

Characteristics and Analysis of Dominant Diseases in Jing Nationality Medicine

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Abstract

Jing medicine occupies a very prominent position in the traditional culture of the Chinese nation and has unique advantages. Through the literature review of Jing medicine, the author has a deeper understanding of Jing medicine in Guangxi. This paper mainly shows the traditional characteristic medicine culture of the Jing nationality and discusses the characteristic therapy and medication characteristics of Jing nationality medicine, which is conducive to the improvement of people's cognition of Jing nationality medicine and the development and innovation of Jing nationality medicine.

Keywords

Jing Medicine, Unique Advantages, Characteristic Therapy, Medication Characteristics

1. Introduction

The Jing ethnic group, a fascinating minority in Guangxi, is renowned for their settlement on the three islands known as the "Jing Ethnic Group Three Islands": Manwei, Wutou, and Shanxin. The islands are located in the subtropical region, surrounded by water on all sides, making it difficult to travel and access medical ^{*}First Author.

care. In order to survive and thrive, the Jing ethnic group began to develop a preliminary understanding of medicine. With the progress of society and the development of multi-ethnic medicine, the Jing people have repeatedly practiced and summarized their treatment methods, ultimately forming their own medical system, known as Jing Medicine. Faced with unique climatic conditions and abundant natural resources, the Jing people not only engage in marine fisheries based on this foundation but also incorporate the theories of yin and yang, the theory of six organs, the unity of humans and nature, and the unity of humans and society throughout the entire diagnostic and therapeutic process. They have also adopted localized measures, skillfully utilizing marine drugs and coastal medicinal plants, and have developed a set of effective diagnostic and therapeutic methods with a good prognosis, aiming to prevent and treat diseases with remarkable efficacy. Therefore, this study compiles and summarizes exceptional disease characteristics in Jing Medicine, aiming to explore the distinctive features of Jing Medicine and provide valuable information for clinical practice.

2. Advantaged Disease Categories in Jing Medicine

In the realm of disease categories, Jing Medicine exhibits proficiency in specific areas. This article, grounded in an analysis of the geographical environment of the Jing ethnic group and based on a review of literature pertaining to the diseases where Jing Medicine excels, along with relevant research advancements, endeavors to collect and categorize the advantaged disease categories in Jing Medicine.

In the early days, due to the geographical location of the Jing ethnic group surrounded by the sea and the prevalence of a damp and humid climate, coupled with poor sanitation conditions, the island was highly susceptible to outbreaks of gastrointestinal infectious diseases such as bacterial dysentery. This greatly hindered the labor force on the island. With the development of Jing Medicine, a traditional medical system practiced by the Jing ethnic group, a folk prescription for treating bacterial dysentery using the root of *Amaranthus spinosus* as the main ingredient, combined with *Portulaca oleracea* and *Polygonum aviculare* to clear heat and stop bleeding, has gradually become well-known among the Jing people. The repertoire of diseases treated by the Jing people has also expanded over time.

According to the book "Jing Medicine" edited by Xu Kui and Huang Yongguang, the compilation of disease prescriptions includes 17 prescriptions for common cold, 22 prescriptions for cough, 31 prescriptions for stomachache, 22 prescriptions for diarrhea, 3 prescriptions for abdominal pain, 8 prescriptions for rheumatism, 11 prescriptions for hepatitis, 34 prescriptions for external injuries, 23 prescriptions for skin diseases, 10 prescriptions for postpartum diseases, 3 prescriptions for childhood fever, 4 prescriptions for childhood malnutrition, and 7 prescriptions for childhood diarrhea [1]. The prescriptions contained in this book demonstrate the strengths of Jing Medicine in addressing related ailments.

