**Experts’ Experience**

LIU De-xi’s Experience in the TCM Differential Treatment of Liver for Male Climacteric Syndrome

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Chief physician LIU De-xi is a famous TCM physician in Hainan province. He excels in the TCM differential treatment for various stubborn and miscellaneous diseases, and has obtained remarkable therapeutic effects. The following is a summary of his experience in the treatment of male climacteric syndrome.

**Analysis on the Pathogeneses**

Male climacteric syndrome is a syndrome with a series of symptoms, which usually occurs in males in the transitional period from the middle age to the old age between 55–65 years. The clinical manifestations can vary according to the different involved zang-fu organs. However, the serum testosterone of such patients all tend to be lower than the normal level. It is stated in *Su Wen* (素问 Plain Questions) that ‘a man of 56 years old, his liver-qi declines, and the tendon is unable to move’, which stresses the close relationship between the vitality of man and the liver-qi. Director LIU thinks that the liver stores blood and dominates free flow of qi, and this function plays a very important role in promoting free flow of qi and blood in the whole body, and in balancing and regulating the ascending, descending, in and out of qi of the various zang-fu organs and tissues. The functional activities of qi of the twelve regular channels all depend on the inspiration of the functional activities of the liver-qi. When the liver-qi circulates smoothly, the other zang-fu organs would be in a calm and peaceful state. Otherwise, there would appear dysfunction and imbalance of yin and yang of the other zang-fu organs, which can, in turn, affect the function of the liver in storing blood and promoting free flow of qi, resulting in the formation and accumulation of pathogenic damp, heat, blood stasis and toxin, forming the causative factors of diseases and making worse the damage of the zang-fu organs, hence the occurrence of the various symptoms. Since male climacteric syndrome starts from failure of the liver-qi, the treatment should be based on the differentiation of the liver.

**Methods of Treatment**

1. Soothing the liver and regulating qi: For a man at 56 years old, the wane and wax of yin and yang begin to become disordered. Being an organ that stores blood and dominates free flow of qi, the liver would be the first to be affected. There can be seen such symptoms as being sentimental, headache and peevishness, dizziness and tinnitus, fullness in the chest and hypochondria, frequent belching, pale tongue proper with thin coating, and wiry pulse. In the treatment, _Xiao Yao San_ (逍遥散 Ease Powder) can be selected, added with _Yuan Zhi_ (远志 Radix Polygalae), _Shi Chang Pu_ (石菖蒲 Rhizoma Acori Graminei), _Xiang Fu_ (香附 Rhizoma Cyperi), _Long Dan Cao_ (龙胆草 Radix Gentianae), _Sheng Long Gu_ (生龙骨 Os Graconis Fossilia Ossis Mastodi), and _Sheng Mu Li_ (生牡蛎 Concha Ostreae). For patients with tidal fever and night sweating, _Di Gu Pi_ (远志 Cortex Lycii) and _Yin Chai Hu_ (远志 Radix Stellariae) can be added; for those with dizziness and vertigo, _Tian Ma_ (天麻 Rhizoma Gastrodiae), _Bai Ji Li_ (白术 Fructus Tribuli), and _Ban Xia_ (半夏 Rhizoma Pinelliae) can be added; for those with _
palpitation and shortness of breath, and general weakness, Huang Qi (黄芪 Radix Astragali) and Dang Shen (党参 Radix Codonopsis) can be added; for constipation, Bing Lang (槟榔 Semen Arecae), Da Huang (大黄 Radix et Rhizoma Rhei), and Zhi Qiao (枳壳 Fructus Aurantii) can be added; and for insomnia and dream-disturbed sleep, He Huan Pi (合欢皮 Cortex Albiziae), Bai Zi Ren (柏子仁 Semen Platycladi), and Bai He (百合 Bulbus Lilii) can be added.

