

Allergic Rhinitis

Help From Chinese Medicine

中医科普系列-过敏性鼻炎



▣ Yang Qing-hua, Ph.D TCM
Carl Stimson, L.Ac



人民卫生出版社

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Foreword

Chinese medicine has two meanings: the broad meaning refers to the traditional medicines created by working people of all ethnic groups in historical China, including "Tibetan medicine," "Mongolian medicine," and many other medicines of the minority populations. The narrow meaning points only to the traditional medicine created by the majority Han nationality in China. What we usually call "Chinese medicine," and what we use in this text, refers to this narrower sense.

Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) is one of the few traditional medicines in the world which is not only still used today, but is actually growing in use – and in some areas like the United States, growing more quickly than any other type of medicines. It is the ideological product of ancient Chinese people observing

the human body and fighting diseases, and it is also an extension of Chinese culture and philosophy. It took thousands of years of experiences and theoretical knowledge fighting human diseases, for this to gradually develop into a complete mature system of medicine. TCM is based on the concept of holism. On the one hand, it focuses on relationships between psychology and physiology, and the human body and nature, thus it is concerned more about the patient as a whole rather than focusing on the disease as a separate entity from the patient. Both TCM and biomedicine theories believe in physiological homeostasis – that a body in balance is healthy and when the body is out of balance it becomes unhealthy or diseased. But TCM holds that diseases are caused by myriad disharmonies – invasion of micro-organisms is only one small cause of imbalance. It also stresses the interrelationship of every part of the human body, including the mind, and the equilibrium of every system is the basic condition for

life. Chinese physicians collect disease information through a variety of signs such as tongue appearance, pulse quality, complexion, and so on, without having to rely on laboratory tests. Traditional Chinese medicine uses medicinals and many physical therapies to treat disease. Medicinals mainly come from plant roots, stems, leaves, flowers, seeds, and fruit, but sometimes from minerals and animals. The physical therapies include acupuncture, cupping, *gua sha*, medicated bath, moxibustion, and tui na – all without the use of pharmaceutical drugs. Because these

therapies are collected or cultivated directly from nature and are entirely hands-on, Chinese medicine can truly be called a green therapy.

From its theories, clinical diagnosis, and treatments, TCM is different from Western bio medicine. It is our hope and intention to explain these differences while showing some effective methods for treating allergic rhinitis, and in doing so, extend the understanding of traditional Chinese medicine around the world.





Guide to the Book //

Explanation ↻

It is widely held in Western biomedicine that allergic rhinitis is an incurable illness. Steps we can take with this illness are: avoid the allergy source(s) to prevent an attack, take medicines such as antihistamines and/or steroid therapy, or have surgery to relieve symptoms. In this book we will explore positive methods for avoiding a rhinitis attack like diet therapy and qi gong, and also show effective methods of treatment using traditional Chinese medicine, such as acupuncture and herbal medicine. Western medicine holds that susceptibility to allergic rhinitis may wax and wane with time but has few if any ways to extend those periods of waning and decrease susceptibility in the long run.

