

Analysis of the Basic Principles and Methods of Integrated Traditional Chinese and Western Medicine

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Abstract Integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine is an interdisciplinary field of Chinese and Western medicine, and it is also a work policy of Chinese medical and health industry. Integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine originated from clinical practice and gradually evolved into an academic system with clear development goals and unique methodology. Integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine is of great significance in today's medical care, utilizing the advantages of both traditional Chinese and Western medicine to provide more comprehensive and personalized medical services. Traditional Chinese medicine emphasizes a holistic approach and dialectical treatment, while Western medicine focuses mainly on scientific methods and drug treatment. Integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine can comprehensively apply these two methods to diagnose and treat diseases more accurately and improve treatment effectiveness. This study aims to explore the basic principles and methods of integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine, combined with relevant diagnosis and treatment cases, in order to provide direction for the development of integrated Chinese and Western medicine.

Keywords Traditional Chinese and Western medicine; Basic principle; Diagnosis and treatment methods; Application area

Traditional Chinese medicine is a form of traditional medicine, while Western medicine is a modern medical system developed on the basis of traditional medicine and the advancements in biological sciences in the Western world. Integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine is the combination of traditional Chinese medicine knowledge and methods with Western medicine knowledge and methods. On the basis of improving clinical efficacy, it clarifies the mechanism and obtains new medical knowledge. The significance and impact of integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine are multifaceted. It fully leverages the unique advantages of both traditional Chinese medicine and Western medicine, providing more comprehensive and personalized medical services to patients. Integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine also plays a crucial role in disease prevention. Traditional Chinese medicine emphasizes the adjustment of constitution and health preservation, using traditional Chinese medicine and lifestyle methods to prevent the occurrence of diseases. On the other hand, Western medicine employs measures such as vaccination and health examinations for disease prevention. Combining the preventive concepts and methods of Chinese and Western medicine can contribute to a more comprehensive protection of people's health (Cao et al., 2022).

Integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine also has a significant impact on the management and rehabilitation of chronic diseases. Chronic diseases often require long-term management and rehabilitation, and the complementary nature of traditional Chinese medicine's differential diagnosis and treatment and Western medicine's pharmacological treatments can provide a more comprehensive and personalized treatment approach. This helps patients alleviate symptoms, improve their quality of life, and contribute to effective chronic disease management. The promotion and popularization of integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine can also foster communication and collaboration between different medical cultures, thereby advancing the development of medical disciplines. Through the sharing of experiences and knowledge, it is possible to enhance the professional competence of healthcare professionals and continuously optimize the treatment methods of integrative traditional Chinese and Western medicine (Gu et al., 2022).

This study will elaborate on the basic principles and methods of integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine. It will also discuss the applications of integrative medicine in chronic diseases, tumors, cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases, and other areas, in order to achieve better development of integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine in the future, highlighting its increasingly crucial role in the field of medicine, and bring more benefits to human health.

1 The Basic Principles of Integrated Traditional Chinese and Western Medicine

1.1 Comprehensive principle

The comprehensive principle is one of the fundamental principles in integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine, emphasizing the integrated application of the theories and techniques of both traditional Chinese medicine and Western medicine (Figure 1). Traditional Chinese medicine and Western medicine each possess unique theoretical systems and treatment methods. The purpose of the comprehensive principle is to complement the advantages of both medical traditions, achieving a more comprehensive and integrated therapeutic effect (Xu et al., 2022).



Figure 1 Integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine

Under the guidance of the comprehensive principle, doctors will, based on the specific condition of the patient, comprehensively apply diagnostic techniques and treatment methods from both traditional Chinese medicine and Western medicine. For example, in terms of diagnosis, doctors can combine traditional Chinese methods such as observation, inquiry, listening, and pulse diagnosis, along with Western techniques such as laboratory tests and imaging examinations, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the patient's condition. In terms of treatment, doctors can integrate traditional Chinese medicine treatments like herbal medicine and acupuncture, as well as Western medicine approaches such as drug therapy and surgery, to develop personalized treatment plans. The core of the comprehensive principle lies in the integrated application of the strengths of both Chinese and Western medicine, aiming to achieve better treatment outcomes.