Research indicates that the Jing Ethnic Group Three Islands are located in a subtropical region characterized by abundant rainfall, high heat and humidity, dense vegetation, and susceptibility to the invasion of malarial parasites and snakes. Consequently, local residents have a relatively high incidence of ailments such as abscesses, skin diseases, rheumatism, numbness, gastrointestinal disorders, and gynecological issues. Additionally, due to the harsh living conditions and their involvement in maritime fisheries year-round, there is a higher prevalence of external injuries [2].

Based on the above, 15 disease categories can be classified as advantaged disease categories treated by Jing Medicine, including the common cold, cough, stomach pain, abdominal pain, diarrhea, vomiting, rheumatic bone pain, skin diseases, external injuries, irregular menstruation, dysmenorrhea, postpartum recovery, pediatric malnutrition, pediatric fever, and pediatric diarrhea [3].

3. The Theoretical Framework and Analysis of Jing Medicine's Diagnosis and Treatment Advantaged Disease Categories

In the context of diagnosing and treating advantaged disease categories, Jing Medicine primarily adheres to the principles of Yin-Yang theory. It classifies and treats diseases based on the characteristics of Yin and Yang and their corresponding attributes, complemented by the theory of the six organs and six bowels. Jing Medicine combines these principles with the relationship between humans and nature, as well as humans and society, to conduct comprehensive analyses.

3.1. Yin-Yang Theory

According to "Su Wen: Yin-Yang Ying Xiang Da Lun," it is proposed that water and fire are indicative of Yin and Yang. In other words, any qualities resembling fire, characterized by warmth, brightness, upward movement, outward expansion, agitation, excitement, and dryness, are classified as Yang. Conversely, qualities resembling water, characterized by coldness, darkness, downward movement, inward contraction, stability, inhibition, and moisture, are classified as Yin [4]. In clinical practice, Jing Medicine incorporates the Yin-Yang theory from traditional Chinese medicine, categorizing symptoms into Yang patterns and Yin patterns. Conditions with heat or excessive pathogenic factors are classified as Yang patterns, while those with coldness or deficiency of righteous Qi are categorized as Yin patterns [5]. For these two patterns, Jing Medicine utilizes the opposing and balancing properties of Yin and Yang to treat diseases, employing methods such as treating cold with heat or heat with cold, and clearing pathogenic factors or supplementing righteous Qi.

3.2. Theory of the Six Organs and Six Bowels

In Jing Medicine, it is recognized that the six organs and six bowels constitute

the internal structure of the human body. These include Shen (kidneys), Xin (heart), Fei (lungs), Gan (liver), Pi (spleen), and San (spleen), along with brain and marrow, gallbladder, stomach, intestines, bladder, and essence (uterus). The vital energies of these organs and bowels harmonize with each other, ensuring normal physiological and life processes. Consequently, when there is an ailment in the internal organs, it invariably manifests externally, often reflecting in corresponding body features and orifices, in line with the principle that "where there is an internal ailment, there will be external manifestations."

3.3. Relationship between Humans and Nature

The Jing people believe that there exists a vast spiritual energy between heaven and earth, containing boundless power and that all things in the world possess individual spiritual energies. The concept of "harmony" signifies the flourishing interplay between the spiritual energies of heaven and earth and those of all living entities. Conversely, "disharmony" results in either excess or insufficiency. Disharmony is seen as the root of pathology and the beginning of decline. Therefore, the interplay between "harmony" and "disharmony" in spiritual energies governs the fluctuations in health and disease and determines the severity and prognosis of illnesses [6]. This concept deeply influences the lifestyle of the Jing ethnic group, as they believe that aligning with the four seasons and cultivating the body and mind can achieve a state of harmony between heaven and humanity, leading to health and longevity.

3.4. Relationship between Humans and Society

Jing Medicine holds that humans exist within specific social environments, and their existence cannot be separated from society. As social environments constantly change, they have a significant impact on the physiological functions of the human body, potentially compromising mental and physical health. Hence, there is a close and interdependent relationship between individuals and their societal surroundings.

