

The April-May 2014 Newsletter of The GP-TCM Research Association



Important meeting announcements

The 3rd Annual Meeting of GP-TCM RA & 5th Annual Meeting of TCM Analysis Society of World Federation of Chinese Medicine Societies (18-20 July, 2014; Nanjing)

- Official website: <http://114.212.200.6:2014/Default.aspx>
- Registration Form: <http://114.212.200.6:2014/Registration.aspx>
- Abstract Submission Form: <http://www.gp-tcm.org/2013/05/3rd-annual-meeting-of-the-good-practice-in-traditional-chinese-medicine-research-association-gp-tcm-ra-18-20-july-2014/>
- **Deadline for abstract submission: 23 June, 2014 (Monday)**
- The Good Practice in TCM Research Association is pleased to offer competitive grants to support PhD students to present their work at the 3rd Annual Meeting of GP-TCM RA. Awardees will receive a grant to cover at least the registration fee.
- All GP-TCM RA members are entitled to a 20% discount of their registration fees
- There will be a pre-conference Interest Groups Workshop in the afternoon of July 18, covering
 - Quality control
 - Pharmacology & toxicology
 - Clinical studies
 - Regulatory affairs
 - Acupuncture

Before the Nanjing Conference, all Interest Group webpages will be activated.

The 13th Meeting of Consortium for Globalization of Chinese Medicine (CGCM) will be held in Beijing on 27-29 August, 2014.

The Meeting is organized by China Academy of Chinese Medical Sciences. It provides a platform for regulatory-industrial-academic exchanges and potential research collaborations on various frontiers of Traditional Chinese Medicine among our worldwide CGCM members and guests. You are cordially invited to submit abstracts to share your exciting studies with us, also encouraged to forward this message to your colleagues and friends. The abstract submission form has been attached for your information. For more details of the meeting, please refer to the 13th CGCM Meeting website: http://13th_cgcm.icmm.ac.cn/.

Call for Abstracts

Deadline for abstract submission: 30 June, 2014 (Monday)

Abstract submission for poster presentations of the Meeting is now open for all CGCM members and invited guests. Please submit your abstracts together with the attached Abstract Submission Form to centraloffice@tcmedicine.org on or before the deadline. Highlights of the posters would be discussed during the relevant discussion sessions. Conclusions, action plans and milestones are expected to be drawn.

Travel Grant

To support postgraduates to attend the 13th CGCM Meeting, up to 50 Travel Grants are now open for application. Awardees will receive travel grant, free accommodation (shared room) and waiver of registration fee. You may wish to encourage your postgraduates to submit abstracts and apply for the Travel Grant.

Should you have any enquiries, please feel free to contact centraloffice@tcmedicine.org.

The April-May 2014 Newsletter of The GP-TCM Research Association



2nd GP-TCM RA Election for President-Elect and Board of Directors

- With the approval of the current GP-TCM RA BoD, the Secretariat is planning to hold the 2nd GP-TCM RA election in September 2014, for nine BoD members, including President-Elect
- Applicants for President-Elect and BoD membership positions need to submit independent applications by no later than Friday 25 July 2014
- Details of candidates will be presented at the Association website and the names of the candidates will be sent to every member of the Association on 1 August
- Election period: 1 September 2014 until 30 September 2014
- Announcement of results in October 2014 GP-TCM RA Newsletter

Teleconferences of GP-TCM RA BoD

The 13th Teleconference of the GP-TCM RA Board of Directors (BoD) was held at 9:00-11:00 GMT = 10:00-12:00 CET = 17:00-19:00 Beijing Time, Thursday 13th January 2014. Attendees: Rudolf Bauer (Chair), Pierre Duez, Tai-Ping Fan, De-an Guo, Aiping Lu, Nicola Robinson, Vivian Wong, and Qihe Xu (Minutes). Apologies were received from Kelvin Chan, Peter Hylands, Monique Simmonds and Rob Verpoorte, with written reports and e-mail inputs received from all absentees. The meeting approved Minutes of the 12th BoD teleconference (13th Jan. 2014) and received reports from President (Rudolf Bauer), President-elect (De-an Guo), Vice President (Qihe Xu), Secretary-General (Tai-Ping Fan) and written report from the Treasurer (Peter Hylands), as well as draft plans of four Interest Groups. On behalf of the GP-TCM RA, Prof. Bauer congratulated Prof. De-an Guo for being honoured as one of the three "TCM Persons of the Year 2013". The meeting especially focused on the newly established full-time Secretariat service provided by AssociAction, timing and protocols of the GP-TCM RA elections, as well as some details of the 3rd Annual Conference to be held in Nanjing in July. The meeting decided to dedicate the 14th BoD teleconference in May and the 15th BoD teleconference in June to planning of the five Interest Groups and the Nanjing Meeting, respectively.

