

Research Progress of Wuwei Xiaodu Decoction on The Treatment of Inflammatory Diseases

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Received : August 08, 2026

Published : October 29, 2026

ABSTRACT

Background: Wuwei Xiaodu Decoction (WXD) has the efficacy of clearing heat and detoxifying the toxins, reducing swelling and dispersing nodules. It is derived from Yizong Jinjian in the Qing Dynasty, and comprised five herbs: *Lonicera japonica*, *Chrysanthemum indicum*, *Taraxacum mongolicum*, *Viola yedoensis* and *Semiaquilegia radix*, and can be used in clinical practice for inflammatory diseases, such as surgical infections, uterine lesions, skin diseases and other diseases. Inflammation is a key factor in the occurrence and development of various chronic diseases, including diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, arthritis, and autoimmune diseases, seriously threatening human health.

Methods and Materials: In March 2026, information on ingredients and pharmacological applications of WXD was obtained from PubMed, China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) databases and The Beijing Health Vocational College Library within the last five years.

Results: Studies have shown that WXD has great potential in treatment of inflammation-related diseases, and can improve inflammatory indicators of patients, relieve pain, reduce adverse reactions, and at the same time regulate the function of immune cells, which has great clinical promotion value.

Conclusion: Therefore, by summarizing the clinical application of WXD and western medicine in treatment of inflammatory diseases, it can provide a basis for its further development and application as well as the treatment of inflammatory diseases.

Keywords: Wuwei Xiaodu Decoction, Inflammation, Adverse Reactions, Immunoregulation, Chinese and Western Medicine Cooperation

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

WXD: Wuwei Xiaodu Decoction

CNKI: China National Knowledge Infrastructure

IL-6: Interleukin-6

TNF-α: Tumor Necrosis Factor-α

WBC: White Blood Cell

PCT: Procalcitonin

CRP: C-reactive Protein

TCM: Traditional Chinese Medicine

QOL: Quality of Life

INTRODUCTION

Inflammatory diseases generally refer to a class of diseases with chronic inflammation as the fundamental pathological mechanism [1]. Its clinical manifestations are usually complex and changeable, and it is easy to relapse and has a protracted course [2]. This not only seriously damages the quality of life of patients, but also brings heavy social and medical burdens. Currently, the mainstream drugs used clinically to treat inflammation include glucocorticoids, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, immunosuppressants, and inflammatory factor antagonists [3-5]. Although these drugs can effectively control the inflammatory response, their long-term use is often accompanied by significant side effects and safety issues. For example, glucocorticoids may cause hypertension, osteoporosis, and immunosuppression; nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs may easily cause gastrointestinal ulcers, increased risk of bleeding, and damage to liver and kidney function; some drugs may also induce drug resistance or allergic reactions [6-8]. These limitations have prompted researchers to explore new, safer and more effective anti-inflammatory strategies. In this context, natural drugs have regained widespread attention due to their diverse mechanisms of action and low overall toxicity and have become an important and promising research direction for the development of new anti-inflammatory therapies [9].

WXD comes from Volume 72 of "Yizong Jinjian-Surgical Heart Methods" edited by Wu Qian in the Qing Dynasty [10]. The whole prescription is composed of five herbs: *Lonicera japonica*, *Chrysanthemum indicum*, *Taraxacum mongolicum*, *Viola yedoensis* and *Semiaquilegia radix*. It has the effect of clearing away heat and detoxifying, dissipating boils, and cooling blood and dispersing stagnation. It is not only a classic prescription for treating the initial onset of boils, but also a commonly used prescription in modern clinical medicine for anti-inflammatory, analgesic, anti-infection, and regulating

