

Kampo Medicine - Current Research

Effects of Saikokeishito on Pediatric Diseases

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Introduction

The source text for the prescription *saikokeishito* (Chai-hu-gui-zhi-tang) is the "Shang Han Lun" and this formula is used extremely frequently in Japan. The reason lies in the fact, that Japanese physicians have traditionally attached great importance to the "Shang Han Lun" and therefore used this prescription very frequently. This resulted in the accumulation of a wealth of experience pertaining to its use and the achievement of good results obtained by pediatric physicians due to therapeutic developments in this field in recent years treating various diseases. Miyazaki and Mori have focused on this aspect and examined pediatric patients in whom treatment with *saikokeishito* had been effective in the past and studied the kind of diseases for which this prescription is effective. The results published in "Journal of Kampo Medicine", Vol. 53 No.2 under the title "Study of pediatric diseases treated effectively with *saikokeishito*". Below I will discuss the application of this prescription while presenting some of the contents of that treatise.

Research by Miyazaki and Mori

Miyazaki and Mori examined 71 cases (37 boys, 34 girls; age distribution from 1 to 12 years, average age being 7.3 ± 3.6 years) among the pediatric patients in their two clinics treated successfully with Tsumura's *saikokeishito* between January and June 2005. These patients were then classified by acute and chronic conditions and the Kampo findings (excess-deficiency, pulse pattern, tongue pattern, abdominal pattern) summarized and subsequently the diseases, treatment periods, combination therapies with Kampo prescriptions or combination therapies with western medications studied.

Among the acute pediatric diseases these authors

observed, *saikokeishito* had been effective in 34 of the cases. The age distribution here too ranged from 1 to 12 years and classified by sex the patients included 17 boys and 17 girls. Regarding diseases these patients included 19 cases of common cold syndrome, 9 cases of common cold induced gastritis, 3 cases of acute otitis media, 2 cases of pollinosis and one case of urticaria. The treatment period varied from one day to six weeks. Combination therapy with other Kampo prescriptions was administered in 3 cases of common cold syndrome, 1 case of acute otitis media and 2 cases of pollinosis. The other patients were treated with *saikokeishito* alone. Among the patients who received a combination therapy with western medications only 2 out of the 34 patients with acute otitis media received a combination therapy with antibiotics. There were 37 cases that *saikokeishito* was effective against chronic pediatric diseases.

The age distribution ranged from 2 to 12 years and the patients included 20 boys and 17 girls. Classified by diseases there were 10 patients with atopic dermatitis (7 moderately severe and 3 mild cases), 7 cases with bronchial asthma (6 cases of moderate severity and 1 mild case), 5 cases of exudative otitis media, 4 patients with a high susceptibility to catching cold and 3 patients with chronic gastroenteritis. The administration period for *saikokeishito* varied from 2 months to 2 years and 2 months. The 20 cases had received combination therapies with other Kampo medicines. Patients receiving western medical combination therapies included 8 cases of atopic dermatitis and 7 cases of bronchial asthma.

Miyazaki and Mori made Kampo medical diagnoses of all these patients. They were as follows. Regarding excess and deficiency 35 of the patients presented with a pattern intermediate between excess and deficiency, 29 patients with mild deficiency pattern and 7 patients with clear deficiency patterns. Regarding the pulse patterns intermediate between floating and deep, clearly

floating or deep, slightly floating and wiry as well as wiry and somewhat deficient were found in this order. The tongue showed patterns of moist + minimal white fur, slightly dry + minimal white fur, moist + white fur as well as moist + no fur in this order.

Abdominal strength was in 30 patients intermediate, somewhat soft in 36 patients and clearly soft in 5 patients. The incidence of the individual abdominal patterns was in 59.2% of the cases tension, 52.1% presented with fullness, tenderness or discomfort of the hypochondrium, 28.2% with increased resistance and tenderness of the epigastric region and 25.4% with a hard glomus below the heart epigastrium in that order.

Research results

Below follows a breakdown of acute diseases for which *saikokeishito* had been effective.

This prescription is used in many cases of common cold syndrome when a few days after the onset of the condition in addition to a lack of appetite, bitter taste in the mouth and similar symptoms of a half exterior half interior pattern headache, chills and similar symptoms of an exterior pattern are still remaining. Yet, two cases have also be reported, in which the administration for early symptoms like headache, chills and generalized malaise brought about a cure in just one day. This indicates the efficacy of *saikokeishito* for acute pediatric diseases from an early stage on. The authors have in the past already recommended the early administration of Kampo medicine for common cold and now would like to emphasize, that the prescription *saikokeishito* should be added to the selection of applicable formulas.

Reportedly administration of this prescription to the 9 patients with common cold induced gastroenteritis produced quick improvements. The three patients with acute otitis media were already under treatment by otolaryngologists using mainly antibiotics, but the therapeutic progress was

fluctuating and did not yet bring about a cure. In this situation the administration of *saikokeishito* led to improvements in moderately severe and mild cases of acute otitis media. Regarding the two patients with pollinosis a combination of *saikokeishito* and other Kampo medicine (*shokenchuto*) allowed to achieve a skillful control. In these patients the pollinosis was triggered by "common cold", so that it can be considered to be a form of cold and thus the Kampo medicines were administered according to the relevant manifestations, while the use of the medication during asymptomatic periods was considered unnecessary, so that this treatment plan allowed to obtain sufficient therapeutic results by treating only the acute symptoms.