The 14th GP-TCM RA BoD Teleconference was held at 9:00-10:30 BST (10:00-11:30 CEST = 16:00-17:30 Beijing Time = 18:00-19:30 Sydney local time) on Tuesday 6th May 2014. The meeting was attended by Rudolf Bauer (Chair), Kelvin Chan, Pierre Duez, Tai-Ping Fan, De-an Guo, Aiping Lu, Nicola Robinson, Monique Simmonds, Vivian Wong and Qihe Xu (Minutes); Apologies were received from Peter Hylands (written report provided) and Rob Verpoorte. The meeting reviewed and approved the position papers and plans of all five Interest Groups. It was decided that the 3rd GP-TCM RA Annual Meeting in Nanjing will have about 5 hours for dedicated discussions about the GP-TCM RA Interest Groups. The format for of each Interest Group session was agreed. Some updates from the President, the Secretariat and the Treasurer were received. The 15th GP-TCM RA BoD Teleconference will be held on Friday 13th June 2014.

Reports from GP-TCM RA Members

Academic-industrial interactions between King's College London and PuraPharm International (Hong Kong) Ltd: In April 2014, Mr. Abraham Chan, Chairman of PuraPharm visited King's College London and signed an agreement to donate £90,000 to set up a PuraPharm PhD Scholarship at King's. The scholarship will enable a PhD student to be trained at King's Centre for Integrative Chinese Medicine, which is co-chaired by Prof. Peter Hylands and Dr. Qihe Xu. Prof. Sir Robert Lechler, Vice President (Health) of King's College London, wrote officially to thank Mr. Chan for his vision and generosity. To further strengthen academic-industrial collaborations, Prof. Hylands and Dr Xu will visit PuraPharm's R&D centre and manufacture facilities in Nanning in July 2014. PuraPharm is a Corporate Member of the GP-TCM RA:

<http://www.purapharm.com/en/>

<http://www.gp-tcm.org/about/corporate-member-showcase/>

The April-May 2014 Newsletter of The GP-TCM Research Association

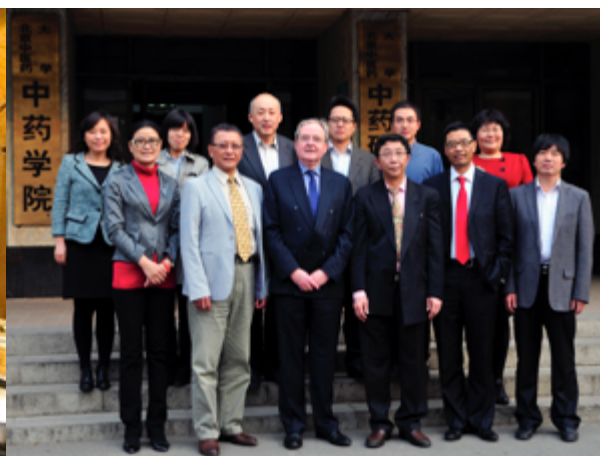


Four senior members of the GP-TCM RA on official visit to Beijing University of Chinese Medicine (BUCM) in April 2014. As part of “2014 年教育部直属高校外籍文教专家年度聘请计划 — 国际化人才培养体系建设聘请欧盟专家特色项目” (2014 Chinese Ministry of Education International Personnel Training Programme with European Union Experts), Prof. Peter Hyland, Dr. Qihe Xu and Dr. Tai-Ping Fan were invited to visit and give lectures at BUCM, and held parallel discussion groups with BUCM staff and students, aiming to explore multi-lateral collaborations, including exchanges of senior BUCM staff (Dean LIN Ruichao 林瑞超, Director of Publicity DONG Ling 董玲, Prof. WU Qing 吴清) and students between China and the EU. A week later, President Rudolf Bauer also visited BUCM, as part of Sino-Austrian Summer School for Chinese Herbal Medicine 2014 (see below). Their lecture titles were:

- Qihe Xu: *Anti-fibrotic and pro-fibrotic activities in the nature, especially in medicinal plants*
- Peter Hylands: *Innovative chemometric metabonomic approaches to natural product research, notably the standardisation of plant extracts*
- Tai-Ping Fan: *Angiogenesis as a guiding principle for elucidating the mechanisms of Chinese materia medica*
- Rudolf Bauer: *Searching the needle in the hay stack - Strategies for drug discovery in traditional medicine*



Dean LIN Ruichao 林瑞超 (L5 of back row) hosting a dinner in honour of Prof. NIU Jianzhao 牛建昭 (middle, front row)



Group photo at BUCM College of Pharmacy WU Qing (L1 back row) and DONG Ling (L1, front row)



The April-May 2014 Newsletter of The GP-TCM Research Association



Sino-Austrian Summer School for Chinese Herbal Medicine 2014

The Sino-Austrian Summer School for Chinese Herbal Medicine, organized by Prof. Dr. Rudolf Bauer, Head of the Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of Graz, and Head of TCM Research Center Graz, took place from 10th – 30th of April 2014 in Beijing, Tianjin and Nanning.

It has been organized in collaboration between University of Graz, Guangxi Botanical Garden of Medicinal Plants Nanning (Director Prof. Miao Jianhua), Institute of Medicinal Plant Development (IMPLAD) in Beijing (Prof. Xiao Peigen and Prof. Peng Yong), Beijing University of Chinese Medicine (Prof. Liu Yong), and the Herbal Medicinal Products Platform Austria (HMPPA). It was financially supported by University of Graz, the Eurasia-Pacific Uninet and Tasly.

28 pharmacy students from Graz, Innsbruck and Vienna participated in the summer school. The program was a mixture of lectures, practical courses, visits, and excursions, and covered all topics related to traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), but also gave an introduction into modern China and Chinese culture.

The summer school started in Beijing with a visit of School of Chinese Pharmacy at Beijing University of Chinese Medicine, and Institute of Medicinal Plant Development, where we met Academician Prof. Xiao Peigen.

Moreover, there was time to visit Tong Ren Tang pharmacy, and the Palace Museum, Summer Palace and to climb the Great Wall at Badaling.

The April-May 2014 Newsletter of
The GP-TCM Research Association



From Beijing we went to Tianjin in order to visit the facilities and research institute of the Tasly Group. In the evening a Haihe River Tour was on the program.

The April-May 2014 Newsletter of The GP-TCM Research Association



The major part of the summer school was organized at Guangxi Botanical Garden of Medicinal Plants in Nanning, which is with more than 7000 cultivated medicinal plants the biggest of its kind in the world. The lectures given by experts from Guangxi Botanical Garden of Medicinal Plants, Guangxi University of TCM, and Nanning and Guangxi Medical University, were covering the theoretical and philosophical background of TCM, traditional TCM treatment and its history, toxicity and pharmacological effects of Chinese herbs, clinical practice of TCM, plant diversity in Guangxi, identification of TCM plants and adulterations, quality standards of the Chinese Pharmacopoeia, and also a course in Taiqi.



Practical courses and excursions enlightened the program like visits of the laboratories and the herbarium including plant tissue cultivation of the botanical garden, the Exhibition Center of Guangxi TCM College,

The April-May 2014 Newsletter of The GP-TCM Research Association



and the medicinal plant market in Yulin. The excursions provided an overview of TCM in daily life in China and Chinese culture in general. One of the highlights was the guided visit of one of the TCM hospitals in Nanning.