4. Distinctive Therapies and Understanding of Advantaged Disease Categories in Jing Medicine

Throughout its extensive history of disease prevention and treatment, Jing Medicine has not only incorporated the essence of traditional medical theories and experiences but has also developed unique diagnostic and therapeutic methods with a distinct maritime influence [7]. This continual evolution enriches the knowledge, theories, and systems of this indigenous medical tradition.

In clinical practice, Jing Medicine relies on a diagnostic approach based on observation, auscultation and olfaction, inquiry, and palpation. It combines the patient's primary symptoms and employs various treatment methods, including internal administration of medicines and moxibustion, among others, to address diseases. Therefore, the treatment modalities in Jing Medicine can generally be categorized into two main approaches: pharmaceutical and non-pharmaceutical.

4.1. Pharmaceutical Therapy

4.1.1. Skillful Use of Marine Pharmaceuticals

One of the distinctive aspects of Jing Medicine lies in its adept use of marine pharmaceuticals for treating diseases, unlike traditional treatment approaches. When addressing diseases related to wind pathogens, such as cough, Jing Medicine selects marine-based remedies like sandworm. Sandworm is characterized by its sweet taste, neutral nature, and warming properties. It has the functions of nourishing Yin, reducing fire, clearing the lungs, supplementing deficiency, strengthening the spleen, and invigorating Qi. It is particularly effective in cases of excessive phlegm and persistent cough. For conditions like rheumatic back pain, squid can be used to promote blood circulation and dispel cold and dampness. Sea snakes and catfish tails can also be employed to treat diseases like rheumatoid arthritis and joint pain.

In the case of digestive system disorders, such as stomach pain, mud clam is a suitable choice. According to the "Bencao Jing Shu," clam has a sweet and warm nature that can invigorate Qi, nourish the middle, and harmonize the five viscera, promoting the health of the stomach. Cuttlefish ink, on the other hand, is effective for promoting blood circulation, resolving stasis, and stopping bleeding. It is especially useful in the treatment of gastrointestinal bleeding. Modern research has shown that cuttlefish ink contains active substances such as polysaccharides, proteins, and peptides, which exhibit anti-tumor and antioxidant properties [8].

For stone-related diseases like gallstones and kidney stones, conch, which has a salty taste and neutral nature, can be used to soften and disperse the stones. It has the ability to clear heat and dampness, resulting in significant effects. In cases of schistosomiasis, sea anemone can be employed to dry dampness and kill parasites. Modern pharmacological studies have also indicated that sea anemone polypeptide toxins possess insecticidal, anti-tumor, blood pressure-reducing, antibacterial, analgesic, and neuroinhibitory effects [9] [10] [11] [12].

4.1.2. Utilization of Coastal Medicinal Plants

According to statistics, there are a total of 16 species from 12 families of true mangrove and mangrove-associated plants thriving within the "Jing Ethnic Group Three Islands" region. Research indicates that among these, ten species possess medicinal value. These species are *Acanthus ilicifolius* (mouse thorn), *Cerbera manghas* (*Cerbera manghas*), *Excoecaria agallocha* (blinding tree), *Avicennia marina* (grey mangrove), *Aegiceras corniculatum* (river mangrove), *Sonneratia caseolaris* (crabapple mangrove), *Excoecaria agallocha* (sea poison tree), *Barringtonia racemosa* (powderpuff tree), *Hibiscus tiliaceus* (beach hibiscus), and *Bridelia micrantha* (small-leafed bridelia) [13].

In preliminary investigations of Jing Medicine conducted by Yang Zengyan and others, it was found that in the Jing ethnic region, *Acanthus ilicifolius* is widely used to prepare decoctions or stews for the treatment of conditions such as acute and chronic hepatitis, hepatosplenomegaly, neuralgia, and lumbar muscle strain. It is also used topically for treating scrofula and extended to address skin diseases. The root decoction of *Cerbera manghas* is administered orally and is effective for treating rheumatoid arthritis. White bridelia leaves, when mashed into a paste, can be applied externally to treat abscesses. A decoction of the bark of *Avicennia marina* can be consumed internally to control hematuria, and its seeds are used as a nourishing tonic. A decoction of *Aegiceras corniculatum* is employed for treating diarrhea, spleen deficiency, and kidney deficiency.