immunity [11]. This prescription uses the core method of clearing away the heat and poison in the triple burner. Monarch *Lonicera japonica*, sweet and cold in nature, mainly enters the lungs and stomach, clears the heat from the Qi level of the upper and middle Jiao, and also cools the blood. Among the Minister and Assistant medicines, *Chrysanthemum indicum* clears liver and gallbladder fire, *Taraxacum mongolicum* removes dampness and heat from the lower burns. Both assist *Lonicera japonica* in thoroughly clearing heat and toxicity from the Qi level. *Viola yedoensis* is bitter and cold, specializing in clearing away heat from blood, and clears Qi and blood with *Lonicera japonica*. *Semiaquilegiae radix* can detoxify and activate blood circulation and remove stagnation of triple burner fire. All the medicines are used together to form a combined force of clearing and purging the qi, blood and upper, middle and lower burners, and together they have the effect of detoxifying and eliminating carbuncles. Modern pharmacological research has also confirmed its efficacy in clearing heat, detoxifying, and eliminating carbuncles and boils. In the prescription, *Lonicera japonica* contains the main components of heat-clearing, sterilizing, anti-viral, antioxidant, and immune-enhancing components, including organic acids, triterpene saponins, flavonoids, volatile oils, trace elements, etc. [12,13]. The flavonoids, volatile oils, terpenes and other components in *Chrysanthemum indicum* not only fight inflammation, but also protect the vascular system and liver tissue. The total flavonoids in *Taraxacum mongolicum* can effectively reduce the levels of Interleukin-6 (IL-6) and tumor necrosis factor-α (TNF-α) inflammatory factors and have good anti-inflammatory effects [14]. *Viola yedoensis* is a commonly used natural anti-inflammatory drug, which can effectively clear away heat and detoxify, and relieve redness, swelling, heat and pain [15]. *Semiaquilegiae radix* have strong ability to inhibit pathogenic microorganisms, and are antibacterial and anti-inflammatory [16]. Compared with commonly used clinical anti-inflammatory drugs, WXD has better anti-inflammatory effects and safety, and has become the first choice for combined anti-inflammatory and anti-infective medicines in recent years. This article summarizes the application of WXD in the treatment of inflammatory diseases with integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine, systematically explains its effects, and provides theoretical support for the development of WXD as an anti-inflammatory drug or auxiliary treatment drug.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

In March 2026, an extensive investigation was conducted

utilizing various databases, notably PubMed, CNKI and the Beijing Health Vocational College Library within the last five years. A total of eighty articles were found using the search parameters including “WXD” and “anti-inflammatory”/“inflammation”; after exclusion of non-relevant and of duplicate articles, forty-four articles were included for a comprehensive understanding of the various applications and characteristics of WXD.

RESULTS

Tonsillitis

Acute suppurative tonsillitis is a common disease in children, and its causative bacteria are mainly *Streptococcus pyogenes*. Typical clinical manifestations include tonsil redness and swelling, flaky or punctate purulent secretions visible on the surface, and often accompanied by severe pain and fever in the pharynx [17,18]. WXD can soothe the throat, reduce swelling, drain pus, clear away heat, detoxify, relieve patients' symptoms, and shows unique advantages in the treatment of tonsillitis. Feng et al. [19] randomly divided 86 children with acute suppurative tonsillitis into the control group and the observation group [19]. The observation group received intravenous infusion of cefuroxime sodium, combined with Yinqiao Powder and WXD, while the control group was only treated by cefuroxime sodium. After treatment, inflammatory reaction indexes including white blood cell (WBC) count, procalcitonin (PCT) and C-reactive protein (CRP) were significantly decreased, and the observation group was significantly lower than that of the control group ($P < 0.05$). Therefore, Yinqiao Powder and WXD combined with Western medicine therapy can improve the clinical symptoms of children with acute suppurative tonsillitis, shorten the course of disease, and can effectively reduce the WBC count, PCT and CRP and other inflammatory markers, promote inflammation regression. At the same time, the incidence of adverse reactions is low, the overall effect is significant, and it has high clinical application value.