The students could experience TCM manipulation techniques like acupuncture, fire cupping, and massages. Other excursions led to Yilin Cave and to Guangxi Museum of Nationalities. To get introduction into TCM products manufacturing and trading in economic scale, the company PuraPharm in Nanning was visited. A long weekend excursion to Guilin included a visit of the famous and historic Longji Rice Terraces, Guilin Tea Science and Research Institute, and a boat trip on River Li to Yangshuo with its fantastic scenery.



In the closing ceremony all students received a certificate from the Director of Graz, Guangxi Botanical Garden of Medicinal Plants Prof. Miao Jianhua and everybody was invited to plant a tree in the “Austrian garden”.

Secretary-General Tai-Ping Fan visited Chengdu University of TCM (CDUTCM) in April 2014. At the invitation of President LIANG Fanrong 梁繁荣 and Vice-President PENG Cheng 彭成, Tai-Ping visited CDUTCM - one of the eight founding GP-TCM RA Corporate Members. In addition to giving two lectures in the College of Acupuncture & Tuina, and the College of Pharmacy, he also discussed strategic alliances among the TCM communities in China and Europe.



With two consecutive “973” Program Grants (aka National Basic Research Program), President Liang’s State Key Subject of Acupuncture & Tuina is at the forefront of deciphering the molecular mechanisms of acupuncture.

The April-May 2014 Newsletter of The GP-TCM Research Association



The College of Pharmacy is building a large, state-of-the-art seed bank (2,650 square metre) for medicinal plants in China. The College also houses State Key Laboratory Breeding Base of Systematic Research, Development and Utilization of Chinese Medicine Resources. Together with several international collaborating institutes including King's College London and University of Cambridge, Vice-President Peng is actively bidding for a national grant to establish Collaborative Innovation Center of Genuine Chinese Materia Medica in Southwest China.



Tai-Ping Fan with President LIANG Fanrong (left) and Vice-President PENG Cheng (right) of CDUTCM



Dean FU Chaomei 傅超美 (L2), Vice-President PENG Cheng (L3), Tai-Ping Fan (middle), Vice-Dean LU Guanghua 吕光华 (R3), Vice-Dean PEI Jin 裴瑾 (R2), Dr. LI Yun-xia 李芸霞 (R1) in front of the 12-storey College of Pharmacy

Special conference dedicated to Li Shizhen and forum to commemorate Prof. Xie Zongwan. On April 26th, the School of Chinese Medicine of Hong Kong Baptist University hosted a special conference dedicated to Li Shizhen, one of the top scholars in the history of Chinese medicine. The year 2018 will mark the 500th anniversary of Li Shizhen's birth, and the celebration hosted by HKBU brought together herbal medicine experts and government officials from Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao to honor his pioneering work. Li Shizhen dedicated his life to researching and preserving herbal knowledge, and his *Compendium of Materia Medica (Ben Cao Gang Mu)* synthesized textual scholarship and field research into an epic text that was unrivaled in scope and importance for centuries to come. His efforts to create a novel and systematic method of classifying medicinal products impacted the development of Chinese natural sciences across many disciplines, and defined the standard of scholarship in the field of Chinese herbal medicine while simultaneously attracting the attention and praise of overseas researchers including Charles Darwin.

The April-May 2014 Newsletter of The GP-TCM Research Association



To mark the tremendous impact of Li Shizhen's work, over 400 participants attended the ceremony and academic forum, including 13 renowned experts that shared inspirational presentations related to Chinese herbal medicine quality control, research, and culture. In addition to the rich academic exchange, HKBU's *Compendium of Materia Medica* Cultural Project was unveiled, complete with a glimpse into an upcoming TV series dedicated to Li Shizhen, produced in conjunction with Health TV. The occasion was also marked by the launching of a new two-volume text by Prof. Zhao Zhongzhen of HKBU, as well as a touching homage to the late Prof. Xie Zongwan, whose lifetime of materia medica scholarship impacted many of the scholars in attendance.



