



Professor Zhou Jianhua Shares Two Medical Cases on the Treatment of Constipation

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Abstract: Constipation, as a common clinical disease, has always been one of the problems troubling humanity from ancient times to the present. With the rapid development of modern society, the richness and diversity of diet, the change of human living habits and mental stress, the incidence rate of constipation is increasing year by year, and the number of patients with constipation symptoms is also increasing. Constipation has also become one of the issues discussed by international medical institutions. And many ancient Chinese medical books have made remarkable contributions to the treatment of constipation, making outstanding contributions to the treatment of constipation in later generations. Professor Zhou Jianhua has been engaged in clinical and teaching work in the field of proctology for decades. Based on his treatment experience, he has summarized two representative patient medical cases for reference.

Keywords: Constipation; Treatment of Constipation.

1. The Concept of Constipation

Constipation refers to a decrease in the frequency of bowel movements (less than 3 times per week), dry and hard stool that is difficult to defecate, or difficulty in defecation despite not having dry stool. The "Guidelines for Diagnosis and Treatment of Common Diseases in Traditional Chinese Medicine Internal Medicine - Traditional Chinese Medicine Disease Syndrome Part" [1] states that constipation is characterized by less than 3 bowel movements per week, no loose stools, hard or clumpy stools, or difficulty in defecation, or a feeling of incomplete defecation, or the need for manual assistance during defecation. The "Chinese Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Treatment of Chronic Constipation (2013, Wuhan)" [2] points out that the main clinical manifestations of constipation are reduced frequency of bowel movements, dry and hard stools, and/or difficulty in defecation. Reduced frequency of bowel movements refers to having less than 3 bowel movements per week; Difficulty in defecation includes difficulty in defecation, difficulty in excretion, incomplete defecation, time-consuming defecation, and the need for manual assistance in defecation. The Rome IV diagnostic criteria describe constipation as: defecation as hard or dry ball stool, difficulty in defecation, incomplete sensation of defecation, obstruction/blockage of the anus and rectum during defecation, and the need for manual assistance in defecation.

2. The Pathogenesis of Constipation

Constipation was often referred to as "difficulty in defecation" or "constipation obstruction" in ancient times. The first person to classify constipation was Zhang Zhongjing of the Han Dynasty. In his book "Treatise on Cold Damage", Zhang Zhongjing classified constipation into two types based on clinical manifestations and pulse conditions: Yin nodules and Yang nodules. "Those whose pulse is floating and counting, can eat, and do not defecate" are referred to as Yang nodules; Those with a deep and delayed pulse, inability to eat, heavy body, and reversed stool are referred to as yin nodules. Zhang Zhongjing, also known as "Pi Yue" and created "Pi Yue Wan", still has remarkable clinical effects to this day. Later, during the reign of Emperor Chaoyuan in the Sui Dynasty, constipation was discussed as an independent disease in the "Treatise on the Origins of Various Diseases", using the terms "difficulty in defecation" and "constipation obstruction". Although Chao did not classify constipation into two categories: "difficulty in defecation" and "constipation obstruction", he made a clear distinction between the two and discussed their etiology and pathogenesis separately. Therefore, it can also be seen as a classification. During the Song, Jin, and Yuan dynasties, medical experts clearly classified constipation. When discussing the causes of constipation, the "Taiping Shenghui Formula" mentions the relationship between fatigue and large intestine wind heat. Although fatigue and colonic wind heat are the etiology and pathogenesis, in a sense, they can also be regarded as a classification. The later "General Record of St. Francis" proposed the concepts of wind secret, heat secret, cold secret, and virtual secret. This approach is also proposed from the perspective of etiology and pathogenesis, but it has certain clinical guidance significance. Liu Wansu clearly proposed the classification of constipation. Liu divides constipation into two categories: deficiency and excess, based on the ability to eat and urinate. If one can eat and urinate red, it is a secret; If one cannot eat or urinate clearly, it is considered a mystery. Li Dongyuan mentioned different types of constipation such as heat dryness, wind dryness, yang stagnation, and yin stagnation. Constipation, as a common disease, is a problem that affects people of all ages and professions. Professor Zhou Jianhua is skilled in treating various intestinal diseases such as constipation, ulcerative colitis, chronic colitis, and proctitis. Professor Zhou, while reading ancient books and combining years of clinical experience, has summarized various clinical formulas for treating different types of constipation. Below are two medical cases shared by Professor Zhou for treating constipation.

3. Medical Case 1

Wu, female, 68 years old, first diagnosed on November 2, 2020, self-reported "difficulty in defecation for five years". During this period, I intermittently took "Maziren Pills" and used "Kaisailu" to promote bowel movements. In recent years, it has become increasingly difficult to consciously defecate, and some have not defecated for 3 to 5 days. I am here for traditional Chinese medicine diagnosis and treatment. Symptoms: Difficulty in defecation, soft texture, feeling weak in defecation, bloating and fullness, intermittent dryness and thinness of bowel movements, defecation every 2-3 days, sluggish appetite, dry mouth and bitter taste, pale and chubby tongue, thin and white coating, fine and weak pulse.