Cardiac Inflammation

Infective endocarditis is a serious infectious disease characterized by microbial infection and vegetation formation on the surface of the endocardium, especially the valves [20,21]. Feng Qiang et al [22] studied 68 patients with endocarditis. The observation group was treated with antibiotics, Huanglian Jiedu decoction and WXD, and the control group was treated with western medicine alone. (73.53%) In comparison, clinical

treatment is effective (94.12%) significantly increased, the difference was statistically significant. Meanwhile, serum IL-6, serum high-sensitivity CRP, serum procalcitonin and erythrocyte sedimentation rate in observation group were significantly lower than those in control group. ($P < 0.05$), and there was no serious adverse reaction in both groups during the treatment process [22]. Therefore, compared with conventional western medicine treatment, Huanglian Jiedu decoction and WXD combined with western medicine showed a more comprehensive treatment advantage for patients with endocarditis. It could not only control clinical symptoms and inflammation of the body more effectively, improve prognosis, but also have higher clinical safety.

Uterine Inflammation

1. Cervical Erosion: Cervical erosion is a common gynecological disease in clinical practice. Investigation shows that the incidence rate of cervical erosion is as high as 43.89% in married professional women in China [23]. Cervical erosion patients often have symptoms such as increased leucorrhea, contact bleeding or infertility. If treatment is not timely, the disease may further develop and increase the risk of cervical intraepithelial neoplasia and cervical cancer [24]. Xie Jingyi et al. treated 300 patients with cervical erosion, of which the control group was given anti-infection combined with microwave irradiation, and the observation group was given Zidai Fang and WXD combined with high-efficiency monomer silver antibacterial gel [25]. After treatment, the total clinical effective rate in the observation group (92.67%) was significantly higher than that in the control group (78.67%), the difference was statistically significant ($P < 0.05$), and the patient satisfaction was higher. At the same time, the adverse reactions of the two groups were lower in the treatment process, and the observation group was significantly lower than the control group ($P < 0.05$).

2. Endometritis: Endometritis is a common reproductive system infection in women, specifically refers to inflammation occurring in the body of the uterus [26]. If not effectively controlled, inflammation can spread deep and involve the myometrium, leading to more serious inflammatory pathological changes. Xiao Chengxiu selected 136 patients with endometritis and randomly divided them into observation group and control group. Patients in the control group were given conventional western medicine treatment, and patients in the observation group were treated with enema with traditional Chinese medicine WXD [27]. After treatment, the levels of serum inflammatory factors (IL-6,

IL-8, TNF- α) in the two groups were significantly lower than those before treatment, and the decrease in the observation group was more significant than that in the control group ($P < 0.05$). The above results show that the use of WXD enema treatment of endometriosis, can effectively reduce the level of inflammatory factors in patients, and reduce treatment-related adverse reactions, has a clear clinical value.

Osteogenic Inflammation

Traumatic Osteomyelitis is a bone infection disease caused by trauma. The main clinical manifestations are pain, bone abnormality such as hyperplasia or necrosis and sinus formation, which often leads to motor dysfunction and quality of life decline of patients [28]. In traditional Chinese medicine theory, this disease corresponds to "attached bone abscess". It is said in "Yizong Jinjian-Surgical Heart Method Essential-Complex Theory of carbuncle" that "carbuncle is originally caused by fire toxin, and meridians block qi and blood coagulation", which reveals the core pathogenesis of fire toxin accumulation and qi and blood stasis. Therefore, its treatment should be based on the basic principles of clearing away heat and toxic materials (eliminating bone poisoning evil), dredging channels and activating collaterals (dredging qi and blood stasis), and filling bone and marrow (promoting bone repair). Zhang Shengquan et al. [29] conducted membrane induction technology on 25 patients with traumatic osteomyelitis of tibia, and intravenous drip of sensitive antibiotics after operation; another 25 patients were treated with WXD on the basis of the control group [29]. Clinical efficacy comparison showed that the total effective rate of the observation group was 92.00%, significantly higher than that of the control group (76.00%). ($P < 0.05$). In terms of functional improvement, the scores of foot and ankle joint function of patients in both groups were improved, but the improvement degree of observation group was better. The recurrence rate of the observation group was only 4.35% (1 case), which was also significantly lower than that of the control group (15.79% (3 cases)). ($P < 0.05$). The results of this study suggest that WXD combined with membrane induction technology can effectively improve the clinical efficacy of tibial traumatic osteomyelitis, significantly reduce the risk of recurrence, promote the recovery of limb function, and have clear clinical application value. Zhang Zebin et al. [30] treated 38 patients with traumatic osteomyelitis with antibiotics, and 42 patients with WXD combined with antibiotics [30]. The results showed that WXD combined with antibiotics had a significant effect on traumatic osteomyelitis (95.24%), significantly higher than