Honourable guests officiate at the *Compendium of Materia Medica* Cultural Project Launch



Professor Zhao Zhongzhen (right), Associate Dean of the School of Chinese Medicine, HKBU, launches his two new books at the Ceremony



Attendees of the 12th *Compendium of Materia Medica* Forum at HKBU, which was organized also to commemorate the 90th Birthday of Prof. Xie Zongwan

The April-May 2014 Newsletter of The GP-TCM Research Association



China Radio International interview on TCM: Dr. Qihe Xu, King's College London (UK), and academics in the USA and Australia talked about their personal views on international development of TCM and the value of international collaboration in TCM development.
<http://english.cri.cn/7146/2014/04/23/3621s823449.htm>

Cross-Strait Forum on Innovation and development of Chinese Medicine (兩岸四地中醫藥創新與發展論壇) was held on 11-12 May 2014 in BaoDing City, Hebei Province, China. This forum was organized by "Cross-Strait Scientific Collaboration Center for Chinese Medicine, Macau". As one of co-organizers, "Modernized Chinese Medicine International Association (MCMIA)" led a Hong Kong delegation of 18 members comprising Hong Kong's major CM industry, academic and practitioner to attend the Forum in BaoDing.

Here are some of the achievements MCMIA attained during this trip:

- (1) Hong Kong offered speakers covering a wide range of topics from "Hong Kong CM Standards, Hong Kong's CM Testing & Certification Scheme, Scientific Research and CM Industry Development."
- (2) MCMIA also signed a tripartite MOU with SATCM and AnGuo government to pledge mutual support for "International Conference & Exhibition of the Modernization of Chinese Medicine & health Products (ICMCM)" and AnGuo's activities in the future.

Prof. Liu Liang of "Cross-Strait Scientific Collaboration Center for Chinese Medicine, Macau" suggested the next Forum to be held in Hong Kong.



Wang Guoqiang, Vice-Minister of Health and Commissioner of SATCM in a group photo with Hong Kong Delegation (L) MCMIA signed a tripartite MOU with SATCM and AnGuo government (R)

Progress in translational research - The multi-disciplinary team of Prof. ZHENG Xiaohui 郑晓晖 at Xi'an Northwest University (NWU) showed synthetic chimeric compounds derived from plant phenolic acids and borneol to protect vascular endothelial cells in cardiovascular disease models. A long-term collaboration between NWU, Peking University Third Hospital, Beijing Normal University, Academy of Military Medical Sciences, Biology Institute of Shandong Academy of Sciences and University of Cambridge has demonstrated IDHP (a blood-borne vasodilator following sublingual administration of Cardiotonic/Danshen Dripping Pill, 丹参滴丸) and synthetic DBZ to be angiogenic *in vitro* and in zebrafish. These synthetic compounds also protect mice against isoprenaline-induced myocardial fibrosis, and atherosclerosis in ApoE^{-/-} mice on high fat diet. In April, Zheng Xiaohui, Tai-Ping Fan and collaborators met in Beijing and Xi'an for intensive discussions on the clinical implications and future directions of their translational research programme.

The April-May 2014 Newsletter of The GP-TCM Research Association



王国强与多国卫生部长谈合作中医药双边交流成效显著 <http://www.satcm.gov.cn/e/action/ShowInfo.php?classid=34&id=19512>

5月19日—22日第67届世界卫生大会期间，国家卫计委副主任、国家中医药管理局局长王国强会见了参会的俄罗斯、捷克、匈牙利、英国、加拿大、韩国、新加坡、马来西亚、阿尔及利亚、巴巴多斯等十五个国家的卫生部长，就推进中国与各国卫生领域交流与合作，特别是传统医学合作进行了深入探讨。王国强说，中医药是中华民族几千年来维护健康、防治疾病的经验总结，不仅在历史上为民族的繁衍昌盛和文明的发展做出贡献，而且至今在中国的国家卫生体系中发挥着不可替代的作用，成为我国重要的卫生资源、独特的文化资源、具有自主知识产权的科技资源和巨大发展潜力的经济资源，形成了中医药医疗、保健、科技、教育、文化、产业、对外交流与合作“七位一体”的发展格局。中医药走出国门已有悠久历史，近年来更是得到国外广大民众、教育科研机构以及政府的关注和欢迎，中医药国际合作的领域不断扩大，层次不断提高，已经成为中国特色外交的组成部分和中国文化国家交流的重要内容之一。以习近平总书记为核心的党中央十分重视中医药的国际合作，习主席在会见世界卫生组织总干事陈冯富珍时特别指出，中国愿促进中西医结合及中医药在海外发展，推动更多中国生产的医药产品进入国际市场。

