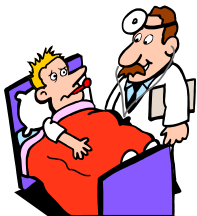


Prevention of Common Cold and Flu in Chinese Medicine April 2006

Every year we hope that we will have enough flu vaccine. It seems that supply simply cannot meet demand. Many people have asked me what people did in the past to prevent flu before there was a vaccination.

Before I answer this question, I will share some of the basic concepts of the Common cold, or Influenza.

In the western medicine, the Common Cold (it is also called Acute Coryza) was defined as an acute, usually febrile, viral infection of the respiratory tract symptom can include inflammation in any or all airways including the nose, paranasal sinuses, throat, larynx, and often the trachea tract and bronchi. There are many viruses can cause the common cold including those in the picorna influenza, parainfluenza, respiratory syncytical, corona and adenovirus groups. Most colds (30-50%) are caused by one of over 100 serotypes of the rhinovirus group and they can change and mutate their antigen every year. Most but not all of the flu vaccines include common predicted virus. That is why some people still can catch colds after flu vaccine immunization. Unfortunately, there is no efficient treatment for treat flu. Prevention is the most important measurement. Such as frequently washing hands and avoiding too much person to person contacts during the flu season.



Traditional Chinese Medicine classifies the common cold differently from Western Medicine. Common colds is differentiated by different pattern such as wind cold, wind heat and wind damp depending on how our to react the pathogen invasion. Then practitioners will treat the flu by formulizing herbal formula and acupuncture points selection according to the pattern of each individual. For instant, if a person has a common cold and shows the signs of fever, sore throat, body ache, a rapid and superficial pulse, a thin yellow or thin white tongue coating, the patient may have the patter of wind heat. Then the treatment will be the herbal formula for wind heat (clear heat and expel pathogen).



However, for hundred of years in ancient China, herbs have been used for defending human life without today's technology. It was discovered that many herbs can inhibit various types of virus. The most commonly used herb drink to eliminate common cold and flu is Ban Lan Gen (*Isatidis Tinctoria Radix*) and Dan Qin ye (*Isatis Tinctoria Folium*). Some times the herbal drink combines with anti-bacteria herbs for fighting secondary bacteria infection after initial virus infection.

I remember my growing up in China and in middle school; my school would provide fresh-boiled herbal drinks daily during flu season. It was mandatory to drink it in order to prevent more students from getting sick.

Nowadays, the traditional herb drink is every family's must-have for prevention and treatment of the flu for the whole family including children and elderly.

How to use it: when you begin having symptoms, take 1-2 small bags (15-20g) for adult, then 10 gram each time, 3 times per day, Just use warm water to dissolve it before intake. If only for prevention, you can take 1-2 small bags 1-2 dosage only, or take dosages depending on how do you feel. For older children can use half of an adult dosage. For young children, use one third of an adult dosage.

Those herbs are safe



For more information about Ban Lan Gen Herbal Drink for flu prevention, please contact Dr. Hu at the Traditional Chinese Medicine Clinic. (619) 226-6506