

Treating Meniere's Disease-Like Symptoms With Herbal Remedies

DIGITAL EXCLUSIVE

Two years ago when I met John, now 43, his main complaint was hearing loss of the left ear. He described it as a tinny, low-pitched ringing with a sense of fullness and obstruction that had been happening intermittently for over a year. His tongue is absolutely normal, pink with no cracks, and only possible slight teethmarks or dusty coating. His pulse is generally faint. There is no known cause of onset, damage or deterioration to the inner ear.

Initially I assumed that his problem was a Spleen Qi insufficiency and for a year prescribed him with herbs to drain dampness and fragrantly harmonize the qi to clear the sensorium, using formulas such as Gui Pi Tang, Xiao Yao San, Yin Qiao San, and Gan Lu Xiao Du Dan. He was also taking supplemental antisecretory protein flakes, all to some improvement. In 2018 he had great benefit from the standard Xiao Chai Hu Tang formula and variations of Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang when the ginseng caused him anxiety, but in October he began to have frequent colds, depression, and leukorrhea from the outer canthus of his left eye, especially when acclimating temperature from cold to warmth. His lacrimal duct was flushed several times by his GP but did not prevent the discharge.

After some cranial palpation it seemed that his glandular metabolism on the left side was hypoactive and it was this that was causing the dampness preponderance to affect the eye, as well as a possible ongoing low grade infection of the nasopharynx. I thought that direct application of a desiccating antibiotic formula might be helpful, with herbs like Ban Xia and Huang Lian. Knowing that Fu Zi has a warming and drying yang tonifying effect that can be used to upregulate the thyroid gland, I suggested that he make a nasal insufflation of Sheng Jiang Xie Xin Tang, and to take the powder internally also. After 1 month of regular use, the discharge of the eye has resolved, his energy has noticeably improved, and he claims a resolution of greater than 98% to the hearing of the left ear.

The prescription for Sheng Jiang Xie Xin Tang that was used includes Huang Qin 20g, Huang Lian 20g, Ban Xia 20g, Ren Shen 10g, Gan Jiang 20g, Gan Cao 20g, Bai Shao 20g, and Fu Zi 20g, as a 150g powder to be taken over the course of a week, and 10-15g of it to be boiled with fresh ginger and reduced for administration as a nasal spray.

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