Traditional Chinese medicine emphasizes holistic observation, syndrome differentiation, and treatment, emphasizing the balance and regulation of the body's yin-yang equilibrium. In contrast, Western medicine focuses on the mechanisms of diseases and pathological changes, emphasizing precise diagnosis and pharmaceutical treatment. By comprehensively applying the theories and techniques of integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine, a more comprehensive understanding of the essence and development process of diseases can be achieved. This, in turn, allows for the formulation of more precise and personalized treatment plans. The application of the comprehensive principle is highly versatile, covering areas such as the treatment and management of chronic diseases, comprehensive treatment of gynecological conditions, cancer treatment, and more. Guided by the comprehensive principle, doctors can better address complex and diverse medical situations, providing more comprehensive and effective treatment plans, ultimately leading to improved health outcomes for patients.

1.2 Personalized principle

The personalized principle is one of the fundamental principles in integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine. It emphasizes the development of personalized treatment plans based on the patient's condition and characteristics. Each person's physical condition, pathological changes, and responses to treatment are unique. Therefore, the personalized principle requires doctors to conduct a comprehensive assessment based on the specific situation of the patient and formulate targeted treatment plans. The personalized principle holds significant importance in integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine.

Traditional Chinese medicine emphasizes syndrome differentiation and treatment, which involves analyzing the patient's condition comprehensively, including symptoms, pulse, tongue appearance, etc., to determine the appropriate treatment based on the overall diagnosis. Through this approach, traditional Chinese medicine can tailor treatment plans to the individual, taking into account factors such as the patient's constitution, etiology, and pathological changes. In contrast, Western medicine places a strong emphasis on precise diagnosis and treatment, intervening in diseases based on scientific examinations and pharmaceutical interventions. Guided by the principle of personalization, doctors integrate diagnostic techniques and treatment methods from both traditional Chinese and Western medicine according to the patient's condition and characteristics. For instance, in the diagnosis, doctors consider symptoms, physical signs, and laboratory test results. They combine traditional Chinese medicine's syndrome differentiation and treatment methods to determine the patient's causes and pathological mechanisms. In terms of treatment, doctors, guided by the patient's specific condition, integrate traditional Chinese medicine treatments such as herbal medicine and acupuncture, as well as Western medicine approaches like drug therapy and surgery, to formulate personalized treatment plans (Fu et al., 2021).

The application of the personalized principle makes treatments more precise and targeted, better meeting the needs and expectations of patients. By tailoring treatments based on the specific conditions of each patient, it is possible to maximize treatment effectiveness and minimize unnecessary side effects and risks.

1.3 Temporospatial principle

The temporospatial principle is a fundamental principle in integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine, emphasizing the formulation of adaptable treatment plans based on different temporal and spatial conditions and environmental factors. The health and disease states of the human body are influenced by time and space, with different seasons, geographical environments, and lifestyle habits impacting the body. Therefore, the temporospatial principle requires doctors to comprehensively consider these factors in order to develop more adaptive treatment plans.

Under the guidance of the temporospatial principle, doctors take into account the temporal and spatial conditions, as well as the patient's living environment and habits. For example, in traditional Chinese medicine, seasons and climate changes are considered to have a significant impact on human health. According to traditional Chinese medicine theory, different seasons and climate conditions can lead to an imbalance of yin and yang in the body, thereby causing certain diseases. Therefore, doctors adjust recommendations for the patient's diet, daily routine, and exercise based on seasonal changes to promote balance and recovery. The temporospatial principle is also reflected in the medication aspect of integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine. The properties and efficacy of Chinese herbal medicine are influenced by factors such as the growth environment and harvest time. Therefore, doctors choose suitable herbs and doses based on the patient's specific situation. Similarly, the use of Western medicine is also personalized and adjusted according to the patient's characteristics and condition.

The temporospatial principle is one of the fundamental principles in integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine. It requires doctors to develop adaptable treatment plans based on different temporal and spatial conditions and environmental factors. By considering the patient's temporospatial environment and personal characteristics, doctors can formulate more specific and targeted treatment strategies, aiming to achieve better treatment outcomes. The application of the temporospatial principle makes integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine more tailored to the needs of patients, providing personalized medical services.