Additionally, for pediatric conditions such as childhood diarrhea with abdominal heat, Jing Medicine combines fish scale fern with immature duck eggs and seasonings for consumption. Fish scale fern has a sour and cold taste, with the ability to eliminate dampness, clear heat, and detoxify. For injuries and bruises, treatment may involve the use of *Ficus microcarpa*, longan fruit, sour cane, *Gentiana scabra*, and *Lagerstroemia indica*. In cases of gynecological disorders like menorrhagia, a water decoction containing sprouted ragleaf, *Imperata cylindrica*, and *Achyranthes bidentata* is administered to control bleeding [14].

4.2. Non-Pharmaceutical Therapies

4.2.1. Utilizing Artemisia Argyi to the Fullest

Moxibustion with ai wool is one of the distinctive diagnostic and therapeutic methods of the Jing ethnic group. In the "Bencao Congxin," it is noted that "Artemisia argyi leaves have a bitter and pungent taste. They possess the property of being warm in nature when fresh and hot when dried. With a pure Yang nature, they can restore waning Yang, traverse the twelve meridians, reach the three yin meridians, regulate Qi and blood, expel cold and dampness, and warm the uterus. When used to scorch, they can penetrate all meridians and dispel various ailments" [15]. Similarly, "Bian Que Xin Shu" states, "The foremost method for preserving life is scorching Artemisia argyi." It also advises, "For diseases of seven years, seek the Artemisia argyi of three years" and "When medication falls short and acupuncture doesn't suffice, moxibustion must be applied" [16]. Based on surveys conducted among various folk and village doctors in the Jing ethnic region [17], it was found that the Jing people not only possess the knowledge of making moxa rolls but are also skilled in using moxibustion to treat various ailments. Specifically, they ignite strips of Artemisia argyi leaves and apply them through direct moxibustion. Most residents of the Jing Ethnic Group Three Islands use moxibustion as a preventive healthcare measure. This practice not only helps boost immunity but is also effective in managing chronic diseases. Moxibustion plays a crucial role in the three stages of preventive healthcare-preventing before illness, preventing complications after illness, and preventing recurrence after recovery [18]. Therefore, moxibustion therapy is a commonly used and effective indigenous treatment method among the Jing people. The specific moxibustion techniques employed by Jing Medicine currently include ginger-separated moxibustion, garlic-separated moxibustion, black moxibustion, and burning moxa [19]. For example, ginger-separated moxibustion is used for wind-cold type colds, while garlic-separated moxibustion is preferred for skin conditions. Black moxibustion, also known as compound moxibustion, involves blending moxa wool with appropriate amounts of musk and scorpion powder, resulting in small moxa cones. This method leaves behind black marks after moxibustion, which can be washed off with water, and hence it is referred to as black moxibustion. Burning moxa can be employed to adjust organ function, promote metabolism, and enhance immunity.

4.2.2. The Ingenious Use of Sand Ginger

Diet is the material foundation for sustaining life. As stated in Sun Simiao's "Qianjin Yaofang," "The foundation of preserving life lies in sustenance. Those who do not understand proper nutrition are insufficient to sustain life." Nutrition through diet is equally important as medication. Therefore, dietary therapy is also a commonly used method in Jing Medicine for treating diseases [20]. In their daily diet, the Jing people often use *Sand ginger*. *Sand ginger* is a type of ginger plant with a pungent taste and a cool and mild nature. It has the functions of softening hardness, reducing heat, promoting Qi circulation, and transforming phlegm. It is effective in cases of childhood fever and excessive upward Qi.

