Quell the itch

Six years ago, Mary, 32, was stricken with a bad case of eczema and hives.
She even stopped eating mutton and seafood, hoping the itch would go away—but to no avail.
Finally, she started seeking treatment with Dr Tony Tang of Tangs Clinical Centre TCM.
Atopic dermatitis, also known as eczema and atopic eczema, is an immune system related skin condition that is common in children but may also affect adults, explains Dr Tang.
The disease usually occurs in people who have an “atopic tendency”—they may develop any or all of three closely linked conditions such as atopic dermatitis, asthma and hay fever (allergic rhinitis).
Eczema in adults can be a serious condition that may result in chronic red, thick lesions with severe itchiness.

Tangs Clinical Centre TCM aims to relieve the discomfort caused by autoimmune skin problems such as eczema in a natural and safe way.
Initially, Mary’s skin condition worsened when she started the herbal treatment, but each time her eczema flared up, the symptoms would seem less intense than the one before.
After seven months of treatment at Tangs Clinical Centre TCM, Mary’s itchiness started diminishing.
After 10 months of continued treatment, she felt that her skin condition improved and appeared to normalise.
Since then, Mary’s skin condition has seen improvement. The discomfort caused by her hives is gradually disappearing and her eczema is now more manageable.

Summary of Therapies for Chronic Eczema

Immunosuppressive drugs are the mainstay conventional therapy for eczema. Topically applied corticosteroids have been the first-line treatment since the late 1950s. While providing excellent short-term relief, prolonged usage of corticosteroid may have adverse side effects, including thinning of the skin, worsening of a pre-existing skin infection, changes in skin colour, acne and rosacea. Two recently approved TCI creams (topical calcineurin inhibitors) contain immunosuppressant agents which may result in side effects such as a burning sensation on the skin. Antibiotics are prescribed should there be bacterial infection. Systemic immunosuppressants, like phototherapy (PUBA, UVB), prednisolone, MTX, ciclosporin and azathioprine are used to improve treatment efficacy. However, it may also cause kidney and liver toxicity to develop. TCM formulas to suppress the immune system to manage symptoms of eczema commonly include herbs such as honeysuckle (金银花[JinYinHua]), Poria, licorice (甘草[ChuanXiao]), Gynura aconitifolia (化皮草[化皮草]) and Tripherygium, dittany bark (白鲜皮[Dittany]).

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