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A controlled trial of Chinese herbal medicine for premenstrual syndrome.

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Abstract

Premenstrual syndrome (PMS) is a common disorder troubling many women during their reproductive years. The Chinese have been using herbal medicines to treat menstrual cycle related symptoms for centuries. The present study examined the effectiveness of Chinese herbal medicine for the treatment of PMS among Australian women within the theoretical framework of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). Sixty-one women were assigned randomly into two groups within different TCM patterns. Herbal medicine and placebo were provided sequentially for a period of three months. There were significant differences (p < 0.01) in scores after three months of treatment between Chinese herbal medicine and placebo in premenstrual physical and psychological symptoms, depression, anxiety and anger favoring herbal medicine, but with no difference in perceived stress (p > 0.05). There were highly significant reductions (p < 0.001) between baseline and the end of the third herbal treatment month in all assessments in both groups except that a significant result (p < 0.05) was recorded on perceived stress only in the herbs-first group. No adverse effects were reported by any participant. The results support the hypothesis that the symptoms occurrence and severity of PMS can be effectively reduced by the use of Chinese herbal medicine.

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