

The therapy of Osteoporosis by Chinese Medicines - Recent Researches and the Pharmacopoeia information thereof



Introduction

Osteoporosis is a common but less detected chronicle disease among old people and a latent factor for waist pains and fractures. Osteoporosis greatly increases the incidence of fracture for an old man, which may happen in a mild crash. This may also happen to a post-menopausal woman due to her decreasing secretion of hormone and increasing loss of bone mass. The density of a woman's bone mass decreases with the increase of age, so more women have osteoporosis than men. This is particularly true for women in our nation, who are more prone to the disease than Western women due to dietary and exercise reasons. This indicates osteoporosis is a major health threat to old men and post-menopausal women of this nation. Taiwan formally became aged society in 1993 according to the U.N. definition for the term. With the aging of population, fracture incidences have increased in leaps and bounds, resulting in huge waste of medical resources. Therefore, we have made the prevention of osteoporosis a priority in health administration.

The West has made great progress in the study and diagnosis of osteoporosis, but there is still no effective and side-effect-free treatment. Current treatment can only reduce the loss of bone mass but has no remarkable effect on its increase and the reduction of fracture incidences. Therefore, we continue to make osteoporosis a subject of study in the hope that we will find a traditional Chinese medicine for effective treatment.

In Chinese medical archives there is no medical term for such a disease. Judging by the symptoms, it falls in the domains of “bone withering” and “waist ache.” Traditional Chinese medicine believes that the liver is responsible for sinews, the kidney is responsible for bones, and the spleen is responsible for the muscles and that malfunction of kidney is the basic cause for loose density of the bones. According to this theory, the study should stress the regeneration of the bone mass. Since 1999, this committee has made a start by analyzing the records in ancient archives in hopes to find a clinically effective medicine and set an example of cooperation between Chinese and Western medicine.

The study of osteoporosis is a priority subject of this committee. In 2000, we entrusted the study to Dr. Chen Chien-lin of Chang Gung Memorial Hospital. His subject was: “Treatment of osteoporosis with traditional Chinese medicine – contemporary studies and information from ancient archives.” Now, we put the results of the study in the forms of a book and a DVD, of which the second edition was issued in November 2002. The book was consecutively selected by the Department of Health in 2002 and 2003 as a good government publication and awarded the third prize in the book category. The DVD, attached to the book, is divided into two parts, the whole contents of the book and the compass system of archives about osteoporosis. The software was designed on the basis of related symptoms and the results of Chinese medical studies carried out in recent years. Four terms are used as key words for the search: waist ache, replenishment for weakness, paralysis, and numbness. The DVD includes the contents of 37 ancient medical books and archives for search. It may be used as a good reference for those who seek a prescription on the basis of symptoms.