各国卫生部长对中国的中医药发展表示浓厚的兴趣，韩国、新加坡、加拿大、瑞士等国卫生部部长（副部长）均对已经与中国开展的传统医学领域合作予以高度评价，表示目前与中国的政府间合作交流机制使双方能够在传统医学领域共享经验，促进传统医学与现代医学的互补，为民众提供更好的健康保障。俄罗斯卫生部长斯科沃特索娃表示，愿积极推进与中国的传统医学合作，尽快确定俄方中医药工作组成员，在中俄卫生分委会合作机制下，与中方共同在开展中俄传统医学学术交流，建立中医药医疗保健中心方面迈出实质性步伐。捷克卫生部长内梅切克提出，希望在中捷卫生论坛上进一步探讨中医药合作。加拿大卫生部长罗娜·安布罗斯对曾经访问过的中国中医医院印象深刻，表示愿与中方共同探讨通过签署合作备忘录形式加强合作。匈牙利人力资源部副部长汉娜·帕娃欢迎中国的中医药大学来到匈牙利共



同举办中医药学院，以培养中医药专业技术人才。阿尔及利亚、马尔代夫、肯尼亚等国也对开展中医药合作表达了希望。这些卫生部代表都对中国在本届世界卫生大会上牵头提出传统医学决议案表示了支持。卫生部国际合作司、国家中医药管理局国际合作司的有关负责同志陪同参加了会见。

Now 津冀攜手打造“數字中藥都” [2014-05-19 河北日報]

去年洽談會上簽約，今年5·18落地。今天上午，安國市與天津市天士力集團攜手打造的“數字中藥都”項目在安國奠基，津冀協同發展再結碩果。

去年5·18洽談會上，安國市與中藥領軍企業天士力簽署的“聯合投資建設安國中藥都合作框架協議”備受關注。今天，恰逢簽約一周年，雙方合作的首個項目——“數字中藥都”進入實質性建設階段。

“安國與天士力都致力於中藥材領域的發展，又同屬於京津冀區域，具有地緣優勢，雙方將聯袂打造國內第一家信息化、數字化的專業中藥材交易市場。”參加完奠基儀式後匆匆趕至廊坊洽談會現場的天士力集團董事局主席閻希軍說，力爭用三到五年時間，將項目建成華北最大的中藥生產基地、北方最大的以大宗中藥材交易為主的綜合性中藥市場、國家級中藥出口示范基地之一。

總投資30億元的安國數字中藥項目，將圍繞種植、加工、交易、倉儲、檢驗五大關鍵環節，建設商貿區、倉儲物流區，中藥研發基地、中藥材出口基地、中藥材種植示范基地，建立道地藥材種植規範及質量標準體系、流通等級分類標準體系、中藥質量追溯體系等，最終形成全國首個倉儲、物流、標準、檢驗、票據“五統一”的專業市場。2014年底前一期建成投產，2020年銷售額將達到300億元。

“借力天士力這樣的知名藥企，有利于安國加快中藥產業結構優化升級。”安國市委書記韓佔山表示，在京津冀協同發展的大背景下，與天士力的合作會起到積極的示范帶動效應。目前，安國已引進北京同仁堂、北京中醫藥大學等知名企業和院校。近日，又與北京地雅集團、北京中藥研究所、北京康仁堂確定了合作意向。今後，安國將吸引國內更多知名藥企和科研機構入駐，改寫安國乃至全省的中藥產業發展格局。

Now Funding news from the European Union:

The **annual work plan 2014** for public health programme was adopted on 26th May 2014.

http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/docs/wp2014_annex_summary_en.pdf

Now Nature publishes "Guidelines for investigating causality of sequence variants in human disease" <http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v508/n7497/pdf/nature13127.pdf>

Now Stratification in global clinical trials

<http://www.theisn.org/systemic-disease/education-by-topic/basic-science/regulatory-science-and-global-clinical-trials-video/itemid-1393>

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=Tripterygium+wilfordii+Hook+F+arthritis+Annals+of+the+Rheumatic+Disease>

Now Chinese Thunder God Herb Works as Well as Pain Therapy

A centuries-old Chinese medical herb known as “thunder god vine” eased the pain and swelling of rheumatoid arthritis as effectively as the commonly prescribed methotrexate, a study showed.