2 The Basic Methods of Integrated Traditional Chinese and Western Medicine

2.1 Comprehensive diagnostic approach in integrative Chinese and Western medicine

The comprehensive diagnostic approach in integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine combines diagnostic methods from traditional Chinese medicine and Western medicine to obtain more comprehensive and accurate diagnostic results. This approach maximizes the strengths of both Chinese and Western medicine, promoting accurate disease diagnosis and personalized treatment. This comprehensive diagnostic approach is a core aspect of the practice of integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine, enhancing the accuracy and effectiveness of disease diagnosis and treatment.

Doctors will inquire in detail about the patient's medical history, including the onset of the disease, the progression of symptoms, relevant lifestyle habits, and family history, among other factors. This helps doctors understand the background of the illness and potential triggers. A comprehensive physical examination is conducted, including observing the skin, checking the pulse, and examining the tongue coating and tongue quality. Traditional Chinese medicine's diagnostic methods, such as tongue diagnosis and pulse examination, can provide additional diagnostic information. Doctors may conduct various laboratory tests such as blood tests, urine tests, and imaging examinations based on the patient's condition (Figure 2). These test results can provide biochemical and structural information about the disease, assisting in the diagnostic process. Doctors, using traditional Chinese medicine's syndrome differentiation and treatment methods, observe the patient's symptoms, pulse, tongue coating, etc., diagnose the disease from the perspective of traditional Chinese medicine, and formulate corresponding treatment plans. Doctors, leveraging Western medicine's pathological knowledge, analyze the mechanisms of lesions and the development process of the disease. By analyzing the results of laboratory and imaging examinations, doctors can gain a deeper understanding of the pathological changes of the disease. Modern imaging techniques, such as X-rays and CT scans, are utilized to observe the structure and tissue changes of the disease. These technologies can provide information about the location and assessment of the disease (Zhang et al., 2023).



Figure 2 Imaging examination

2.2 Comprehensive treatment approach in integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine

The comprehensive treatment approach in integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine combines treatment methods from traditional Chinese medicine and Western medicine to achieve a more comprehensive, personalized, and effective therapeutic outcome. This approach fully leverages the strengths of both Chinese and Western medicine, integrating traditional Chinese medicine's syndrome differentiation and treatment with Western medicine's pathological analysis and pharmaceutical treatments. It aims to provide more comprehensive and targeted treatment plans.

Traditional Chinese medicine is one of the core therapeutic methods in traditional Chinese medicine. According to the theory of syndrome differentiation and treatment in traditional Chinese medicine, doctors choose appropriate Chinese herbal formulas for treatment based on the patient's condition and constitutional characteristics. Chinese herbal medicine can play a therapeutic role by adjusting the balance of yin and yang and improving the circulation of qi and blood. Western medicine is an integral part of modern medicine. Doctors select suitable Western

medications for treatment based on the etiology and mechanisms of the disease. Western medications can intervene in physiological and biochemical processes, inhibiting the progression of the disease and alleviating symptoms. Acupuncture is one of the distinctive therapies in Chinese medicine, regulating the circulation of qi and blood and the functional status of the body by stimulating specific acupuncture points. In integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine, doctors may integrate acupuncture therapy to enhance treatment effectiveness. Physical therapy, including physiotherapy, massage, cupping, etc. (Figure 3), stimulates human tissues through physical means, promoting blood circulation, relieving pain, and enhancing immune function, among other benefits (Yu et al., 2023).



Figure 3 Cupping

2.3 Combined use of Chinese and Western medicine in medication

The combined use of Chinese and Western medicine in medication refers to the rational selection and application of Chinese herbal medicine and Western pharmaceuticals in integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine treatment, to enhance treatment effectiveness and reduce the risk of adverse reactions, including personalized treatment, syndrome differentiation and treatment, synergistic effects, appropriate dosage reduction, monitoring and adjustment, and professional guidance. The goal is to comprehensively leverage the advantages of both Chinese herbal medicine and Western pharmaceuticals, improve treatment outcomes, minimize the risk of adverse reactions, and facilitate the maximum recovery and health of patients.

