues

Following the principle of "treating with both food and medicine," a protocol combines fixed foundational formulas with syndrome-specific adaptations, all derived from pure herbal extracts without Western pharmaceutical components or additives:

Fixed Foundational Formulas (Three-Effect Synergy):

Gan Qing Bao: Soothes liver qi and clears liver fire.

Chang Wei Bao: Strengthens the spleen and stomach, replenishes qi, and dispels dampness.

Shen Qin Bao: Warms primordial yang and nourishes kidney yin.

These directly target core pathomechanisms involving liver, spleen, and kidney disharmony.

Syndrome-Specific Adaptations:

Nodule patients: Add Jie Jie Bao (promotes blood circulation and softens hardness).

Hyperthyroidism patients: Add Jia Kang Bao (nourishes yin, reduces fire, and soothes liver depression).

Hypothyroidism patients: Add Jia Jian Bao (warms the spleen and kidney and replenishes qi and blood).

Hashimoto's patients: Add Qiao Ben Bao (replenishes qi and yin and reinforces vital qi).

Moxibustion addresses external manifestations, while nutritional support strengthens internal foundations, forming a closed-loop system for accelerated lesion resolution and indicator recovery, reducing recurrence rates.

3.3 Targeted Correction of Unhealthy Lifestyle Habits

Traditional Chinese Wellness Exercises: Practice Baduanjin (Eight-Section Brocade) daily upon waking and before bed, engage in standing meditation for 30 minutes daily, and progress to Tai Chi to align with pathomechanisms by unblocking meridians and calming the mind.

Key Lifestyle Adjustments: Abstain from smoking and alcohol, avoid late nights (sleep before 11 PM), regulate emotions, and standardize dietary structure (reduce spicy, pungent, and high-iodine foods) to eliminate root causes of disease onset and recurrence.

4 Clinical Typical Cases

4.1 Case 1: Bilateral Multiple Benign Thyroid Nodules (Phlegm-Stasis Interaction Type)

Patient Profile: Ms. Li, 41 years old, corporate manager, presented with a 3-month history of foreign body sensation in the anterior neck, accompanied by irritability, insomnia, chronic late-night habits, and occasional alcohol consumption. Western medical evaluation revealed bilateral multiple solid nodules (left largest: 1.8×1.2 cm; right largest: 1.5×1.0 cm; TI-RADS Category 3) with normal thyroid function. TCM diagnosis: liver qi stagnation with phlegm-stasis coagulation.

Intervention: Standardized 3-course moxibustion protocol + "Gan Qing Bao (Liver-Clearing Formula) + Chang Wei Bao (Spleen-Stomach Harmonizing Formula) + Shen Qin Bao (Kidney-Nourishing Formula) + Jie Jie Bao (Nodule-Resolving Formula)" + lifestyle modification and traditional wellness exercises.

Outcome: Follow-up imaging showed nodule reduction (left: 0.6×0.4 cm; right: 0.5×0.3 cm) with complete resolution of symptoms. Stability maintained at 6-month follow-up.

4.2 Case 2: Hashimoto's Thyroiditis (Hypothyroid Phase, Spleen-Kidney Yang Deficiency Type)

Patient Profile: Ms. Wang, 35 years old, teacher, presented with 6-month history of cold intolerance, fatigue, edema, memory decline, and scanty menses, compounded by chronic anxiety and late-night habits. Laboratory findings: TSH 78.23 mIU/L, suppressed FT3/FT4, elevated TPOAb/TgAb, and coarse thyroid parenchymal echo on ultrasound. TCM diagnosis: spleen-kidney yang deficiency with qi-stasis and blood stasis.

Intervention: Standardized 3-course moxibustion protocol + "Gan Qing Bao + Chang Wei Bao + Shen Qin Bao + Qiao Ben Bao (Hashimoto's-Specific Formula)" + lifestyle modification and traditional wellness exercises.

Outcome: Post-treatment TSH decreased to 5.12 mIU/L with normalized FT3/FT4 and significant antibody reduction. Complete symptom resolution maintained at 3-month follow-up.

4.3 Case 3: Hyperthyroidism (Yin Deficiency with Excessive Fire Type)

Patient Profile: Ms. Zhang, 29 years old, social media professional, presented with 4-month history of palpitations, hyperhidrosis, tremor, insomnia, night sweats, and mild exophthalmos, exacerbated by chronic circadian rhythm disruption and overtime work. Laboratory findings: TSH 0.02 mIU/L, elevated FT3/FT4, and diffuse thyroid enlargement on ultrasound. TCM diagnosis: liver fire hyperactivity with yin deficiency.

Intervention: Modified 3-course moxibustion (lower temperature) + "Gan Qing Bao + Chang Wei Bao + Shen Qin Bao + Jia Kang Bao (Hyperthyroidism-Specific Formula)" + lifestyle modification and traditional wellness exercises.

Outcome: Normalized thyroid function, resolution of goiter, and significant symptom improvement without relapse at 4-month follow-up.

4.4 Case Summary

All three cases demonstrated simultaneous improvement in imaging findings, laboratory markers, and clinical symptoms through the trinity protocol, validating its efficacy in addressing both root and manifestation of thyroid disorders and underscoring the scientific rationale of integrated TCM-Western medicine regulation.

5. Conclusion

Zhiqidao Spiritual Energy Moxibustion represents a comprehensive TCM moxibustion therapy system with robust theoretical foundations, innovative technologies, standardized protocols, and proven clinical efficacy. Anchored in classical TCM texts, its core techniques systematically address limitations of conventional moxibustion through scientifically structured courses, precision nutritional interventions, and holistic lifestyle corrections, forming a closed-loop model of "external treatment + internal nourishment + habit optimization."

While Western medicine excels in acute management, Zhiqidao fills a critical gap in root-cause regulation of chronic thyroid disorders through TCM's holistic paradigm, demonstrating complementary synergies between the two systems. This framework offers novel insights for TCM external therapies, academic references for moxibustion innovation, and practical evidence for integrated TCM-Western medicine approaches, warranting further research and clinical adoption.

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