

A GUIDE TO EXTERNAL APPLICATION OF CHINESE HERBS:

A PARTIAL TRANSLATION OF 《中药外用指南》

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Abstract

Purpose: Chinese herbal medicine has long been a major constituent of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) theory and practice, yet western practitioners of TCM tend to focus on internally ingested formulas due to a lack of English-language texts discussing formulas for topical use. While the existing literature makes mention of externally applied medicinals and formulas for dermatology and traumatic injury, the conditions and symptoms covered are neither varied nor comprehensive. This project addresses the need for a comprehensive, English-language text about the external application of Chinese herbs through a partial translations of *A Guide to External Application of Chinese Herbs (Zhongyao Wai Yong Zhinan)*.

Method: The formulas included in the translation represent the most commonly treated conditions and symptoms among complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) practitioners as reported in the CDC National Health Statistics Report. The translation was performed by the author and checked by a native Chinese speaker who is also a trained acupuncturist and traditional Chinese herbalist.

Results: Chinese herbal formulas for the treatment of a wide variety of pain conditions including acute and chronic joint pain, traumatic injury, headache and migraine, as well as formulas for cough, asthma, and other respiratory conditions were included, 69 in total. The selection includes formulas for both adult and pediatric patients. The delivery methods are all topical and include pastes, ointments, creams, liniments, washes, compresses, liquid drops, and powders.

Conclusion: The translation of the most clinically relevant formulas from *A Guide to External Application of Chinese Herbs (Zhongyao Wai Yong Zhinan)* add a new dimension to the practice Chinese herbal medicine in the West by giving practitioners immediately useable treatments for many commonly seen conditions. This is especially useful in cases where ingesting herbal formulas is not a viable treatment. This project is meant to expand the practice of Chinese herbal medicine in the West.

Keywords: TCM, CAM, herbal medicine, Chinese herbs, topical, external, liniment, translation, orthopedic, common cold, cough, asthma, pediatrics