

# Clinical Experience of Qianzhengsan Combined with Acupoint Application in the Treatment of Peripheral Facial Paralysis

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**Abstract:** Associate Professor Chen Yonghua has been engaged in clinical research on encephalopathy of traditional Chinese medicine for more than 20 years. He has rich clinical experience and is good at syndrome differentiation and disease differentiation treatment of facial paralysis, a common clinical disease. Through the diagnosis and treatment of many patients with peripheral facial paralysis, master Chen found that the addition and subtraction of the classic prescription Qianzhengsan combined with the acupoint application of the traditional external treatment method has a good curative effect, which is simple, safe and easy to be accepted by patients.

**Keywords:** Peripheral facial paralysis, Etiology and pathogenesis, Qianzhengsan, Acupoint application.

## 1. Introduction

Peripheral facial palsy, also known as facial neuritis or Bell's palsy, can occur in any season but is more prevalent in winter and spring. It is a disorder of facial expression muscle dysfunction caused by non-specific inflammation of the facial nerve in the facial nerve canal[1] and is a common cerebral neurological mononeuropathy. The clinical manifestations of PFP include dysfunction of the facial expression muscles on one or both sides, including shallowing or disappearance of the frontal lines, widening of the eye fissures, shallowing or disappearance of the nasolabial folds and the mid-face folds, skewing of the corners of the mouth to the healthy side, difficulty raising the eyebrows, inability to frown, closed eyes, incomplete exposure of the teeth, puffing of the cheeks and other physical signs. Treatment in Western medicine is mainly based on hormonal therapy and nerve nutrition, but is often accompanied by a variety of side effects. Chinese medicine believes that this disease occurs mainly because of the deficiency of the veins and channels and the lack of positive qi, and the wind and evil of the six leprechauns invade the facial meridians, resulting in the blockage of qi and blood, and the delayed and non-collection of tendons and veins. Acupuncture point dressing is a traditional external treatment method that involves the application of medicine to specific acupuncture points to stimulate them, thereby regulating qi and blood and unblocking the meridians. There are many references to the application of medicines in the "52 Recipes for Diseases", a medical prescription work excavated from the Mawangdui No. 3 Han tomb in Changsha, Hunan Province, as well as in the "Ling Shu", where it is written that "the treatment is to use horse paste ..... to iron the sharp cheeks". In addition, China's first monograph on external treatment methods, the Li Bo Era, even suggested that "the theory of external treatment is the theory of internal treatment, and the medicine of external treatment is the medicine of internal treatment, the only difference is the method".

He has rich clinical experience in the treatment of cerebrovascular disease, insomnia, facial palsy, hepatomegaly, Parkinson's disease, dementia, epilepsy, etc. The author is

fortunate to study under Chen and has been taught by him in clinical practice.

## 2. Pathogenesis

### 2.1 Chinese Medicine Etiology and Pathogenesis

According to traditional Chinese medicine, the development of the disease is caused by a combination of factors. The three main aspects include external causes, internal causes and a combination of internal and external causes. (1) External causes: feeling external evil, the face is attacked. In the Suwen Wind Theory, it is said that "wind is also a disease, either for cold and heat, or for partial withering, or for wind also ..... so its flesh has unkindness also". This indicates that facial paralysis is caused by the evil of wind-cold or wind-heat. (2) Internal causes are the root cause of peripheral facial palsy. Ming-Li Jiao's "Introduction to Medicine" says that "a crooked mouth from a wind injury is a result of a weak body affected by wind." As the body is deficient in internal vital energy, the Qi and blood are unable to nourish the facial muscles and meridians, resulting in facial palsy. (3) The combination of internal and external causes means that the patient has a deficiency of positive qi and the body is not strong enough to protect itself from the outside, so wind and evil attack the head and face. According to Dr Chen, this disease belongs to the category of meridians in stroke, and the causes are mostly wind, fire, phlegm, silt and deficiency.

### 2.2 Western Medicine Etiology and Pathology

Western medicine has 2 theories on the pathogenesis of the disease, one is the theory of viral infection, which is latent in the sensory ganglia of the facial nerve.

The virus is activated by non-specific stimuli and a metamorphic reaction occurs, causing local damage and demyelination. The second is the theory of microcirculatory disorders of the facial nerve. The facial nerve travels in a tortuous and narrow bony canal, which has poor blood flow and is prone to ischaemic injury.