Based on factors such as the patient's condition, constitution, pathological characteristics, and drug metabolism, individualized treatment plans are formulated. Treatment in integrated Chinese and Western medicine should be patient-centered, emphasizing individual differences and adjusting drug selection and dosage based on the patient's specific circumstances. The theory of syndrome differentiation and treatment in traditional Chinese medicine emphasizes tailoring treatment according to individual conditions and constitutional characteristics. In the combined treatment of Chinese and Western medicine, the theory of syndrome differentiation and treatment in traditional Chinese medicine should be applied to determine the diagnostic type and treatment principles, selecting corresponding Chinese and Western medicines. The combined treatment of Chinese and Western medicine can enhance treatment effectiveness through the synergistic effects of Chinese herbal medicine and Western pharmaceuticals. The selection and combination of Chinese and Western medicines should be based on their pharmacological characteristics and mechanisms of action, ensuring complementary and synergistic effects. In combined treatment, the dosage of drugs should be appropriately reduced based on the pharmacological effects and the risk of adverse reactions, reducing the incidence of adverse reactions while ensuring treatment effectiveness. In the treatment of integrated Chinese and Western medicine, it is necessary to closely monitor the efficacy and adverse reactions of patients. Based on monitoring results, timely adjustments to drug dosage and combinations should be made to ensure the safety and maximize the effectiveness of treatment. Combined treatment should be guided and supervised by qualified professionals. Doctors should possess relevant knowledge and clinical experience in integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine, conduct comprehensive

assessments of patient conditions, develop reasonable treatment plans, and regularly conduct follow-ups and evaluations (Zhang et al., 2021).

3 Applications of Integrated Traditional Chinese and Western Medicine

3.1 Treatment and management of chronic diseases

Chronic diseases refer to illnesses with a prolonged and gradual progression, such as hypertension, diabetes, and heart disease. The integrated treatment of chronic diseases with traditional Chinese and Western medicine can leverage the advantages of both traditional Chinese medicine and Western medicine, enhancing treatment effectiveness and improving the quality of life.

Traditional Chinese medicine emphasizes syndrome differentiation and treatment. Based on the patient's specific condition, constitution, and etiology, traditional Chinese medicine utilizes methods such as acupuncture, herbal medicine, and massage to adjust the balance of Yin and Yang, promote the circulation of Qi and blood, and improve symptoms. For example, in the case of hypertension, traditional Chinese medicine may use methods to regulate liver Yang and promote liver Qi circulation to lower blood pressure. Western medicine often uses medications to control symptoms and progression of chronic diseases. For instance, in the treatment of diabetes, Western medicine may use oral antidiabetic drugs or insulin to control blood glucose levels (Wang and Zhang, 2022) (Figure 4). Medication therapy must be conducted under the guidance of a doctor, and patients need to take their medications on time and undergo regular check-ups. The treatment of chronic diseases also requires lifestyle adjustments by the patients. Traditional Chinese medicine emphasizes health preservation, including a balanced diet, moderate exercise, maintaining a healthy weight, and regular sleep patterns. Western medicine also emphasizes a healthy lifestyle, such as quitting smoking, limiting alcohol consumption, managing stress, and ensuring good sleep quality. Traditional Chinese medicine can integrate dietary therapy to adjust the patient's nutritional intake to meet the body's needs. Western medicine can also provide nutritional support, such as offering special dietary formulations or nutritional supplements to supplement the necessary nutrients for the body.



Figure 4 Insulin injection

The treatment of chronic diseases with a combination of traditional Chinese and Western medicine requires a professional doctor to formulate personalized treatment plans based on the specific conditions of the patient. Patients should actively cooperate with the doctor's treatment plan and undergo regular check-ups and follow-ups as scheduled. At the same time, patients should maintain a positive attitude.

3.2 Comprehensive treatment of tumor diseases

Tumor diseases constitute a category of abnormal tissue collections formed by the growth and spread of abnormal cells. The integrated treatment of tumors with traditional Chinese and Western medicine takes into account individual differences among patients, including pathological types, staging, age, constitution, and other factors, to formulate personalized treatment plans aimed at maximizing treatment effectiveness.

