

Kampo Formula Developed in Japan (3)

Saikoseikanto

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Profile

The currently used *saikoseikanto* is a modified formula of the original *saikoseikanto* (*Bupleuri* Radix, *Scutellariae* Radix, *Ginseng* Radix, *Cnidium* Rhizoma, *Gardeniae* Fructus, *Forsythiae* Fructus, *Platycodi* Radix, *Glycyrrhizae* Radix) described in the “Wàikē shūyào Pivot of External Medicine”. The formula modified by Dohaku Mori (1867-1931) is characterized by exercising his ingenuity in adding “*shimotsuto*” and “*orengedokuto*” to the original prescription.

The current constituents are as follows:

Bupleuri Radix 2 g
Scutellariae Radix 1.5 g
Phellodendri Cortex 1.5g
Coptidis Rhizoma 1.5g
Trichosanthis Radix 1.5 g
Glycyrrhizae Radix 1.5 g
Platycodi Radix 1.5 g
Arctii Fructus 1.5 g
Gardeniae Fructus 1.5 g
Rehmanniae Radix 1.5 g
Paeoniae Radix 1.5 g
Cnidii Rhizoma 1.5 g
Angelicae Acutilobae Radix 1.5 g
Menthae Herba 1.5 g
Forsythiae Fructus 1.5 g

[Efficacy] Heat-clearing and relieving toxins/soothing liver and blood activation

[Indications] Heat toxin/liver depression/blood stasis

[Drug actions] *Coptidis* Rhizoma, *Scutellariae* Radix, *Phellodendri* Cortex, and *Gardeniae*

Fructus work to clear heat and expell toxins in *orengedokuto*, while *Angelicae Acutilobae* Radix, *Paeoniae* Radix, *Cnidii* Rhizoma, and *Rehmanniae* Radix work to nourish and cool the blood and activate blood in *shimotsuto*. *Bupleuri* Radix, *Arctii* Fructus, *Forsythia* Capsule, *Platycodi* Radix, *Trichosanthis* Radix, *Menthae* Herba, and *Glycyrrhizae* Radix work to dispel wind and heat, expell toxins and dispel pus. Especially *Arctii* Fructus and *Platycodi* Radix repress throat inflammation.

Clinical application

Mori devised this prescription for improving the scrofulous constitution of children. Scrofulous is a syndrome caused by allergic reactions relating to a tuberculosis infection. Scrofulous was often seen in childhood in those days. The symptoms include swollen lymph glands of the neck and other places, which were accompanied by eczema, keratoconjunctivitis, blepharitis, rhinitis or cheilitis, presenting a peculiar sickly visage. With the decreasing of tuberculosis, such patients decreased and are not seen today. Today, with the benefits of the past experience, the prescription is used for respiratory tract infections, atopic dermatitis, other skin disorders, and neurotic diseases that are recurring in children. Of course, this formula has indications for adults.

1. Recurrent upper respiratory inflammation in children (especially tonsillitis)

This formula is often used for tonsillitis and sinusitis that recur in childhood. A long term administration (more than six months) is needed for these diseases.

Iwama, et al. have released a document on their study in which *saikoseikanto* was administered to

12 child patients (age 2-8, 5 males, 7 females) having tonsillitis recurrently, a half of the patients had tonsils assessed as grade II of Mackenzie's classification with white furs on the cryptae. These patients received the formula (0.1g/kg/day) for about one year when the disease stage marginally passed the acute stage. Although eight patients developed a fever after one month of oral administration, a fever onset did not appear after two months. Ten patients used to suffer from a fever every day during 2-5 months prior to the start of the administration. The onset of fever, however, decreased to only three times a year. Two patients were not responsive to the treatment, one of which had a tonsillectomy¹⁾. There is other report published on this formula by Fujii²⁾.

This formula containing 15 kinds of crude drugs is complex in its constitution and has been created with the concept different from that of "Shāng hán lùn." This suggests that children's susceptibility to infections has a variety of aspects, which elucidation remains to be seen.

2. Atopic dermatitis

Atopic dermatitis is a refractory skin disorder and it is increasing in recent years. *Saikoseikanto* is often used for this disorder occurring in childhood.

Horiguchi, et al. report that when this prescription was used together with topical steroids to 34 patients in total in the groups of atopic dermatitis with mild to serious severity, the combination use was effective in 84% of all patients and it was also effective in each group, whereas when petroleum jelly was combined instead of steroids, this combination use was effective in 64% (this case, many of the patients in the group of mild severity showed marked

effectiveness and many patients of the groups of moderate and serious severity had no effect or became worsened)³⁾.

Mikawa, et al. report that they prescribed *saikoseikanto* for children with atopic dermatitis (15 male and 10 female) who had not obtained sufficient effects even though the causes of the disease were eliminated or by the use of topical ointments to assess the effects of itching. From one week administration, they obtained the impression of "slightly improved" to "very improved" in 80% of the children⁴⁾.

Ito administered *saikoseikanto* for 12 weeks to 25 children aged 2-15 with atopic dermatitis who had not had adequate effects by the application of topical creams. The results showed that after 2 weeks and onwards, improvements were observed with significance differences and more-than-improved were shown in 80% of all patients⁵⁾.

3. Neurosis

Saikoseikanto contains *Bupleuri Radix*, which is a typical drug for soothing the liver, Wild Mint, which has both actions of soothing the liver and dispersing pathogenic factors, *shimotsuto*, which nourishes the liver, and many heat clearing drugs, which cure the pathological conditions of depressed liver qi transforming into fire.

Therefore, this formula is used for neurosis and it is often used especially for neurosis in young children.

References

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