Proceedings of the 36th World Small Animal Veterinary Congress WSAVA

Oct. 14 - 17, 2011
Jeju, Korea

Next Congress:

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CLINICAL APPLICATION OF YIN-YANG THEORY AND THE FIVE ELEMENTS THEORY IN TRADITIONAL VETERINARY MEDICINE

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Abstract

In traditional medicine, Yin-Yang theory and five element theories are basic principle knowledge and important guidance in pathology, physiology, diagnosis, and treatment of disease. Four pathological changes of Yin-Yang imbalance are occurred. There are Yang Excess, Yin Excess, Yang Deficiency and Yin Deficiency. The pathological changes make illness and disease. The five elements state to the five categories which are Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water in the natural world. Five elements are related to a specific organ system explained as Five Zang (Yang) and five Fu (Yin). Each element is related to season of the year, specific emotions, colors, sense organs, and body parts. Each element corresponds to imbalances, disease pattern, and treatments.

Introduction

Balance or harmony is an important word to express body health. In traditional medicine, health is defined as balance between body and internal/external environments [1]. The internal environments include the emotional state, hereditary influences, the neuroendocrine system, congenital influence and personality. The external environments include climate, nutrition, geophysical forces and foreign pressure [3]. When we talk health on body, the meaning of health is not an absolute, but a relative state of being. If imbalance takes place between internal and external environments or within the internal factors, diseases arise from hard working for the homeostasis of the body [3]. The ancient oriental doctor explains this relationship as the Yin-Yang theory which is based on the philosophic principle of two energies as “Qi” and the five element theory, which is based on the idea that everything in the whole world is the change of five basic elements as “Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water.” These two philosophical views are developed to explain and understand natural phenomena [1,3,4]. In oriental medicine, two theories have an important guidance in pathology, physiology, diagnosis, and treatment of disease [3,4].

Clinical application of Yin-Yang Theory

The Yin-Yang principles are derived from observation of the nature alternation and explained as phenomena in pairs of opposites [1,2,3,4]. Balance in universe is maintained by related dependence and control on each part.
Usually, male belongs to Yang and female belongs to Yin. From this similar concept, Day, Light, Sun, summer, Heat, Fire, active, strength, and Qi correspond to Yang, while Darkness, Moon, winter, Water, Gentle, Weakness, and Blood correspond to Yin. Thus, the Yin-Yang is representative meaning for interdependent aspects of everything [4]. The interdependent relationship represents that each of the two aspects is the condition for the other’s existence and either of them cannot exist in separation. For example, without summer there would be no winter. In an animal, back area represents to Yang, but abdomen represents to Yin. Fluids or nutrient substances in the body belong to Yin, and metabolism or physiological functional activities in the body relates to Yang. Within the theory of Yin-Yang, they perform together protecting the body from pathological factors which are bacteria, virus, and stress. From this state, four pathological changes of Yin-Yang imbalance are occurred. There are Yang Excess, Yin Excess, Yang Deficiency and Yin Deficiency. The pathological changes make illness and disease [1,4].

**The state of Yang Excess:** This state is that Yang energy is greater than normal condition as unbalanced state. Cooling power to reduce the Yang energy cannot to regulate the heat energy. In animal patient, the clinical signs include high fever, red or purple tongue and strong pulse. Yang excess tends to be acute onset and short course in young age. The strategy of treatment is to clear heat. GV-14, and LI4 are good points to clear heat. Huang Lian is suitable herbal medicine [4].

**The state of Yin Excess:** This state is that Yin energy is greater than normal condition as unbalanced state. Cooling power to control the balance overwhelm the warming energy. In animal patient, the clinical signs include pain, swelling, edema, loose stool, pale or purple tongue, and slow pulse. Yin excess tends to be acute onset and short course in young animal. The strategy of treatment is to clear cool. GV-4 is good point to sedate cool. Rou Gui or Ginger are suitable herbs [4].

**The state of Yang Deficiency:** The state is that Yang is lower than normal condition as unbalanced state, but Yin is normal. Warming power is not enough to equalize the cooling energy. So, the coldness results from the deficiency of Yang. In animal patient, the clinical signs include coldness at extremities, edema, loose stool, chronic back pain, urinary incontinence, and weakness of the rear limbs, fertility disorder, pale tongue and weak or deep pulse. Yang deficiency tends to be chronic onset and long course in older animal. The strategy of treatment is to tonify Yang energy. Baihui as moxa application is good point to tonify Yang. Ba ji Tian is a suitable herb [4].

