

## TIAN JIU- Needle Free Acupuncture for Chronic Health Issues

Tianjiu, also called “Fujiu” stands for “Applying Moxibustion (heat treatment) in Summer” and is a replacement for needling acupuncture. Tianjiu is a non-invasive therapy in which a processed Chinese herbal paste is placed on a sticky patch and then applied to certain acupuncture points on the human body. It is designed to open the pores and promote energy and blood circulation, thus harmonising the visceral aspect of the body through the channel system.

Tianjiu was first recorded in 1695 in the classic Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) text *General Medicine According To Master Zhang*, and is the first known method for the treatment for a recurring illness. TCM practitioners at that time used Tianjiu to treat asthma and chronic bronchitis. In some texts it is recorded as “Dong Bing Xia Zhi”, which means “treating winter diseases in summer”, because the majority of respiratory diseases, including asthma, are considered “winter” diseases in TCM as they are more likely to manifest in acute attacks during the cold “winter” months.

The application of a targeted herbal plaster to the skin surface acts in the same way as a vaccination, which supplies antihistamine and anti-inflammatory substances which provide protection from further outbreaks of the disease. The concept behind Tianjiu in Chinese Medicine is to provide the patient with positive heat energy. In the case of respiratory diseases and associated allergies like Rhinitis, the application of the herbal paste occurs at a specific time in summer or winter. At other times of the year, if the patient is experiencing acute attacks, needle acupuncture is used to relieve the acute symptoms and herbal concoctions taken for oral administration to offer further relief. When the appropriate time for Tianjiu occurs, the herbal paste is applied to resolve the underlying cause of the illness. This has proved extremely effective in the treatment of asthma.

After hundreds of years of practice of Tianjiu in TCM, a great wealth of experience has accumulated. In recent decades numerous scientific studies have shown the efficacy of Tianjiu in alleviating pain, and improving allergy-related symptoms. Common application of Tianjiu now includes its use in allergies and chronic health conditions including:

Rhinitis

Asthma

Hay Fever

Persistent Coughing

Irritable Bowel Syndrome

Eczema

Period Pain (Primary Dysmenorrhea)

Weakened Immune Response

Despite the more gentle process of applying herbal patches to the skin, Tianjiu can fully heal these conditions and restore the body to balance. Its positive effects may be due to the dual impact of acupoint stimulation and the medicinal action of the herbs in the plaster. By causing redness, (which is regarded as a sign of heat), congestion, or even a blister at the treatment site, which subsequently heals completely, Tianjiu can strengthen the body, rebalance the immune system and reduce the symptoms associated with allergies and pain.

In the population of people with respiratory conditions, those with biomarkers for abnormal IgE levels and Eos levels, and impaired or reduced pulmonary function, clinical trials using Tianjiu as the treatment protocol in an Asthma Control Test, showed a significant positive variation between the treatment group and the control group.

In addition, to being a very safe form of non-invasive treatment, due to the method of application, Tianjiu is particularly valuable for paediatric conditions. This is because it does not utilise drugs and therefore does not interfere with the body's natural internal environment and the child's development. It is also effective, low cost and easy to perform.

A typical course of Tianjiu consists of three sessions, nine days apart. That particularly in the case of respiratory diseases, there is a particular calculation, based on the lunar calendar, which determines when Tianjiu will be performed. This will occur on a particular day in the hottest part of summer or the coldest time of winter. For other diseases including period pain, Irritable Bowel Syndrome and other chronic health issues, there is no fixed day or season prescribed.

In preparation for the treatment, a few Chinese herbs are finely ground and mixed with ginger juice to make a paste. The paste is then applied to clean skin and covered with a plaster. The plaster is left on for 4 – 6 hours in the case of adults, and 1 – 2 hours in the case of children. The plaster is then removed and if stinging, redness, or a blister is present, the goal of Tianjiu for that year has been achieved. However, if no reaction occurs, then a second and possibly third treatment will be applied, until a blister appears.

Should no change occur over three sessions of Tianjiu, this may be the result of a weak constitution, or the severity and duration of the disease. It may then be necessary to repeat the Tianjiu treatment over the following two or three years.