2. Regulating the liver and spleen: Overwork and anxiety, and wishes being unfulfilled can cause injury of both the liver and spleen, leading to stagnation of the liver-qi and dysfunction of the spleen in transportation. There may appear such symptoms as listlessness, change in disposition, lassitude, hypochondriac and abdominal distension and fullness, little food intake and nausea, tidal fever with profuse sweating, impotence or decreased sexual desire, red tongue proper with little coating, and deficient-slow or wiry-slippery pulse. Danggui Shaoyao San (当归芍药散 Powder of Chinese Angelica and Peony) can be used in the treatment, added with Shan Yao (山药 Rhizoma Dioscoreae), Chen Pi (陈皮 Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae), Qing Pi (青皮 Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae Viride), Yu Jin (郁金 Radix Curcumae), Yin Yang Huo (淫羊藿 Herba Epimedii), and Tu Si Zi (菟丝子 Semen Cuscutae). For shortness of breath and general weakness, Dang Shen (党参 Radix Codonopsis) and Huang Qi (黄芪 Radix Astragali) can be added; for quick temper and peevishness, Chao Zhi Zi (炒栀子 parched Fructus Gardeniae), Long Dan Cao (龙胆草 Radix Gentianae), and Chuan Lian Zi (川楝子 Fructus Toosendan) can be added; for impotence, Ba Ji Tian (巴戟天 Morindae Officinalis), She Chuang Zi (蛇床子 Fructus Cnidii), and Gou Ji (狗脊 Rhizoma Cibotii) can be added, and for constipation, Zhi Qiao (枳壳 Fructus Aurantii), Bing Lang (槟榔 Semen Arecae), and Bai Zhu (白术 Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae) can be added.

3. Tonifying the kidney and nourishing the liver: ‘Essence and blood are inter-producing’. The liver and kidney are of the same source. The liver and kidney are closely related physiologically and pathologically. At the middle and old age, man’s liver and kidney are in the decline, and blood and essence are getting deficient. There can appear the symptoms of declined memory, dizziness and tinnitus, weakness of waist and knee joints, unstable emotional state, tidal fever and night sweating, or decreased sexual desire, red tongue proper with little coating, and thready-rapid or wiry-rapid pulse. The liver belongs to wood, while the kidney belongs to water. The liver is the son of the kidney. When the son is deficient, it will steal qi from the mother; and when the son is sufficient, it can also make the mother sufficient. Therefore, in the treatment, we can use the modified Zhi Bai Dihuang Wan (知柏地黄丸 Pill of Anemarrhena, Phellodendron and Rehmannia), Zuo Gui Yin (左归饮 Kidney-yin Reinforcing Decoction), and Yiguan Jian (一贯煎 An Ever Effective Decoction for Nourishing the Liver and Kidney) for nourishing the kidney and liver. The ingredients include: Zhi Mu (知母 Rhizoma Anemarrhena), Huang Bai (黄柏 Cortex Phellodendri), Shan Zhu Yu (山茱萸 Fructus Corni), Fu Ling (茯苓 Poria), Ze Xie (泽泻 Rhizoma Alismatis), Sheng Di Huang (生地黄 Radix Rehmanniae), Shu Di Huang (熟地黄 Radix Rehmanniae Preparata), Mai Dong (麦冬 Radix Ophiopogonis), Bai Shao (白芍 Radix Paeoniae Alba), Tian Dong (天冬 Radix Asparagi), Sang Ji Sheng (桑寄生 Herba Taxilli), Gou Qi Zi (枸杞子 Fructus Lycii), Bei Sha Shen (北沙参 Radix Glehniae), Xiang Fu (香附 Rhizoma Cyperi), Gou Teng (钩藤 Ramulus Uncariae cum Uncis), and Dan Nan Xing (淡南星 Arisaema cum Bile). For thirst with preference for drinking water, Xuan Shen (玄参 Radix Scrophulariae), Shi Hu (石斛 Herba Dendrobii), and Tian Hua Fen (天花粉 Radix Trichosanthis) can be added; for soreness and weakness of the waist and knee joints, Du Zhong (杜仲 Cortex Eucommiae), Gou Ji (狗脊 Rhizoma Cibotii), and Huai Niu Xi (怀牛膝 Radix Achyranthis Bidentatae) can be added;
for spermatorrhea, Jin Ying Zi (金樱子 Fructus Rosae Laevigatae), Wu Wei Zi (五味子 Fructus Schisandaec), Lian Xu (莲须 Stamen Nelumbo), Duan Long Gu (煅龙骨 calcined Os Draconis Fossilia Ossis Mastodi), and Duan Mu Li (煅牡蛎 calcined Concha Ostreae) can be added; for decreased sexual desire or impotence, Wu Gong (蜈蚣 Scolopendra), Xian Mao (玄肉 Morinda Officinalis), Sheng Mu Li (生木鳖 Semen Miltiorrhizae), Bai Shao (白芍 Radix Paeoniae Alba), and Gan Cao (甘草 Radix Glycyrrhizae).

The above prescription is often added with herbs having the flowing nature for promoting the flow of qi and blood, and activating yang-qi in the kidney, which is the key for warming the liver and nourishing the spleen. The following herbs are often selected such as Dan Shen (丹参 Radix Salviae Miltiorrhizae), Mu Dan Pi (牡丹皮 Cortex Moutan), Zhi Qiao (枳壳 Fructus Auranti), Sha Ren (砂仁 Fructus Amomi), and Yu Jin (郁金 Radix Curcumae).

