

Clinical Application and Differentiation Diagnosis of *Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang*

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Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang (henceforth shortened as *BZYQT*) is translated in English as "Tonify the Middle and Augment the *Qi* Decoction." It boosts the middle burner and benefits the *qi* by nourishing liver and spleen; and also raises and lifts clear *yang qi*. This formula is used for three major patterns. Let's review three case studies that successfully implemented *BZYQT* in treating each of these types of patterns.

3 Patterns *BZYQT* Can Address

The first pattern *BZYQT* can address is an inability to raise clear *qi* caused by spleen and stomach deficiency. Patients might present with one or more of the following: dizziness, deafness, shortness of breath, pale complexion, low appetite, or loose stool.

The second pattern is *qi* deficiency fever. Patients experience occasional fever that worsens up exertion, spontaneous sweating, with a pale and puffy tongue.

The third pattern is sinking of the middle *qi*. Patients show symptoms that might include spotting, hemorrhoids, irregular uterine bleeding, organ prolapse, and/or a pale tongue with a weak and soft pulse.

Case #1: Nausea and Anxiety

The patient is a 17-year-old Caucasian teenager with a chief complaint of nausea and anxiety for three years. She feels periodic nausea that triggers her anxiety and heart palpitation. She has low appetite and lightheadedness; and an aversion to cold.

At her first visit, she has a very pale complexion and talks in a low voice. Her upper stomach is distended with a hard muscle knot above her umbilicus and her stomach feels cold to the touch. Her tongue is puffy with a pale coating, and her pulse is deep and thin.

The TCM diagnosis in this case is spleen and stomach deficiency. The spleen in Chinese medicine directs clear *qi* upward to moisten the lungs, and gathers chest *qi* to form blood in the heart and nourish orifices. Spleen *qi* deficiency leads to impairment of transportation and transformation, and causes indigestion.

Acupuncture is suggested to her twice a month with the herbal formula *BZYQT*. Acupuncture points included *Ren* 12, *ST* 36, *PC* 6, *ST* 25, *SP* 3, *SP* 10 and *LI* 10, with indirect moxa over each point until the patient feels a warm sensation on each acupuncture point.

Patient recalls that her nausea is gone after her first acupuncture treatment. After one dose of *BZYQT*, she says she got a burst of energy and doesn't feel any lightheadedness or other symptoms for the rest of the day. After taking five doses of the decoction, she reports that all the symptoms

disappeared, and that she feels more energy with socializing and is not concerned if she might suffer an anxiety attack.

Case #2: Skin Itchiness

The patient is a 57-year-old Asian female who has noticed skin itchiness and irritation after showering for about 10 years. The itchiness and irritation normally take 10 to 20 minutes to fade away and she denies any allergies.

She has a difficult time falling asleep and frequently wakes up during the night. She notices her body is easily bruised and her limbs are heavy. Sometimes she feels nausea after meals. She often feels tired. Her tongue is puffy with a thick yellow coating. Her pulse is slippery and rapid. Her TCM diagnosis is spleen *qi* deficiency with damp heat.

The ascending of spleen *qi* brings purifying fluid to the heart and lungs, while the descending of stomach *qi* eliminates waste to the intestines. If the ascension of spleen *qi* is impaired, an overabundance of fluid would damage the middle burner and cause dampness and phlegm accumulation. Congealed phlegm causes internal heat, which can dry body *yin* and general wind. Wind is the backbone of many itchy skin conditions from a TCM perspective.

Jeong, et al. (2019), mention that *BZYQT* suppresses serum immunoglobulin E (IgE) levels and eosinophil infiltration to treat allergic reaction; and that this formula also has antioxidant function on the skin. This patient with skin itchiness immediately noticed that her skin condition improved after taking five doses of *BZYQT*. She has more energy and better focus. Her skin itchiness disappeared after two weeks of taking *BZYQT*.

Case #3: Irregular Uterine Bleeding

The patient is a 31-year-old Asian mother with two children. She has experienced irregular uterine bleeding for more than six weeks. She describes her menstrual blood color to be bright red and blood volume as very heavy. She feels low energy and a lack of attention span. Unfavorable bleeding interferes her daily life and she feels very stressed.

Her complexion is pale and dull. She is underweight. Her extremities are cold. Her pulse is deep and weak.

Her TCM diagnosis is spleen deficiency and *qi* sinking. Spleen *qi* ascends to send *qi* above and plays an important role in holding blood in the vessels. Impairment of spleen function leads to *qi* sinking and manifests as abnormal uterine bleeding, hemorrhoids and organ prolapse.

For a few months, this patient is prescribed two doses of *BZYQT* every day and acupuncture twice a month. Acupuncture points are PC 6, ST 36, Ren 12, Ren 4, ST 25, SP 15, SP 6, *Yintang*, and *Du* 20. She stops bleeding after her third visit of acupuncture. Her energy level has increased since she started this formula and she feels more relaxed.

Resources

- Maciocia G. *The Foundations of Chinese Medicine. A Comprehensive Text for Acupuncture and Herbalists, 2nd Edition*. Elsevier, 2005.
- Jeong M, Kim Y, Kim A, et al. The herbal drug, Bu-Zhong-Yi-Qi-Tang, for treatment of atopic dermatitis. Protocol for a systematic review. *Medicine*, 2019 Jan;98(1):e13938.
- Scheid V, Bensky D, Ellis A, Barolet R. *Chinese Herbal Medicine Formulas & Strategies. 2nd Edition*. USA: Eastland Press, 2009.

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