Below follows a breakdown of chronic diseases for which *saikokeishito* had been effective.

The authors classified many atopic dermatoses according to either treatment of the root or local and symptomatic treatment, where treatment of the root represents a causal therapy and local and symptomatic treatment a conservative therapy. *saikokeishito* has a harmonizing action on the nutrient and defense systems and works conditioning for the constitution, so that it is used as a prescription for the treatment of the root. Ephedra preparations for example *epikajutsuto* etc. can be used for local and symptomatic treatment, Scutellaria and Coptis prescriptions for example *orengedokuto* etc. or *byakkokaninjinto* etc. are used as prescriptions for local and symptomatic treatment. The 7 patients with bronchial asthma were classified as moderately severe or mild cases during the chronic stage. Since 6 out of the 7 patients simultaneously presented with patterns representing indications of other Kampo medicines, *saikokeishito* was used in conjunction with those other prescriptions (mainly Ephedra prescriptions, enriching and moistening prescriptions as well as Qi

Regulating prescriptions. This decision has its foundation in the dragover disease theory of their teacher Fujihira. In particular a combination of the here discussed prescription and the qi normalizing prescription *hangekobokuto* often produces favorable therapeutic results.

Regarding pediatric exudative otitis media most cases represent a transitional condition from a not yet fully healed acute otitis media in a state, where there is an accumulation of exudate in the middle ear. Those authors considered this disease to be located in the lesser yang region, because the lesion is at the side of the head. Moreover, based on the accumulation of the exudate, they considered it to be a form of water stagnation. Again, by becoming chronic the condition is considered to deteriorate into a deficiency pattern, so that mainly *Bupleurum* preparations, diuretic prescriptions or *kenchuto* are used. The reported five cases presented with an indication for *Bupleurum* preparations and a mildly deficient pattern, which was associated with spontaneous sweating and dizziness, so that *saikokeishito* was used. Three out of these patients presented with a spleen and stomach deficiency (qi deficiency), so that they reportedly combined the former prescription with *shokenchuto*. A combination with *shokenchuto* is often used in cases of refractory chronic pediatric diseases, probably based on the experiences of those authors.

A high susceptibility to catching cold and chronic gastroenteritis represent what is generally regarded as a pediatric weak constitution. There are a number of reports describing the effectiveness of *saikokeishito* in treating these children. *Bupleurum* preparations are in general frequently used to treat mainly chronic nose diseases like allergic rhinitis, chronic rhinitis, chronic paranasitis and similar conditions that are associated with heat syndrome or water stagnation. The 4 cases described here presented with mild deficiency pattern, spontaneous

sweating, dizziness, fullness, tenderness or discomfort of the hypochondrium (Kyokyo kuman), stuck feeling in pit of stomach, excessive strain of abdominal muscles, so that with a treatment using mainly *saikokeishito* good results were reportedly achieved.

There was one patient with pseudomyopia. This was a 7-year old boy. Visual acuity upon first examination was 0.4 on the right and 0.5 on the left. Miyazaki and Mori observed a mild deficiency pattern, bitter taste in the mouth, glomus below the heart, mild degree of fullness, tenderness or discomfort of the hypochondrium on the right side and excessive strain of abdominal muscles. Based on these findings they administered *saikokeishito*. Seven months later visual acuity had improved on both sides to 0.8 and after 1 year of treatment visual acuity had improved on the right to 1.0 and on the left to 0.9.

Habitual headache, orthostatic dysregulation, bed wetting etc. are interpreted as a form of pediatric autonomic dystonia and these authors reported, that *saikokeishito* provides an effective treatment. Saburo Aimi published in his work "Application of *saikokeishito* to the treatment of autonomic dysregulation syndromes" numerous cases of effective treatment²⁾. Those authors too had success with the application of this prescription based on this concept.

Conclusion

Miyazaki and Mori investigated cases in which *saikokeishito* had been effective and their report shows that this prescription is indicated for a wide range of pediatric diseases, both acute and chronic, and has been found to be an effective formula. Actually, in the field of pediatrics in Japan this prescription is one of the most frequently used formulas. For example, when used for children suffering from repeated upper respiratory tract infections the frequency of infections gradually decreases and through long-term treatment the

children have reportedly slowly become healthy^{3,4}. Otherwise Saburo Aimi reported the application of this prescription for the treatment of epilepsy⁵, Hirose its application in cases of habitual headache⁶ and Mori et al. for orthostatic dysregulation⁷, which shows, that there is a substantial amount of study regarding the use of this prescription in children. The report by Miyazaki and Mori verify the results of past reports and at the same time newly proposed its use during the early stage of common cold. Reading this report makes it clear, that the skillful use of *saikokeishito* in pediatric care is very important.

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