Guide ↻

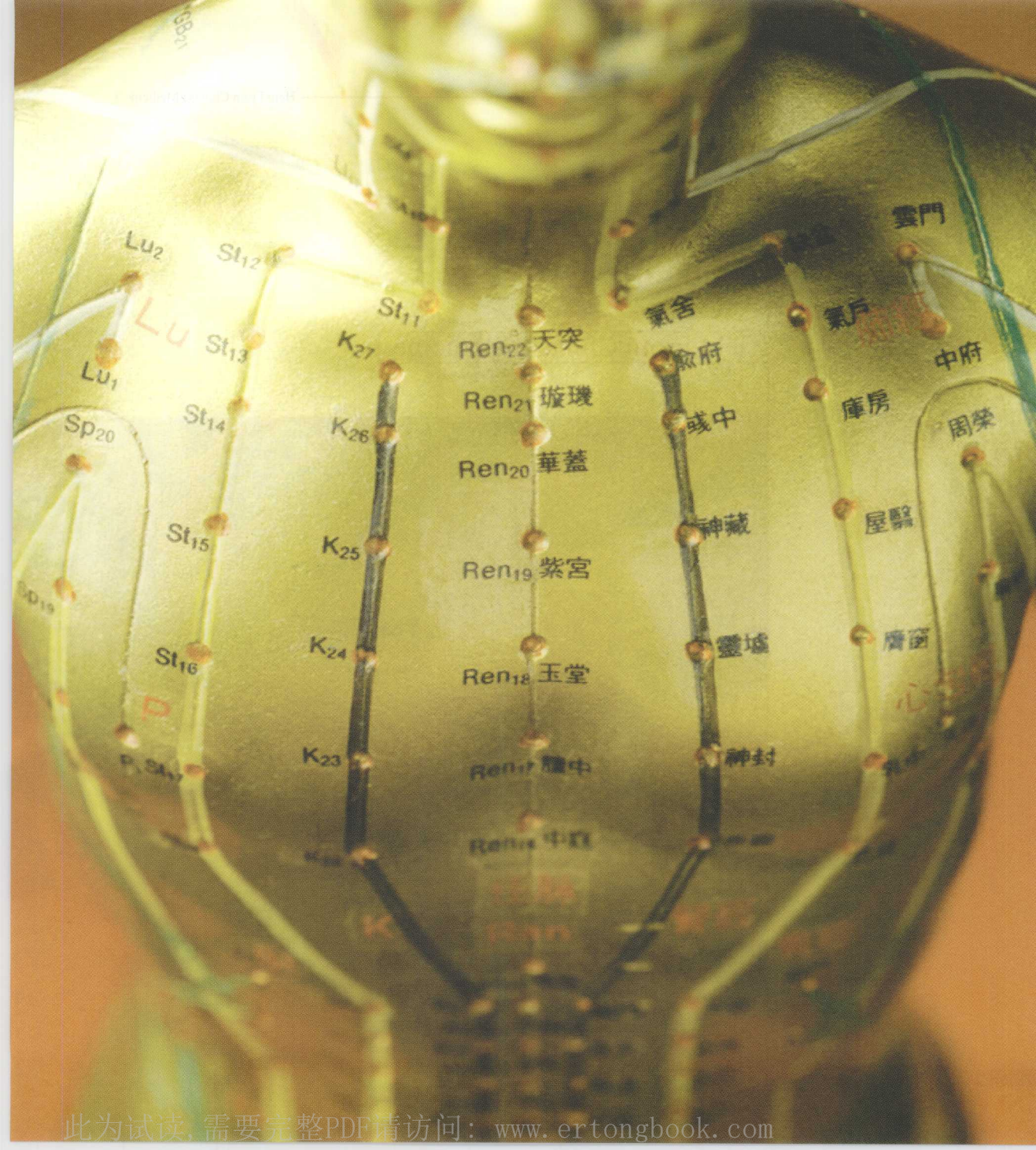
The second purpose of this book is to provide you with a resource that can be used to understand allergic rhinitis in TCM terms, which is absolutely different from what you may know now. Many of the treatments in this book can be easily done at home with no or only minor assistance in locating certain acupoints. After reading this guide we hope you will have a better understanding of TCM as a whole, and specifically its methodologies for treating allergic rhinitis, and be willing to try it for yourself.



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Chapter 1

Why Chinese Medicine?



Differences Between Chinese Medicine and Biomedicine

TCM is a system of diagnosis and health-care approaches that has evolved over at least 3000 years. The TCM approach to understanding the human body is unique and distinctly different from Western biomedicine.