For suspiciousness and palpitation, Shi Chang Pu (石菖蒲 Rhizoma Acori Graminei), Yuan Zhi (远志 Radix Polygalae), and Bai Zi Ren (柏子仁 Semen Platycladi) can be added; for spontaneous sweating and heavy sensation of the body, Huang Qi (黄芪 Radix Astragalii) and Fang Feng (防风 Radix Saposhnikoviae) can be added; for abdominal distention and diarrhea, Rou Dou Kou (肉豆蔻 Semen Myristicae), Shan Yao (山药 Rhizoma Dioscoreae), and He Zi (诃子 Fructus Chebulae) can be added; for edema of the four limbs, Ze Xie (泽泻 Rhizoma Alismatis), Dong Gua Pi (冬瓜皮 Exocarpium Benicasea), and Bu Gu Zhi (补骨脂 Fructus Psoraleae) can be added; for cold of insufficiency type of the liver and stomach, vertex pain, and retching and leaking of salivation, Chuan Xiong (川芎 Rhizoma Ligustici Chuanxiong) and Gang Gui (当归 Radix Angelicae Sinensis) can be added; for frequent night urination, Yi Zhi Ren (益智仁 Fructus Alpiniae Oxyphyllae), Sang Piao Xiao (桑螵蛸 Ootheca Mantidis), Sheng Long Gu (生龙骨 Os Draconis Fossilia Mastodi), and Sheng Mu Li (生牡蛎 Concha Ostreae) can be added; and for impotence and decrease of sexual desire, Jiang Can (僵蚕 Bombyx Batryticatus), Ba Ji Tian (巴戟天 Morindae Officinalis), Sheng Long Gu (生龙骨 Os Draconis Fossilia Mastodi), and Sheng Mu Li (生牡蛎 Concha Ostreae), and Yin Yang Huo (淫羊藿 Herba Epimedii) can be added.

5. Regulating the liver and tranquilizing the mind: The Heart Channel of Hand-Shaoyin is connected with the Kidney Channel of Foot-Shaoyin. In the
climacteric period, the patient tends to have kidney-qi in the decline, restlessness of the heart-qi, and hyperactivity of heart-fire, which can lead to failure of the kidney-qi to go upward to calm the heart-fire, and failure of the heart-qi to go downward to coordinate with the kidney-qi. Stagnation of the liver-qi and restlessness of the heart-qi would make qi of the heart and liver unable to descend, and dysfunction of transformation between yin and yang in the kidney. There can be seen such symptoms as dull complexion, spontaneous sweating and lassitude, mental confusion, anorexia, grief with desire to weep, and dream-disturbed sleep. The commonly-used prescription is Gui Zhi (Robinia pseudoacaciae Ramulus Cinnamomi) plus Longgu Muli Tang (Decoction of Dragon’s Bone and Oyster Shell), or Gan Mai Da Zao Tang (Decoction of Licorice, Wheat, and Date), added, according to the actual condition of the patient, with Bai Zi Ren (Paeonia suffruticosa Alba), Sheng Di Huang (Radix Rehmanniae Preparata) 20g, and Huang Jing (Rhizoma Polygonati) 20g. After taking 7 doses of the above prescription, the patient had the symptoms of flushed face, dryness of the mouth and night sweating alleviated. He then continued taking the original prescription for another 14 doses, after which he became vigorous, with dream-disturbed sleep and night sweating disappeared, but decreased sexual desire not improved. Then Long Dan Cao (Radix Gentianae) and Zhi Mu (Rhizoma Anemarrhenae) were left out from the above prescription, and Gou Qi Zi (Fructus Lycii) 15g, Zhi Shou Wu (Radix Polygoni Multiflori Preparata) 15g, Yin Yang Huo (Herba Epimedii) 10g, and Xian Mao (Rhizoma Curculiginis) 10g were added for activating the kidney-qi and regulating the kidney essence. After taking 30 doses of the modified prescription, all the symptoms disappeared, and the patient was cured.

