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Humble opinion of the pharmacovigilance of Traditional Chinese Medicine

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Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) has been playing an important role in health protection and disease control for thousands of years in China. Using either as raw materials for decoction, as prepared herbal medicines or as formulated traditional medicines, TCM is still widely accepted by Chinese people, especially for chronic disease treatment. Although relying on natural products, mainly of herbal origin, safer than synthetic drugs, TCM is not safe absolutely. There are many adverse TCM drug reactions all over the world for recent decades, such as Aristolochic acid nephropathy (AA nephropathy), which has been observed in patients taking Mu Tong and Fangchi (traditional Chinese formulae that have been adulterated by aristolochic acid). So TCM need the “pharmacovigilance” to insure its’ rational and safe use. The pharmacovigilance of TCM is the combination of western pharmacovigilance idea and Traditional Chinese Medicine theory. There are many records about the rational use of TCM in ancient medical classics. It’s a tremendous asset for us left by our predecessors. For instance, classifying the TCM by its’ toxicity, Reducing the toxicity by processing, Incompatibility of TCM, Contraindications in using TCM in the period of Pregnancy, Taboo food and drink when taking TCM, etc. They have grown out of the accumulated knowledge and experience of hundreds of thousands of TCM doctors. These can serve as the pharmacovigilance of TCM, and they can guide the rational use of TCM, and then enhance the safety of TCM.

Biography

Baihui Dong is a postgraduate student in School of Chinese materia medica, Beijing University of Chinese Medicine, China. She completed her bachelor degree from Shandong University of Traditional Chinese Medicine in 2012. She won the honorary title of “excellent student” for many times and scholarship in each year during she’s undergraduate study. She is engaged in the study of pharmacovigilance of TCM in her graduate careers.

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