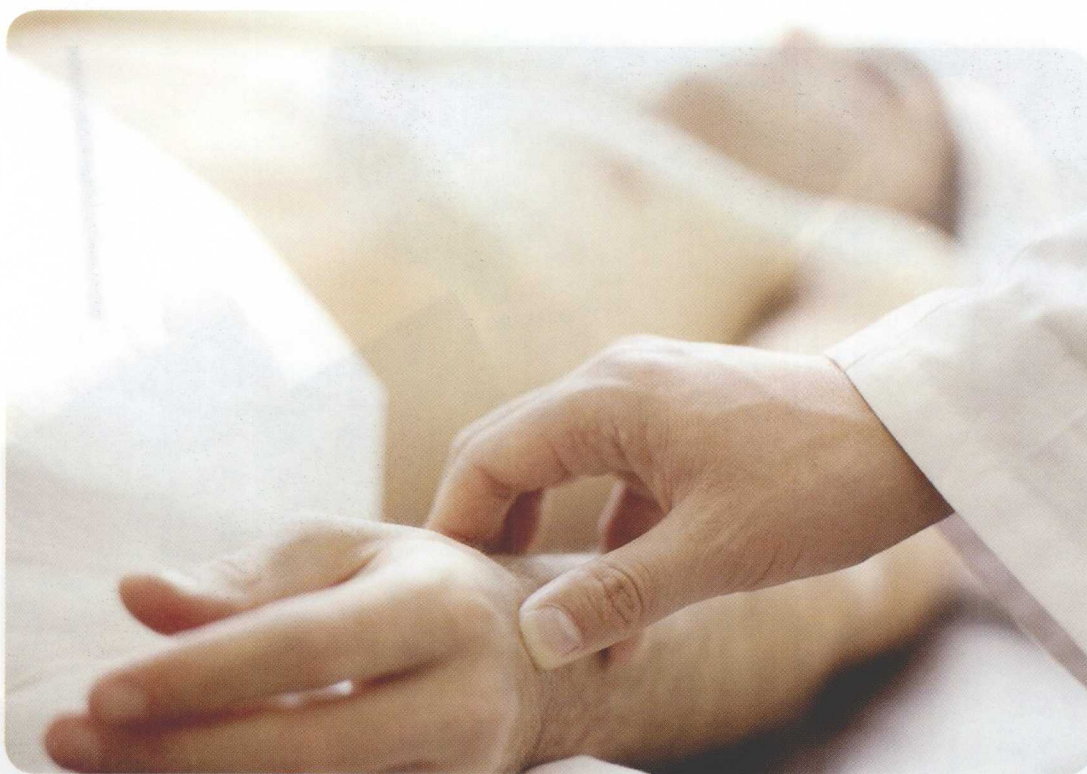
The Western physician starts with a symptom then searches for the underlying mechanism – a precise cause to a specific disease. For example, for diarrhea a physician may first test a patient's feces to determine the pathogen which caused the diarrhea. Then a pharmaceutical drug will be prescribed with germicidal or bacteriostatic action against the found pathogen. The diarrhea will be cured when the

pathogen has disappeared as verified by later tests. In this same instance, a TCM physician will check the patient's tongue and pulse, ask detailed questions, and sometimes they may ask to see the patient's feces with their own eyes. The understanding of the reasons for the diarrhea may be vastly different. It might be said that the stomach has cold obstruction, or perhaps spleen or large intestine dysfunction.



tion. Then methods such as warming the stomach, replenishing the spleen or large intestine are prescribed. The body has recovered when the organs have regained their normal balance. Of course TCM does acknowledge the effects of external pathogens like bacteria or parasites, but our terminology in describing them var-

ies considerably from Western medicine. In addition, when the Western physician considers the problem solved when the diarrhea is gone, or the bug has been eliminated, a TCM physician does not consider the problem solved until the body is back in harmony and at full strength.



Characteristics of Chinese Medicine

The Chinese approach to understand the human body is unique. It is based on the holistic concept of the universe outlined in the spiritual insights of Daoism, and it has produced a highly sophisticated set of practices designed to cure illness and to maintain health and well-being. These practices include acupuncture, herbal remedies, diet, meditation, and both static and moving exercises. Although they appear very different in approach, they all share the same underlying sets of assumptions about the nature of the human body and its place in the universe. It is only natural to wonder why the insertion of fine needles into a variety of points in the body, often bearing no obvious relationship to the actual problem, can have such a dramatic effect. Any patient trying to consume an herbal mixture must, at times, question what is going on?