Colorectal condition (knee chest position): Normal appearance of the anus, palpation: no lumps or nodules around the anus; Finger examination: The finger insertion is smooth, the anal sphincter muscle has normal contraction and relaxation functions, and there are soft lumps at the 1st and 5th positions of the dentate line; Microscopic examination: The entrance was smooth, and the mucosa at the end of the rectum was edematous with a light red color and a small amount of fecal residue. When the endoscope was retracted to the dentate line, hemorrhoids were visible at positions 1 and 5, with scattered bleeding points on the surface of the hemorrhoid mucosa. Further inquiry into the patient's medical history

revealed occasional rectal bleeding and a history of mixed hemorrhoids for 9 years without treatment. Follow the doctor's advice to perform an electronic colonoscopy examination. The diagnosis results show: chronic colitis with mild erosive changes; Rectal pigmentation (mild); Take a pathological piece of the mucosal protrusion in the splenic flexure of the colon. Pathological report: Chronic inflammation of colon mucosa with polypoid hyperplasia.

Diagnosis: Constipation (Spleen and Kidney Deficiency Syndrome)

Chronic colitis

Mixed hemorrhoids (stage III internal hemorrhoids)

Prescription: 20g Angelica sinensis, 15g Achyranthes bidentata, 30g Cistanche deserticola, 10g Zexie, 10g Cimicifuga, 10g Citrus aurantium, 15g Platycodon grandiflorum, 20g Semen Raphani, 30g Rheum palmatum, 6g Yuanming powder, 6g Licorice, 10g. 10 doses of the above-mentioned medicine.

On November 23, 2020, during the second consultation, after taking medication, the patient initially had normal bowel movements. However, in the past week, the amount of stool was small, forming, and there was abdominal pain that was tolerable. There was also a feeling of heaviness and bloating in the lower abdomen. The tongue is pale, with tooth marks on the edges, thin yellow coating, and stringy veins. Go ahead and add 30g of white peony and 15g of dodder. 10 doses of the above-mentioned medicine.

On December 11, 2020, during the third consultation, there was no significant improvement in symptoms after the last medication. The fur was thin and yellow, and the pulse was stringy. Add 15g of Ophiopogon japonicus, 15g of Scrophularia ningpoensis, and 20g of ground. 10 doses of the above-mentioned medicine.

On January 4, 2021, there were four consultations. After taking the medication last time, one could have a bowel movement once every 1-2 days. At first, it formed, but then the stool became loose, the tongue was pale with teeth marks on the edges, the coating was thin and white, and the pulse was stringy. Reduce the amount of rhubarb in front to 3g and add 10g of soapberry. 10 doses of the above-mentioned medicine

On January 27, 2021, during the five consultations, I had a bowel movement once every 1-2 days after taking medication. The stool quality was normal, with no abdominal pain or bloating. The tongue was light and there were tooth marks between the edges. The coating was thin and white, and the pulse was stringy. Continue taking the first 20 doses.

On March 22, 2021, after taking medication, the patient was able to have daily bowel movements, but the amount of stool was small, the four corners were cold, the tongue was pale with sharp teeth marks, the coating was thin and white, and the pulse was deep and thin. Add 10g of black film in front. The patient did not seek medical attention again.

The patient is an elderly woman who has been deficient in the body for a long time. After giving birth, she suffers from qi deficiency and fluid deficiency, spleen and stomach disharmony, spleen control and transformation, weak transmission due to spleen deficiency, and stagnation of waste, leading to dysfunction of colon conduction and constipation; Spleen deficiency leads to abnormal movement of water, grains, and essence, resulting in poor appetite and lack of appetite; If the essence cannot support the mouth and tongue, then the mouth will be dry and bitter; Constipation for a long time leads to loss of conduction in the large intestine, and the waste remains in the intestine for a long time, which

consumes more energy and damages fluids. Therefore, Jichuan decoction was chosen as the main ingredient, which comes from the "Jingyue Quanshu". The book "Jingyue Quanshu" states: "If a disease involves deficiency and obstruction of bowel movements, then drugs such as nitrate yellow attack must not be used. If there is a situation where it is necessary to treat it, it is advisable to use it as a tonic." The name of the formula "Jichuan" refers to the use of a tonic to support the river for navigation. Zhang Jingyue calls this formula "a tonic". Teacher Zhou Jianhua believes that using Jichuan decoction with modifications has good therapeutic effects on elderly constipation patients, regardless of gender. In the process of modification and cutting, drugs such as Ligusticum and Platycodon grandiflorum are selected. Laizi has a flat nature, sweet taste, and has the effect of reducing qi and bloating. Modern pharmacological research has shown that Laizi has a promoting effect on intestinal emptying in mice. According to "Medical Zhong Zhong Shen Xi Lu": Laizi, whether raw or stir fried, can promote qi opening and depression, reduce bloating and relieve fullness. This is a product that dissolves qi, not a product that breaks qi. Platycodon grandiflorum can promote lung function, invigorate the throat, eliminate phlegm, and expel pus. Burdock seeds can moisten and smooth the intestines, clear lung heat; Licorice can clear heat and relieve cough. The combination of three medicines can clear lung heat and promote intestinal heat; Xuanming powder is soft and firm when poured down, combined with rhubarb to attack and clear the accumulation, causing dryness in the intestines. Ophiopogon japonicus, Xuanshen, and Shengdi nourish yin, moisten dryness, and produce fluids to prevent excessive spillage of rhubarb and Xuanming powder from damaging yin.

