Progress of Experimental Studies on Prescriptions Designed by Zhang Zhongjing

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13 papers on experimental studies on Zhang Zhongjing’s prescriptions were published between 1955 and 1960, 13 from 1961-66, 10 from 1972-75, 17 from 1976-1980, 59 from 1981-85 and 103 in the past 5 years. 60 prescriptions have mainly been studied, 42 from the Treatise on Febrile Diseases and 22 from the Synopsis of Prescriptions from the Golden Chamber. Much information is given on the antipyretic, anti-inflammatory, anti-asthmatic, anti-bacterial, antiviral and immune enhancing effects of various prescriptions. A comparison of the Chengqi Tang group of prescriptions, for example, shows that Da Chengqi Tang most strongly stimulates intestinal peristalsis, with Tiaowei Chengqi Tang next and Xiao Chengqi Tang least. Da Huang (Rhizoma Rhei), Zhi Ke (Fructus Citri seu Ponciri) and Hou Po (Cortex Magnoliae Officinalis) mainly excite the large intestine and Mang Xiao (Mirabilitum) the small intestine. An analysis of Guizhi Tang showed that each ingredient had a separate effect, and that it’s efficacy on inhibiting the influenza virus was reduced if any ingredient was removed. Detailed studies further show both synergistic and antagonistic relationships between the ingredients of Guizhi Tang in treating different diseases.

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