### 3. Treatment

#### 3.1 Qianzhengsan for Peripheral Facial Palsy

FPF is located in the meridians and tendons of the face, which means that when the meridians and tendons of the face are diseased, facial paralysis will occur. Zhuanzheng San has the effect of dispelling wind, dispelling phlegm and opening up the meridians, and is a representative agent for treating wind. Zhuanzheng San can dispel wind and phlegm, clear the meridians and resolve spasm. It enters the Yangming meridian and leads the medicine upwards to dispel wind and phlegm, and is good at removing the wind from the head and face. The two herbs are similar in taste, but the scorpion is strong in opening the channels and the silkworm is good in resolving phlegm. The combined use of the three herbs is strong despite the small number of flavours. Based on his clinical experience, Mr. Chen added Gui Zhi to warm the meridians, Fang Feng to dispel dampness and dispel cold, Chuan Xiong to invigorate the Blood and disperse cold, Huang Qi to nourish the vital energy, Angelica Sinensis to tonify the Blood and invigorate the Blood, and Tao Ren, Hong Hua and Ginger Huang to invigorate the Blood and dispel stasis. According to the principles of Chinese medicine, if the evidence is wind-heat, add Jin Yin Hua, Peppermint and Xuan Shen to clear the heat and dispel the wind and clear the ligaments; if wind-cold, add Jing Zhi, Bai Zhi and Qiang Wu to dispel the wind and dispel the cold. Adding and subtracting according to the evidence will achieve better clinical results in clinical practice.

#### 3.2 Acupressure for Peripheral Facial Palsy

The first recorded in the Su Wen, is a classic external treatment method in Chinese medicine treatment methods, acupuncture point compress from life, primitive society people with the natural environment in the struggle, often suffer trauma, gradually found part of the grass stems coated in the wound can have hemostatic, pain relief and other effects. "Ling Shu - meridians" has a cloud: "foot Yangming's tendons ..... chin tendons have cold, it is urgent to lead cheek day to move the mouth, there is heat is tendons slow, not winning the collection and release of seclusion, treatment by horse paste, paste its urgent, to white wine and gui, to apply its slow ..... ", which was later referred to by the people as the cure of plaster. According to Mr. Chen Yonghua, acupoint paste is equivalent to transdermal drug delivery, acting on the affected part of facial paralysis and exerting drug effects after transdermal absorption. In addition, the drug does not go through the liver and gastrointestinal tract, avoiding the first-pass effect of the liver and toxic side effects of the gastrointestinal tract. It is bitter and cold in taste and has the function of reducing swelling and pain, dispersing nodules and promoting circulation. It is the dried tuber of the plant *Dictyostelium*, family *Tennantaceae*, which has the effect of dispelling wind and phlegm, and relieving pain. 87 prescriptions for external use of "facial medicine" are included in the "Thousand Gold Formula", of which *Dictyostelium* appears as often as 25 times, which shows its effectiveness.

### 4. A Sample of Test Cases

Patient, female, 53 years old, first visited our neurology clinic on 25 November 2021. She was found to have incomplete closure of her right eye and left-sided mouth after a cold outing on 23 November. Examination: blood pressure: 118/77 mm Hg, clear consciousness, poor mental health, still clear speech, incomplete closure of the right eyelid, 3 mm leakage of the white eye, loss of the right frontal line, shallowing of the right nasolabial fold, distortion of the corner of the mouth to the left, inability to frown, cheek puffing and leakage of air, inability to whistle, impaired taste in the anterior 2/3 of the tongue, dry mouth, no herpes in the bilateral external auditory canal, muscle strength of the limbs grade V, normal muscle tone of the limbs, tendon reflex (++) , pathological signs (-). Tongue and pulse: pale tongue, white coating, floating and tight pulse.

Traditional Chinese Medicine diagnosis: facial palsy (wind-cold obstruction).

Western medical diagnosis: right-sided peripheral facial nerve palsy.

Treatment: Expelling wind and dispersing cold, promoting circulation and relieving spasm.

Treatment: 1) Chinese herbal medicine internal prescription (qianzhengsan plus or minus): 3g of whole scorpion, 6g of white fenugreek, 6g of stiff silkworm, 9g of Chuanxiong rhizome, 9g of Fangfeng, 5g of cinnamon stick, 30g of Astragalus, 10g of peach kernel, 8g of safflower, 8g of angelica, 10g of sliced ginger yellow. 2) Acupoint dressing: Take two kinds of Chinese medicine: Strychnine and White Herb, and process them into powder in the ratio of 2:1, add sesame oil and mix well, then apply to the affected side of the cataract and the two acupuncture points, 1g per point, once a day. 7 times is a course of treatment.