In a trial of 207 patients in China, those who took extracts of the herb showed slightly more improvement than those on methotrexate alone; combining the two boosted efficacy significantly over methotrexate alone. The study appears in the *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases* published by BMJ, formerly known as the *British Medical Journal*.

While traditional Chinese medicine has been practiced for hundreds of years, research into its benefits compared with today's standard therapies has been limited. Thunder god vine could become a new approach to treating rheumatoid arthritis because not all patients respond to methotrexate and modern biologic treatments, such as Amgen Inc.'s Enbrel, are expensive, the researchers wrote in the report.

The April-May 2014 Newsletter of The GP-TCM Research Association



“While the herb has been used to treat rheumatoid arthritis in China for many centuries, there wasn’t clinical evidence of its efficacy compared with current standard medical treatments,” said lead author Xuan Zhang, a doctor at the Peking Union Medical College Hospital’s Department of Rheumatology. “The results were very clear because on many indicators it performed slightly better than methotrexate.”

Measuring Pain

The researchers used a standard measurement based on a 50 percent improvement in the number of tender or swollen joints, along with criteria including pain and disability. The proportion of those achieving the standard after 24 weeks of the trial was 77 percent among those treated with both drugs, 55 percent among those on the herbal extract, and 46.5 percent for those on methotrexate.

There was little difference between the frequency or type of side effects in the three groups, although the number of women who developed irregular periods was slightly higher in those treated with the extract, identified by the name *Tripterygium wilfordii* Hook F, according to the report.

Extracts from the herb had been found in the 1980s to have an antifertility effect, although other studies showed that the effects were usually reversible and more common in women entering menopause, the authors wrote.

Doctors in China tend to recommend the herbal extract, usually taken in capsule form, as mainly suitable for older patients above the age of 50, Zhang, a professor of medicine at the teaching hospital in Beijing, said in a telephone interview. That is also the same patient group that tends to get afflicted with joint pain, he said.


Thunder god vine extract has also been investigated for its potential to treat autoimmune diseases and some cancers. A drug made from the plant wiped out pancreatic tumors in mice, researchers at the University of Minnesota’s Masonic Cancer Center said in a study published in October 2012.

Affordable Treatment

Tripterygium wilfordii Hook F may be an affordable alternative treatment for rheumatoid arthritis, researchers said.

A month’s worth of the herbal extract costs about 80 yuan (\$12.90) a month, while treatments with methotrexate, which has to be used in combination with biological or chemical reagents, costs at least three times more, said Peking Union’s Zhang. Amgen Inc.’s Enbrel, which is usually injected weekly, costs \$3,221 per prescription and Abbvie Inc. (ABBV)’s Humira, which is usually injected every other week, costs about \$3,650 per prescription, according to data compiled by Bloomberg.

“This would have significance for how we should consider and study fundamental treatments for rheumatoid arthritis in the future,” he said. The research group is continuing to study the three treatment groups beyond 24 weeks for the longer term effects, Zhang said.

 **Naturally occurring aristolochic acid analogues and their toxicities.** *Nat Prod Rep.* 2014 May; 31(5):676-93. doi: 10.1039/c3np70114j. Epub 2014 Apr.2
[Michl J](#), [Ingrouille MJ](#), [Simmonds MS](#), [Heinrich M](#).

