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In Tang's good hands

Simon (not his real name) was 76 when he developed severe itching on both his hands and legs.

Prior to that, he was in the pink of health and had no family history of atopic disorder.

The first three months, he tried home remedies such as applying honeysuckle and traditional Chinese medicine to no avail. After that, he took oral steroids (corticosteroid), which gradually reduced the rash during the three-month treatment period.

However, the itching returned. This time, the corticosteroids could not control the peeling and itching skin on his hands and feet (Figure 1).

His family took him to Tangs Clinical Centre TCM, helmed by Dr Tony Tang. Dr Tang has identified some very useful active plant compounds — such as Radix Astragali, Radix Salviae Miltiorrhizae, Ramulus Cinnamomi and Radix Codonopsis Pilosula — and formulated them into a unique herbal

formula to help the body to achieve homeostasis, supporting the immune system and relieving the symptoms in a natural and safe way.

When Dr Tang's herbal concoction is first introduced to a patient's body, the patient will experience severe withdrawal symptoms, where the itchy skin condition worsens.

As he continues with the herbal therapy, it will gradually subside but reoccurrence of minor rebounds are expected.

The fluctuations will continue its pattern until the rash completely clears where skin lesions will eventually fall off and the itching will reduce.

Figures 2 to 6 show the 10-month progress of Simon's itchy skin condition. His hands are 95 per cent cleared, while his feet have been completely smoothed, returning to their normal skin tone.

It can affect anyone

Although commonly developed earlier in life, this itchy skin condition



Simon underwent a 10-month treatment at Tangs Clinical Centre TCM for his itchy skin condition.

PHOTOS: Tangs Clinical Centre TCM

can develop at any age and can affect any gender.

The elderly may have more sensitive skin and are more susceptible to

illnesses. This may also be due to old age, especially those with a weaker immune system and who have lower resistance against harmful diseases.

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Summary of Therapies for Chronic Eczema



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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) [Lonicera], licorice (甘草) [Glycyrrhiza], threewingnut (雷公藤) [Triperygium], dittany bark (白鲜皮) [Dictamnus],

light yellow sophora root (苦参) [Sophora], cicada slough (蝉蜕) [Cryptotympana], selfheal (夏枯草) [Prunella] etc.

Dr. Tony Tang and his TCM clinic are currently applying a counter reversal application towards the cousins of the two conventional western and eastern immunosuppressive treatment. The clinic uses herbal ingredients such as Astragalus, Paeonia, Codonopsis, Saposhnikova etc. to help maintain the immune system at a balanced, normal and healthy stage. Although Eczema is not a life threatening disease, the symptoms associated with the condition require some time to manage. The right choice of treatment therapy is integral and a doctor should be consulted. In any recommended treatment, the patient's safety should be the top priority.

Clinical Research Publication:

1. Review of Treatment for Psoriasis, a Botanical Formula. Journal of Dermatology. 2005; 32(12): 940-945
2. A herbal medicine for psoriasis. European Journal of Dermatology. 2008; 18(3): 352-353
3. Atopic Dermatitis. Complementary Therapy. 2009;2(5):58-62
4. A 14-year-old girl with multiple, firm, dome-shaped eroded nodules and itching on the limbs. Dermatologic Therapy. 2010; 23(3): 299-301
5. A Nonimmunosuppressant Approach on Asia Psoriasis Subjects: 5-Year Followup and 11-Year Data Analysis. Dermatology Research and Practice. vol. 2012, Article ID 304172, 11 pages, 2012. doi: 10.1155/2012/304172
6. Review of the regulations for clinical research in herbal medicines in USA. Chin J Integr Med. 2014 Dec; 20(12): 883-93

Consultation Hours: 11am - 5pm, Tuesday - Saturday



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