Integrating conventional Western medical treatments such as surgery, radiotherapy, and chemotherapy with traditional Chinese medicine approaches like herbal medicine, acupuncture, and massage aims to alleviate side effects, boost immunity, and enhance patient tolerance. Chinese medicine possesses unique advantages in alleviating discomfort caused by radiotherapy and chemotherapy, as well as promoting overall recovery. For instance, using herbal medicine for spleen and stomach regulation, nutritional supplementation, and improvement of physical strength. Chinese medicine emphasizes holistic immune regulation, which can enhance the activity of the immune system through methods like herbal medicine and acupuncture, helping to prevent cancer cell recurrence and spread. Integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine can also play a role in early screening and prevention of tumors by improving individual resistance through traditional Chinese medicine's constitutional identification and regulation, reducing the risk of illness. Chinese medicine methods can be used to alleviate symptoms in cancer patients, such as pain, nausea, vomiting, fatigue, improving the quality of life. Comprehensive treatment requires long-term follow-up, timely adjustment of treatment plans based on the patient's condition and response to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of the treatment.

In the comprehensive treatment of tumor diseases, integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine emphasizes personalized treatment, the comprehensive use of various therapeutic methods, improvement of immune function, and enhancement of quality of life. These principles and methods are aimed at better addressing the needs of cancer patients, improving treatment effectiveness, and enhancing overall quality of life.

3.3 Prevention and treatment of cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases

Cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases refer to a class of illnesses, including heart diseases, cerebrovascular diseases, and peripheral vascular diseases. The integrated treatment of cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases in traditional Chinese and Western medicine can leverage the advantages of both, enhancing treatment effectiveness and improving the quality of life.

According to the specific condition, constitution, and etiology of the patient, methods such as acupuncture, traditional Chinese medicine, and massage are employed to adjust the balance of Yin and Yang in the body, promote the circulation of Qi and blood, and improve symptoms. For instance, in the case of hypertensive patients, traditional Chinese medicine can lower blood pressure by regulating liver Yang and soothing liver Qi. Western medicine often uses medications to control symptoms and progression of cardiovascular diseases. For various cardiovascular diseases such as hypertension, coronary heart disease, and stroke, Western medicine may employ antihypertensive drugs, antithrombotic drugs, anti-anginal drugs, etc. Medication should be taken under the guidance of a doctor, and patients need to adhere to the prescribed schedule and undergo regular check-ups (Sheng et al., 2022; Liu and Yan, 2023).

The treatment of cardiovascular diseases also requires patients to make lifestyle adjustments. Traditional Chinese medicine emphasizes health preservation, including a balanced diet, moderate exercise, maintaining a healthy weight, and regular sleep patterns. Western medicine also emphasizes a healthy lifestyle, such as quitting smoking, limiting alcohol intake, reducing stress, and ensuring good sleep quality, to reduce the risk of cardiovascular diseases.

4 Summary and Outlook

The treatment methods of integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine have significant importance in modern medicine. The prospects for integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine are vast. By fully utilizing the strengths of both approaches, more comprehensive and personalized treatment plans can be provided. Traditional Chinese medicine emphasizes a holistic view and differential treatment, focusing on enhancing the body's self-regulation ability, which can play a crucial role in the management of chronic diseases and health maintenance. Western medicine emphasizes science and evidence, providing advanced drug and technological treatments. Integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine can play a vital role in disease prevention, rehabilitation, and comprehensive medical care.

However, integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine faces some challenges. There are differences between the theories and treatment methods of traditional Chinese and Western medicine, requiring in-depth research and discussion for better integration. Integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine needs an adequate number of specialized doctors and clinical practice experience to provide effective treatment plans. Additionally, the promotion and popularization of integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine also require support through education and advocacy to help more people understand and accept this treatment approach.

In the future, integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine will see broader applications and promotion. With the progress of technology and continuous deepening of medical research, the treatment methods of integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine will be continuously optimized and improved. An increasing number of doctors will receive relevant training and incorporate integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine into their clinical practice. Furthermore, there is a growing demand from the public for health and holistic treatments, and integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine can meet this demand. Through further research and promotion, we can better leverage the strengths of traditional Chinese and Western medicine to provide more comprehensive and personalized medical services for patients. This will contribute to improving the effectiveness of disease treatment and the quality of life for patients.

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