the control group (76.32%) ($P < 0.05$). In immune function, CD4⁺ level and CD4⁺/CD8⁺ ratio were increased and CD8⁺ level was decreased in combination group compared with control group. The duration of antibiotics and extubation were shorter in the combination group than in the control group ($P < 0.05$). After treatment, inflammatory indicators such as white blood cells, neutrophils, erythrocyte sedimentation rate, CRP and PCT decreased more significantly in the combination group, and the pain VAS score was also lower (all $P < 0.05$). The above results comprehensively illustrate that this combination therapy can effectively regulate immune function, effectively shorten the time of antibiotic use, inhibit inflammatory reactions, accelerate the rehabilitation process and relieve pain.

Skin Inflammation

1. Herpes Zoster: Herpes zoster is an opportunistic infection caused by reactivation of varicella-zoster virus [31]. It typically presents as clustered blisters and erythema with significant pain. The disease occurs most frequently in immunocompromised individuals. Current conventional treatments for the disease are mainly antiviral and analgesic, but often face limited efficacy and high recurrence rates. In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) theory, this disease belongs to the category of "winding waist fire pill" or "snake series sore", and its treatment follows the basic principles of clearing heat and removing dampness, detoxifying and purging fire, and activating blood circulation and dredging collaterals. Lu Yubin's study included 60 patients with herpes zoster, among which the control group used acyclovir tablets, and the treatment group used internal and external washing combined therapy of Gulou Honghua decoction and WXD [32]. The results showed that the total effective rate of the treatment group (93.33%) and patient satisfaction (96.67%) were significantly higher than the control group in terms of mechanism, the treatment group was superior to the control group in reducing serum inflammatory factors (IL-4, IL-6, TNF- α) levels, improving NRS pain score and improving key immune indicators ($P < 0.05$).

2. Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease: Hand-foot-mouth disease belongs to the category of "warm disease" in TCM system [33]. The basis of its occurrence lies in that children are "delicate Zang-fu organs, insufficient Qi", relatively insufficient Qi, and vulnerable to external epidemic diseases and toxins. The pathogenic Qi often enters from the nose and mouth, invades the lungs and spleen, and interacts with the damp-heat in the body, resulting in poor Qi circulation and non-transformation

of moisture. Toxin, heat and dampness are intertwined, and occur externally on the skin of limbs and oropharynx, showing symptoms such as herpes. Therefore, the treatment should be based on “clearing away heat and detoxifying”. Xu Lihua et al. conducted a retrospective study on children with hand, foot and mouth disease and included 116 patients [34]. The results showed that WXD was added to conventional western medicine. The observation group has an overall clinical effectiveness rate (96.55%) was significantly better than that of the control group treated only with conventional western medicine (77.59%), the difference is statistically significant. There was no significant difference in the incidence of adverse reactions between the two groups. In this section, the observation group had better effect in reducing the levels of serum inflammatory factors (TNF- α , IL-6, CRP) ($P < 0.05$), which indicated that WXD could safely and effectively relieve the symptoms of hand and foot rash and oral ulcer in children, and its mechanism might be related to inhibiting NF- κ B pathway and alleviating systemic inflammatory reaction.