4.2.3. The Water Therapy of Qixi (Seventh of July)

On the seventh day of the lunar month, commonly known as the Qigiao Festival, it is believed to be the day when the Cowherd and the Weaver Girl meet. In the Jin Dynasty, Zhou Chu's "Fengtu Ji" recorded the customs of making wishes, seeking wealth, and seeking longevity on the seventh day of the seventh lunar month, making it one of the romantic traditional festivals in China [21]. The water collected on the seventh day of the seventh lunar month, known as Qiqi Water, also reflects the cost-effective nature of traditional Jing medicine [22]. It is believed that this well water can alleviate heat, quench thirst, and treat diseases. For instance, rubbing the body with Qixi water can help reduce body temperature in cases of childhood fever. Mixing a small amount of rice vinegar with Qixi water and taking it orally multiple times can relieve sore throats and toothaches. A mixture of a small amount of table salt and Qixi water can be consumed to alleviate abdominal pain and gastric heat. For the above-mentioned diseases, Western medicine, based on modern science, conducts scientific diagnosis and treatment through etiology and pathophysiology research. However, the Qiqi Water therapy not only has remarkable effects and is well-known, but also holds an immeasurable position in traditional Jing medicine. Therefore, in diagnosis and treatment, the two can complement each other and be organically integrated. Whether it is traditional medicine or Western medicine, the significance of their diagnosis and treatment lies in the expectation of the public's physical health.

4.2.4. Seawater Bath Therapy

The Jing ethnic group has lived along the coast for generations, and the belief in

the sea god has become the core of their religious customs. Therefore, seawater is also considered a natural remedy for illness, with insecticidal and detoxifying properties, as well as the ability to relieve itching and treat skin diseases [23]. The concept of the efficacy of seawater is well-founded, as recorded in the "Compendium of Materia Medica": "Boiling and bathing with seawater can treat wind, rheumatism, scabies, and psoriasis." Modern pharmacological research also indicates that seawater has functions such as inhibiting the growth of bacteria, regulating the immune system, and modulating endocrine functions. Furthermore, the salty taste of seawater corresponds to the kidney meridian, promoting bowel movement and softening hardness. Therefore, taking seawater baths can have therapeutic effects such as relaxing muscles and tendons, promoting meridian circulation, and enhancing immunity.

5. Conclusions

The Jing ethnic group's advantage in medicine lies in the knowledge and practices developed over generations through their long-term experience in diagnosis and treatment. Leveraging their unique natural environment, the Jing people have continuously explored effective remedies against various diseases. This has led to the development of distinctive therapeutic methods centered around marine-based medicinal substances. They have passed down these diagnostic and treatment methods, along with their knowledge of medicinal properties, from generation to generation. These practices have played a crucial role in the survival and development of the Jing ethnic group and reflect the continuity of Jing Medicine's history.

However, in the present day, many of the traditional folk prescriptions and empirical formulas accumulated by Jing Medicine have been forgotten, and numerous medicinal techniques and experiences remain inadequately transmitted and developed. If this trend persists, Jing Medicine may face the risk of disappearing. Therefore, it is imperative to conduct standardized research on the diagnostic and treatment characteristics of Jing Medicine's advantage disease categories, with a focus on its core features.

To preserve and promote Jing Medicine, we should not only inherit its knowledge but also make full use of its distinctive diagnostic and treatment methods to supplement the gaps in the understanding and research of marine-based medicinal substances within traditional Chinese medicine culture. Additionally, efforts should be made to introduce specialized talent into the field of Jing Medicine and enhance training to ensure that the diagnostic and treatment practices of Jing Medicine become more standardized. This will increase the clinical participation rate of Jing Medicine, provide additional diagnostic and treatment perspectives for medical practice, and drive the development and innovation of Jing Medicine while safeguarding the health of the general population.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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