#### Second Consultation (2 December 2021)

After 7 days of treatment according to the above protocol, the right eye still does not close tightly and leaks about 2.5mm. The symptoms of skewing the corners of the mouth to the left are less than before, the sense of taste has greatly improved, the frontal lines on the right side appear but are shallower than the left side, the cheeks still leak air. Treatment plan: On the basis of the original formula, add Angelica Sinensis to 10g, Scorpion to 6g, Fructus Lycii to 10g, Qiang Wu to 8g, and Jing Zhi Zhi to 6g. The course of treatment was maintained for 7 days.

#### Third Consultation (9 December 2021)

After 7 days of treatment according to the second consultation protocol, the right eye is better closed than before, with about 2mm of dewlap. Treatment plan: Add 6g of mucuna pruriens, 10g of hawthorn, 10g of hen's nest, 6g of farro and 10g of sour date on top of the original formula. Maintain for 7 days.

#### Fourth Consultation (16 December 2021)

After 7 days of taking the above mentioned drugs, the patient's right eye closure was greatly improved, with a white leak of about 1mm, the degree of skewing of the corners of the

mouth to the left was significantly improved, and the lightening of the right frontal lines was basically improved. The patient's sense of taste returned to normal, the cheek puffing was slightly leaky, the right frontal striae were significantly relieved, he could still eat and drink, his sleep was average, his tongue was light red, his fur was thin and white, his pulse was thin. Treatment plan: Continue according to the three-consultation plan for 7 days.

Fifth Consultation (23 December 2021)

After 7 days of treatment according to the above protocol, the patient complained of no significant discomfort, the right eye was closed and did not show white, the left corner of the mouth was greatly improved, the frontal lines on both sides were basically symmetrical, the cheek puffing was completed, the sleep was acceptable and the bowel movements were regulated. The patient was advised to take rest and avoid catching cold, to stop the acupressure and to continue the herbal medicine for 7 days. After a follow-up telephone call half a month later, the patient had recovered and had been working normally for 10 days, with no residual symptoms.

## 5. Note

FPF is called "facial paralysis" in Chinese medicine, commonly known as "hanging line wind". The "Spiritual Pivot - Jing Tendon" said: "The pawn mouth is secluded, the urgent person's eyes do not fit, heat is tendon longitudinal, the eyes do not open, the cheek tendons have cold, it is urgent to lead the cheek to move the mouth, there is heat is tendon relaxation longitudinal slow not win, so seclusion." Chinese medicine believes that the causes of this disease can be broadly categorized into three aspects: internal causes, external causes, and a combination of internal and external causes of the disease. In the above patient, the weakness of the patient's body and the external exposure to wind and evil attacked the meridians of the face, resulting in blockage of Qi and blood, deregulation of the meridians and tendons, and loss of contraction of the tendons and flesh, resulting in facial paralysis. Acupuncture point application is a classical TCM external treatment method, and Ma Qian Zi reduces swelling and pain, disperses nodules and channels, while Bai Shen Zi dispels wind and relieves pain.

## 6. Summary

Peripheral facial palsy is a common clinical disease. The specific cause of this disease has not been clarified in Western medicine, and treatment is mainly based on anti-inflammatory and anti-viral treatment, improving facial nerve blood circulation, reducing nerve root oedema and nerve nutrition. Hormone therapy is particularly important, as it has anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant, edema-reducing and neuron-protective effects[3]. However, glucocorticoids may lead to hyperadrenocorticotrophic syndrome, reduce the body's immunity, induce infections and, worse still, psychiatric symptoms. According to Chen, the causes of this disease are mostly wind, fire, phlegm, silt and deficiency. The pathogenesis of the disease is that the body is overworked, the righteousness is insufficient, the external guard is not solid, the wind and the evil take advantage of the deficiency to invade the facial meridians, the qi and blood do not run

smoothly, the meridians are not restrained, and the disease develops. The combined treatment of peripheral facial nerve palsy with internal adjustment and external application has good curative effect and high safety, and is worthy of clinical promotion.

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