**The state of Yin Deficiency:** The state is that Yin is lower than normal condition as unbalanced state, but Yang is normal. Cooling power is not enough to equalize the warming energy. So, the hear results from the deficiency of Yin. In animal patient, the clinical sings include general weakness, thirsty, restless, anxiety, red or dry tongue, thready or fast pulse. Yin deficiency tends to be chronic onset and long course in older animal. The strategy of treatment is to increase Yin energy. KID-3, BL-23, SP-6 are good points to nourish Yin. Shu Di Huang is a suitable herb in the state [4].

**Clinical application of Five Elements Theory**

The five elements state to the five categories which are Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water in the natural world. In ancient philosophy interaction of the five elements explains the nature of all phenomena[2,3]. These elements are always moving and changing with enhancement, and inhibition on each side. In traditional medicine, the mutual relationship of five elements help is to use traditional medicine in the diagnosis and treatment of health problems. Each element is related to a specific organ system explained as Five Zang(Yang) and five Fu (Yin). Five major Yin organs are Heart, Lung, Spleen, Liver, and Kidney. Five major Yang organs are Small intestine, Triple Heater, Lager intestine, Gallbladder, and Urinary Bladder. Wood element is involved of the liver and gall bladder [2,4]. It is associated with anti-toxic processing. Fire element is involved of the heart and small intestine. It is associated with the circulation of blood, and hormones. Earth element is involved of the stomach and spleen. It is associated with the digestion. Metal is involved of the lungs and large intestine.
It is associated to respiration and elimination. Water is involved of the kidneys and urinary bladder. It is associated with drainage system. Each organ is related to season of the year, specific emotions, colors, sense organs, and body parts[2,4]. **Wood:** Wood element is associated with the liver and gallbladder, the season of spring, the color of green, the emotion of anger/irritation, the orifice of eyes, the tissue of tendons/ligaments, the secretion of tears and the time 11:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. If you have a patient with red eye in spring time that has seizure and barks loudly, the patient has a potential liver problem [2,3]. **Fire:** Fire element is associated with the heart and small intestine, the season of summer, the color of red, the emotion of joy/fright, the orifice of tongue, the tissue of vascular system, the secretion of sweat and the time 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. If you have a patient with separation anxiety, bad dreaming, hysterically barking and hyperactive happiness, the patient has a potential heart problem [2,3]. **Earth:** Earth element is associated with the stomach and spleen, the season of late summer, the color of yellow, the emotion of worry, the orifice of mouth, the tissue of muscles, the secretion of saliva, and the time 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. If you have a patient with vomiting after breakfast, overweight, extremely sensitive toward moods, and low stamina, the patient has a potential spleen problem [2,3]. **Metal:** Metal element is associated with the lung and large intestine, the season of fall, the color of white, the emotion of grief/sadness, the orifice of nose, the tissue of skin/hair coat, the secretion of nasal fluid, and the time 3:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. If you have a patient with constipation, continually runny nose, allergies, and asthma, the patient has a potential lung problem [2,3]. **Water:** Water element is associated with the kidney and urinary bladder, the season of winter, the color of black, the emotion of fear/terror, the orifice of ears, the tissue of bones, the secretion of urine, and the time 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. If you have a patient with terror of stranger, constantly thirsty, and bladder infection in winter season, the patient has a potential kidney problem [2,3]. Each element interacts with promotion/creation cycle or control cycle. The previous element in the cycle is the “mother” of the element. The next element in the series is the “son” of the previous element. It is common to express the terms Mother and Son relationship in cycle [4]. In creation cycle, Wood produces Fire, Fire produces Earth, Earth produces Metal, Metal produces Water, and Water produces Wood. So, if there is a problem with stomach or spleen as earth element, this disorder affects the metal element so that the patient may have some problems in lung or large intestine. In control cycle, Wood restrains Earth, Earth restrains Water, Water restrains Fire, Fire restrains Metal, and Metal restrains Wood. If there is a problem with urinary system as water element, it can accumulate the body with fluid. This condition affects heart function so that the patient may have congestive heart failure [1,2,4].

**Conclusion**

The Yin-Yang theory and five element theories are basic principle in traditional veterinary medicine. From these two theories, pathological changes of diseases can be explained and be given a suitable treatment for clinical practice. Each part is interdependent and has mutual relationship. In veterinary clinic, we should effectively use these two theories when it needs to be diagnosed and treated any disease.

**References**