Sample Cases
Case 1: A male patient of 52 years old, paid his first visit on April 21st, 2000. The patient complained of dizziness and lassitude, and tidal fever and night sweating for more than half a year, which were getting worse. He was also accompanied with flushed face and dryness in the mouth, dream-disturbed sleep, decrease of sexual desire, lumbar soreness and tinnitus, unstable emotional state, red tongue and lips, thin-yellow tongue coating, and thready-wiry pulse. The TCM differentiation was deficiency of kidney-essence, and excessiveness of the depressed fire of the liver channel. The principle of the treatment was nourishing the liver and kidney, and eliminating heat from the liver. The prescription contained: Long Dan Cao (Radix Gentianae) 9g, Chao Zhi Zi (Fructus Gardeniae) parched 9g, Zhi Mu (Radix Rehmanniae) 9g, Bai Shao (Radix Paeoniae Alba) 15g, Tian Dong (Radix Asparagi) 15g, Nu Chen Zi (Fructus Ligustri Lucidi) 15g, Huang Bai (Radix Phellodendri) 3g, Sheng Long Gu (Os Draconis Fossilia Mastodi) 30g, Sheng Mu Li (Concha Ostreae) 30g, Shu Di Huang (Radix Rehmanniae Preparata) 20g, and Huang Jing (Rhizoma Polygonati) 20g. After taking 7 doses of the above prescription, the patient had the symptoms of flushed face, dryness of the mouth and night sweating alleviated. He then continued taking the original prescription for another 14 doses, after which he became vigorous, with dream-disturbed sleep and night sweating disappeared, but decreased sexual desire not improved. Then Long Dan Cao (Radix Gentianae) and Zhi Mu (Rhizoma Anemarrhenae) were left out from the above prescription, and Gou Qi Zi (Fructus Lycii) 15g, Zhi Shou Wu (Radix Polygoni Multiflori Preparata) 15g, Yin Yang Huo (Herba Epimedii) 10g, and Xian Mao (Radix Curculiginis) 10g were added for activating the kidney-qi and regulating the kidney essence. After taking 30 doses of the modified prescription, all the symptoms disappeared, and the patient was cured.

Case 2: A male patient of 56 years old paid his first visit on September 11, 2003. The patient complained of general weakness and chest oppression, coldness of the body with chills, flushed face and sweating, susceptibility to awakening in the night for more than one year, which got worse in the recent 2 months. At the moment, the patient had listlessness, pale complexion, forgetfulness and tinnitus, coldness of four limbs, headache and body pain, little food intake, pale tongue with teeth marks on the border and thin-white coating, and wiry-slippery pulse. The TCM differentiation was yang-insufficiency of the spleen and kidney, and disharmony between Ying and Wei. The treating principle was regulating the liver, and
tonifying the spleen and kidney. The prescription contained: Gui Zhi (桂枝 Ramulus Cinnamomi) 9g, Dang Shen (党参 Radix Codonopsis) 15g, Fu Ling (茯苓 Poria) 15g, Bai Zhu (白术 Rhizoma Atrctylodis Macrocephalae) 15g, Ba Ji Tian (巴戟天 Radix Morindae Officinalis) 12g, Tu Si Zi (菟丝子 Semen Cuscutae) 12g, Bu Gu Zhi (补骨脂 Fructus Psoraleae) 12g, Yin Yang Huo (淫羊藿 Herba Epimedi) 12g, Yu Jin (郁金 Radix Curcumae) 12g, Dang Gui (当归 Radix Angelicae Sinensis) 10g, Xiang Fu (香附 Rhizoma Cyperi) 10g. Bai Shao (白芍 Radix Paeoniae Alba) 10g, Sheng Long Gu (生龙骨 Os Draconis Fossilia Mastodi) 30g, Sheng Mu Li (生牡蛎 Concha Ostreae) 30g, Xi Xin (细辛 Herba Asari) 3g, Gan Cao (甘草 Radix Glycyrrhizae) 8g, 3 pieces of Sheng Jiang (生姜 Rhizoma Zingiberis Recens), and 3 grains of Da Zao (大枣 Fructus Jujubae). After taking 7 doses of the above prescription, the patient got his mental state improved, the four limbs feeling warm, and the body pain disappeared. He continued taking the above prescription for another 15 doses. His sleep became calm, the tinnitus disappeared, the appetite increased, and the facial complexion became red-bright. Then, Bu Gu Zhi (补骨脂 Fructus Psoraleae), Sheng Long Gu (生龙骨 Os Draconis Fossilia Mastodi), Sheng Mu Li (生牡蛎 Concha Ostreae), and Gui Zhi (桂枝 Ramulus Cinnamomi) were left out from the prescription, added with Shi Chang Pu (石菖蒲 Rhizoma Acori Graminei) 8g, Yuan Zhi (远志 Radix Polygalae) 9g, and Gou Qi Zi (枸杞子 Fructus Lycii) 12g. After taking 22 doses of the modified prescription, the patient was cured.

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