(3) Psoriasis: The incidence of psoriasis in children is increasing year by year, and its complex immunopathological mechanism and high recurrence rate pose great challenges to treatment [35, 36]. The disease is defined as immune-related chronic inflammatory skin disease in modern medicine, and is called “white” or “wind” in traditional Chinese medicine [37]. The description of “dry skin itching such as rash and white, scratching, gradually dry limbs, cracking blood and pain” in the Book of Surgical Syndrome accurately summarizes its typical clinical features. Liu Weiwei et al. included 96 children with guttate psoriasis and divided them into two groups according to the order of treatment [38]. The control group received external treatment of 0.45% triamcinolone acetonide acetate cream combined with emollient cream, while the treatment group was combined with internal administration of WXD on this basis. The efficacy evaluation showed that the total effective rate of the treatment group was significantly higher than that of the control group, indicating that it had more advantages in reducing the skin lesion area and severity. After 4 weeks of treatment, the TCM syndrome scores of both groups decreased significantly ($P < 0.05$), and the decreased range of the treatment group was greater ($P < 0.05$). During the whole treatment process, the liver and kidney functions of all patients were not abnormal. The results of this study showed that WXD combined with external therapy could effectively promote the regression of rash, improve TCM syndrome, and had good safety and clinical popularization value.

(4) Sores: Sore is a common disease in TCM surgery, generally refers to various

skin purulent infections [39]. Its typical manifestations are red, swollen, burning, pain and local swelling [40]. Among these diseases, most belong to yang syndrome, usually with acute onset, rapid development and severe clinical characteristics. Rao Chong randomly divided 65 patients with yang syndrome sores into observation group ($n=33$) and control group ($n=32$). The control group took orally moxifloxacin hydrochloride tablets and externally applied Fusidic acid cream, while the observation group was treated with WXD and externally applied Shengji Yuhong cream [41]. The study results showed that the total effective rate of the observation group (96.97%) significantly higher than the control group (81.25%) ($P < 0.05$). In terms of improvement of specific indicators, the observation group also showed overall advantages: the reduction of redness and swelling range, the reduction of pain score, and the reduction of leukocyte and neutrophil levels after treatment were significantly better than those of the control group. The scores of all dimensions of quality of life (QOL) in the observation group were also significantly improved ($P < 0.05$), which indicated that the scheme of WXD combined with Shengji Yuhong cream for external use had ideal curative effect on yang syndrome sores, could effectively relieve pain, control inflammation and improve QOL, and was a feasible and effective treatment option.

(5) Acne: Acne is a chronic inflammatory skin disease involving the pilosebaceous gland unit, which occurs on the face, back and chest where sebum secretion is strong. [42,43] Acne typically presents as acne, papules and pustules, which often have a significant negative impact on the psychological state and social life of patients. Acne with dampness-heat in the spleen and stomach is more common in clinical diagnosis and treatment. Xie Yimin et al. selected 43 patients with acne of spleen and stomach damp-heat type from outpatient department of traditional Chinese medicine and gave WXD and Yincheng Weiling Decoction for treatment. 18 cases were cured, accounting for 41.9%; 16 cases were significantly effective, accounting for 37.2%; 6 cases were effective, accounting for 13.9%; 3 cases were ineffective, accounting for 7.0%; the total effective rate was 93.0% [44]. The study confirmed that, for spleen and stomach dampness-heat acne, WXD and Yincheng Weiling Decoction treatment can obtain accurate curative effect, the program has clinical reference value.

CONCLUSION

Traditional anti-inflammatory drugs are limited in clinical application due to low selectivity of target and obvious

side effects. Therefore, it is urgent to develop new anti-inflammatory strategies. As a classic prescription, WXD has shown clear anti-inflammatory activity in bone tissue, skin, cardiovascular and gynecological inflammatory diseases, effectively shortening the use time of antibiotics and avoiding drug resistance. Meanwhile, *Lonicera japonica* in the prescription has the effect of regulating immune function of patients, and the prescription has good safety and few reports of related toxicity. Therefore, the combination of WXD can enhance the immunity of patients and avoid secondary infection or disease recurrence effectively while treating diseases. However, the specific mechanism of action of WXD has not been studied deeply, and large-scale long-term clinical observation is also lacking to fully verify its efficacy. Therefore, it is of great significance to conduct in-depth pharmacological mechanism exploration and standardized clinical evaluation for the transformation of new drugs and the treatment innovation of inflammatory diseases.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors have no conflicts of interest.

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