Overall, in the treatment of constipation, it is not advisable to simply "promote digestion" or simply "promote digestion". Medication should be a combination of "promote digestion" and "promote digestion". Promoting lung qi can help with colonic conduction, reducing spleen and stomach qi stagnation can facilitate descending ventilation, and tonifying kidney essence can nourish intestinal fluids. The coordination of the lungs, spleen, and kidneys can restore normal colonic conduction function, which is the standard for promoting dryness and restoring bowel function.

4. Medical Case Sharing 2

Jin, male, 82 years old, first diagnosed on August 30, 2019. He reported experiencing "difficulty in defecation for 5 years" and being able to defecate once a day. The stool is dry, difficult to expel, and there is a feeling of incomplete defecation accompanied by abdominal distension. Bitter and dry mouth, due to years of unsatisfactory bowel movements, feeling depressed and down in the chest, with a pale and yellowish tongue, and a smooth pulse. Upon further investigation of the patient's medical history, it was found that they had visited multiple hospitals and received treatment multiple times, but the results were unsatisfactory.

Colorectal examination (left lateral position): Visual examination: The appearance of the anus is still normal. Digital examination: The insertion of the finger is smooth, and the anal sphincter function is still acceptable without any abnormalities. Colonoscopy examination: The insertion is smooth, and soft and tortuous venous masses can be seen at 12 o'clock and 4 o'clock positions, with no other abnormalities.

Diagnosis: Constipation (Intestinal Qi Stagnation Syndrome)

Prescription: Chuanmutong 15g Poria cocos 15g Paeonia lactiflora 15g Qianghuo 15g Ginger Pinellia ternata 15g Chenpi 15g Stir fried Qingpi 15g Big belly skin 15g Mulberry bark 15g Cinnamon 10g Licorice 10g Cordyceps sinensis 15g Perilla frutescens 15g Cistanche deserticola 30g Rapeseed 30g Platycodon grandiflorus 20g Yuanming powder 10g Angelica sinensis 20g Peach kernel 10g, 6 doses of

the above drugs.

On September 10, 2019, during the second consultation, the patient reported their condition with a light tone and a happy mood. After three doses of medication, their bowel movements were slightly dry at the beginning, but they were smooth and their incomplete bowel movements were relieved. After the last dose of medication, the incomplete bowel movements disappeared. Abdominal distension relieved, but feeling full and uncomfortable in the abdomen. The tongue is pale with yellow coating and the veins are smooth. Go ahead and add 20g of *Pinellia ternata* and 10g of *Huanglian*. Take 10 doses of the above medicine.

On September 28, 2019, during the three consultations, the patient felt that their bowel movements were smooth. They could defecate once a day in the morning, but the final stool did not form. The abdominal distension was relieved, the sagittal qi was frequent, the tongue was pale and yellow, and the pulse was smooth and taut. Add 30g of Job's tears and 10g of sand kernels ahead. 10 doses of the above-mentioned medicine. After follow-up, the patient reported daily normal bowel movements.

The patient is an elderly male who has been suffering from constipation and has been seeking medical attention multiple times without recovery, resulting in depression and discomfort. He has been given treatment with distracted qi drinks. Distracted Qi Drink is used to treat all qi disharmony in men and women, often caused by worry and contemplation, anger that harms the mind, or anxiety when eating, or being careless, causing the depressed qi to linger and stop between the chest and diaphragm, unable to flow smoothly, resulting in chest tightness, rib weakness, choking, acid swallowing, nausea, dizziness, limb fatigue, yellowing complexion, bitter mouth and dry tongue, reduced diet, gradually losing weight, or a weak colon; Or after illness, there may be chest and diaphragm deficiency and a lack of appetite. The *Renzhai Zhizhi Fang Lun* states: "To treat the stagnation of the seven emotions, promote urination and defecation, clear and relieve symptoms quickly. *Perilla* leaves cost one and a half cents, licorice roasted seven cents, *Pinellia ternata* and *Fructus Aurantii* each six cents, *Qingpi*, *Chenpi*, *Mutong*, *Dabaopi*, *Mulberry white skin*, *Muxiang*, *Chifuling*, *Betel Nut*, *Pengshu*, *Maimendong*, *Platycodon grandiflorus*, *Cinnamomum cassia*, *Fragrant Aconitum*, and *Huoxiang* each five cents. After filing, three slices of ginger, two jujubes, and ten stems of lantern heart decoction, some clinical patients often suffer from emotional disorders due to long-term constipation, especially some female patients who are in menopause. After observation, these patients suffer from physical and mental torment of diseases, and their hearts are divided into different parts. Qi drink corresponds to this condition, as it can regulate patients' emotional disorders and improve constipation.

References

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