Abstract: Aristolochic acids are known for causing aristolochic acid nephropathy (AAN), a renal fibrosis often associated with urothelial carcinoma. Aristolochic acid I and II are considered to be the cause of these nephrotoxic and carcinogenic effects. However a variety of aristolochic acid analogues, including aristolactams and 4,5-dioxoaporphines have been reported. Their implications in aristolochic acid nephropathy have possibly been overlooked. In this report, in vivo and in vitro toxicity and mutagenicity of these three classes of compounds are discussed. Furthermore, the review gives an update of aristolochic acids, aristolactams and 4,5-

The April-May 2014 Newsletter of The GP-TCM Research Association

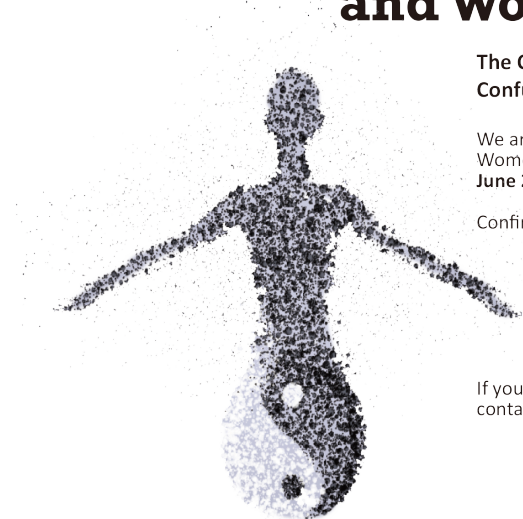


dioxoaporphines reported between 2003 and 2013 and their biological activities.

Conclusions: A large number of aristolochic acid analogues exist and their implication in AAN is largely unknown. So far at least 192 aristolochic acid analogues have been isolated from natural sources. However, in vitro toxicity has only been reported for 77 of these compounds. Doubts remain, whether it is possible to make conclusions about nephrotoxic potencies from in vitro cytotoxicity assays. Firstly, in vitro toxicity is highly dependent on the cell type used. Secondly, mechanisms not related to cytotoxicity are involved in AAN. As an example, aristolochic acid II shows only mild toxicity in vitro. However, the compound is known to be highly toxic in humans and animals due to its mutagenic properties. In vivo toxicity studies have only been carried out for a small number of the aristolochic acid analogues. Therefore, based on the current scientific evidence, the implication of other aristolochic acid analogues in AAN cannot be confirmed nor denied. Although it is clear that aristolochic acids I 1 and II 2 are toxic, they are not necessarily the only (or most potent) toxins present in species of *Aristolochia* and related species. Contributions of aristolactams and other derivatives to AAN may be significant and deserves further research.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=Naturally+occurring+aristolochic+acid+analogues+and+their+toxicities>.

Conference on Chinese Medicine and Women's health



The Confucius Institute at London South Bank University is the first Confucius Institute worldwide to have a focus on TCM.

We are pleased to announce a one day conference - Chinese Medicine and Women's health to be held at London South Bank University on **Friday 27th June 2014**.

Confirmed invited speakers are;

- Prof. Xiaoke Wu (First affiliated hospital of Heilongjiang University of Chinese Medicine)
- Dr Giovanna Franconi (Tor Vergata, Rome)
- Dr Andrew Flower (Southampton University)
- Dr David Carr (Institute for Women's Health, University College London)

If you are interested in presenting or submitting an abstract please get in contact.

Venue: London South Bank University

Email: ci4tcm@lsbu.ac.uk

Web: www.ci4tcm.com

Cost: £120 per person (student, £60)



London South Bank University

伦敦中医孔子学院
LONDON CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE FOR TCM

Acknowledgements

Contributions from Prof. **Rudolf Bauer** (Austria), Mr. **Eric Brand** (China), Prof. **DONG Ling** (China), Dr. **Tai-Ping Fan** (UK), Prof. **Bruce Hendry** (UK), Dr. **LI Yun-Xia** (China), Prof. **LIANG Fanrong** (China), Prof. **LIN Ruichao** (UK), Prof. **PENG Cheng** (China), Prof. **Nicola Robinson** (UK), Ms. **Wenting Wang** (China), Prof. **Vivian Wong** (China), Prof. **WU Qing** (China), Dr. **Qihe Xu** (UK) and Prof. **ZHAO Zhongzhen** (China) are gratefully acknowledged.