



# Wellbeing Clinic Newsletter

## Today's Focus: **INFECTIONS**

***Having written a lot recently, we were planning to have a break until the next year but in light of the recent alarming news, it is impossible for us to stay silent.***

***We feel that this newsletter is urgently needed and it may even save some lives.***

Within the last two weeks or so, we have read these news about a secondary school pupil dying from throat infection, a young person dying from an infected spider bite and a young child dying as a result of mould.

<https://news.sky.com/story/grieving-mother-of-boy-who-died-with-strep-a-describes-symptoms-as-another-child-dies-with-infection-12761161>

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/dec/03/hull-student-harry-bolton-sepsis-suspected-spider-bite-inquest>

<https://www.itv.com/news/granada/2022-11-15/awaab-ishak-two-year-olds-death-caused-by-mould-in-flat>

These are only few examples with more similar news circulating in the press and social media and there may be more such cases which remain unreported.

All these three examples seem to follow a somewhat similar pattern. All three patients have received help from the health services but in spite of this their condition failed to improve, leading eventually to their death.

***How do you actually get to a point where something which should be a trivial condition such as throat infection, a respiratory infection or a spider bite ends up requiring a hospital treatment and eventually takes your life?***

Unfortunately little detail is provided in the news about the treatment these three patients have received. In the absence of this, we will not speculate on adequacy of medical treatment in these specific cases but we would like to share with you some more general observations based on our own and our client's common experiences with the medical services as well as some recent interesting news.

This article illustrates the point particularly well.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-63059585>

Although it is based on medical practice in India, the same problems may be not as uncommon here in the UK as we might have liked.

In particular these fragments from the article have attracted our attention:

As prices of antibiotics fall and diagnostics remain expensive, doctors prefer to prescribe drugs rather than order tests.

Doctors are sometimes not sure what they are treating, and they want to treat everything by using broad-spectrum drugs.

Hospital infections are also to blame. Patients are often pumped with antibiotics to compensate for poor hygiene and sanitation, "because no doctor wants to lose a patient because of an infection".

If you have visited a medical facility and you have been offered a drug without an actual diagnosis, the above will not feel so unfamiliar to you.

Antibiotics, steroids or painkillers are generally cheap whereas laboratory tests and specialist examinations are expensive and surely there are also capacity issues too in the currently "overwhelmed" medical

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system. The patients therefore may receive antibiotics, painkillers, steroids or other medication without a proper diagnosis, just on the basis of the symptoms experienced. If one drug doesn't work, another one is given and so on in the hope that maybe this time it might work. This may be going on for weeks if not months.

Unfortunately this trial and error strategy is likely to backfire very badly, because prolonged use of inappropriate antibiotics or other medication may not only do nothing to help but it may undermine the patient's immune system to the point where it cannot cope with the infection and may also become vulnerable to other pathogens. This is why it seems to us, the news of patients dying from what normally should be entirely preventable causes are becoming more and more commonplace.

Irrational use of antibiotics is even more dangerous where the actual cause of the problem is a fungal infection. Why? Surely many of us, especially ladies, have experienced some form of fungal infection shortly after an antibiotic treatment. One of the very common side effects of antibiotics is weakening of body's immunity against fungal infections. So if you had a respiratory problem related, for example, to mould but you were given an antibiotic because your symptoms resemble a bacterial infection, this can unfortunately make you much worse and even, very possibly, kill you.

Additionally, infections by drug resistant pathogens have now become major threat and conventional medicine has not yet developed efficient ways of dealing with this problem. This is a very extensive subject on its own right and we will elaborate on this in more detail in our future newsletters.

### **Can Traditional Chinese medicine help?**

Fortunately yes. **TCM has an excellent track record in treating many types of infections whether viral, fungal or bacterial.** Many reliable TCM treatment methods are available to deal with infections.

### **Herbs**

We have mentioned in our previous newsletter that there are over 800 Chinese herbs which have amazing antimicrobial properties and are being extensively researched in the efforts to fight the growing drug resistance problem. So much so that **TCM is now believed to be an important source for development of new anti-infective drugs in the future through its complex multitarget and multiroute properties.**

Such herbs have been shown effective against many types of pathogens, which makes them of great potential interest not only in medicine (whether traditional or conventional) but also in other areas such as agriculture or storage and transportation of food.

There are several ways and mechanisms by which these herbs work. Some are able to inhibit the rate of microbial growth, some can impede or even reverse development of microbial drug resistance whilst some can regulate the levels of inflammatory factors in the body and improve immunity or regulate body's immune response. Trials over combined uses of TCM remedies and antibiotics have also shown that such remedies were able to restore sensitivity of drug resistant bacteria to antibiotics.

### **Acupuncture and cupping**

Depending on the condition being treated these powerful traditional techniques can

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be used as standalone treatment, in combination with herbal treatment or even as a support in conventional medical treatment.

Acupuncture relies on stimulating specific acupoints with needles, which, in the context of an infection, helps to regulate and improve body's immune response and its natural ability to fight the pathogens.

Cupping also provides similar benefits by applying suction to specific points on the body.

### **So, is Traditional Chinese medicine really worth trying?**

One of the most significant accusations against TCM we sometimes hear is that it may deter people from seeking a "proper" medical treatment.

We certainly do not aim at preventing anyone from visiting their GP. It is actually perfectly possible to seek conventional medical help and a TCM therapy at the same time and it is a very normal approach in China to combine both if needed.

But, assuming you have done your best to seek medical help, in the current context, how likely are you actually to receive it in good time? Judging from so much alarming news we see more and more often, it seems that the prospects of obtaining timely and truly professional medical help may be becoming somewhat illusory.

Another common complaint about TCM is that it may be "potentially unsafe" because it is "unproven". Now, can you really consider a discipline that has been around for some 5 to 8 thousands of years unproven? What should actually be said is that the modern science is still in the process of trying to figure out how and

why exactly some of the TCM therapies work. Research over TCM remedies has already brought about Nobel Prize worthy scientific discoveries and we believe there is much more to come sooner or later.

As for now we and our clients can easily see the proofs of TCM's safety and effectiveness in our everyday work.

At the same time, in conventional medical facilities people are being subjected to practices which are well proven to be ineffective and dangerous and all this is tolerated for the reasons of systems being "overwhelmed", "understaffed", or experiencing a "system failure".

**Besides, many of our own clients are medical professionals such as nurses, dentists, doctors or pharmacists. If these people are able to trust TCM and benefit from it, then it seems, everyone else can too.**

Given the truly impressive benefits of TCM in treating infections, it would be perfectly sensible to try this alternative, especially if your condition is still mild and can be easily treated before it has a chance of deteriorating to the point of becoming dangerous, or if you are sent home with Calpol because there is no space for you in the hospital.

In light of the recent tragic news, we would especially encourage parents of very young children to consider this option. Time is of even more importance in treating very young patients whose condition may deteriorate suddenly and very quickly become life threatening.

Not only it may save you or your family from a serious illness, or even death, but it may also help to free the "overstretched" public medical resources for others, who might need them more urgently.

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