

Chapter 2

Personalized Experience Sharing of Cai's TCM Gynecology

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ABSTRACT

This chapter introduces experience sharing of Cai's gynecology in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). It argues that Cai's family in China are experts in TCM gynecology, whose seventh generation Xiaosun Cai is a TCM master. Therefore, inheriting experience of Xiaosun is a critical business in the present TCM field. The authors demonstrate a novel system (named TCM-PMES) for preserving the diagnostic processes of veteran practitioners like Xiaosun in a personalized way. Based on the summarized Cai's diagnostic template, a custom input system embracing the particular expressions of the specialist is set up in the platform. Unique and unfiltered experience of veteran practitioner is maintained as complete as possible. Various approaches on exploring relationships among TCM components and speculating syndrome types from clinical symptoms are also studied. This work provides a new way for keeping and researching the personalized factors in the diagnostic process of Cai's TCM gynecology.

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INTRODUCTION

Gynecology is so complicated, that doctors often say that illness of women is ten times harder to cure than that of men (Cai, Huang & Mo, 2000). Different from men, illness of women is related with menstruation, pregnancy, vaginal discharge and labor. Due to the variance of women with different conditions, the pathological mechanism and treatment prescription are not the same in TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine) gynecology. Even for cold headache or pharyngalgia, if the patient is in the period of menstruation, we need to consider whether she is in disorder of menstruation, the quantity or abdominalgia. The prescription should not only release the exterior or disturb the menstruation, but also accord to the therapeutic principle of considering the root and tip in total. If the same disease takes place in another pregnant woman, some herbs hurting the foetus must not be used in principle, but may be used in specific cases. If the ill women newly gave birth, they have much spontaneous perspiration. The doctor should consider they are blood deficiency and need to discharge the lochia completely. So relieving the exterior with pungent and pool need to be improved with other measures. In TCM gynecology, we further need to consider their physical type, old or young, living conditions, working status and so on of the patients.

Cai's gynecology started from 250 years ago, the present existing successor is the 7th, whose name is Xiaosun Cai. Xiaosun was born in 1923, he has dedicated to medical care for more than 60 years. Xiaosun was elected as the national tutor for inheriting the masters' experience in 1992 and included in the medical who's who published by Cambridge Press in 1995. Now he has several students, one of which is Suying Huang, one of the authors. Xiaosun has inherited and accumulated ample experience in his career, he still takes front line jobs now. TCM masters like Xiaosun are high years old, and their experience may be lost some day, which are inherited from their family or ac-

cumulated in their work throughout their lives. These experiences are valuable, and hard to be summarized into knowledge directly now due to the complex TCM principles. Therefore, collecting their medical records and mining their experience is a critical work in the TCM field, which is also a policy of the Chinese government.

As a complete medical system, TCM plays an indispensable role in medical care in China for more than five millenniums. It is a treasure of Chinese culture. Different from the Reductionism thinking mode of Western Medicine (WM), TCM is based on the holistic and systematic ideas. Classification of TCM syndrome should be based on overall analysis of symptoms and signs of human body. Symptoms or signs in different areas of body may contribute to the same kind of syndrome. Even the relationship between disease and syndrome might be many-to-one. Based on the methodology of holism, TCM plays a unique role in health care and disease treatment. Increasing usage of Chinese natural herbal medicine and acupuncture world widely is a good indication of effectiveness of TCM (Yamashita, Tsukayama, & Sugishita, 2002; Honda & Jacobson, 2005; Thomas, Nicholl, & Coleman, 2001).

Medical knowledge and understanding of TCM veteran practitioner is the practical and creative achievement of TCM principles. They are all valuable assets to the TCM system. Knowledge of veteran practitioner on TCM clinical diagnosis and Chinese herbal medicine sometimes cannot be found in literatures. Traditionally, the precious medical knowledge and philosophical view of veteran practitioner is followed by his apprentices (C. Zhou, 2004). The number of juniors who have the honor to learn from a great master is limited. Furthermore, whether the juniors can grasp the soul of the knowledge system of the veteran practitioner totally depends on his personal ability, sometimes even gift. As most of the famous TCM practitioners getting older, preserving and researching into their clinical records, books or publications becomes urgent and important.

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