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A Longitudinal Study on Body Constitutions in Pre-Pregnancy and Postpartum Women

Li-Li Chen, PhD, RN

School of Nursing, China Medical University, Taichung, Taiwan

Jun-Dai Lin, PhD, MSN

Department of Nursing, Asia University, Taichung, Taiwan

Amy Shu-Chuan Lin, MSN, RN, NP

Department of Nursing, No.542, Sec. 1, Zhongshan Rd., Changhua City, Changhua County 500, Taiwan (R.O.C.), Changhua, Taiwan

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to monitor the longitudinal change of body constitution - yang-xu, yin-xu, and stasis - in pre-pregnancy and postpartum women.

Methods: A longitudinal study design was used. Participants were recruited from the postnatal ward of a medical center in central Taiwan. Excluding those with complications from pregnancy and delivery, a total of 118 postpartum women with normal spontaneous delivery were recruited. One-hundred six women were completely followed up upon. A structural questionnaire was used and included: 1. Three traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) body constitution scales: yang-xu, yin-xu, and stasis; 2. Demographic data. This instrument has been tested for reliability and validity. The internal consistency values of the yang-xu, yin-xu, and Stasis constitution scales were 0.86, 0.83, and 0.81 using Cronbach's α coefficient. Data were collected by the same staff from June 2009 to January 2010(including the follow-up).

Results: The mean age of the 118 participants was 30.3 ± 3.9 . Postpartum women's scores for yang-xu, yin-xu, and stasis constitution in the six months after childbirth varied. The lowest scores of yang-xu, yin-xu, and stasis constitution occurred in five weeks after childbirth (28.5 ± 7.2 vs. 31.6 ± 8.6 vs. 25.7 ± 7.9), and were highest in six months after childbirth (31.7 ± 9.5 vs. 33.6 ± 10.8 vs. 27.3 ± 9.0). Yin-xu and stasis constitution scores five weeks after childbirth were similar to pre-pregnancy levels but other time points were higher than pre-pregnancy. Yang-xu constitution scores returned to pre-pregnancy levels at six months after childbirth. Repeated measures ANOVA analysis revealed that the mean score of yang-xu, yin-xu body constitution were statistically different between pre-pregnant women and postpartum women ($p < 0.05$). The mean scores of stasis body constitution in pre-pregnant women and postpartum women were different and at the boundary line of being statistically significant ($p = 0.05$).

Conclusion: This study established evidence data for yang-xu, yin-xu, and stasis body constitution values and their changes within the six months following childbirth. The results might provide obstetric medical professionals planning for six months postpartum TCM body constitution healthcare measures basis.

Title:

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Keywords:

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Abstract Summary:

This study established evidence data for yang-xu, yin-xu, and stasis body constitution values and their changes within the six months following childbirth. The results might provide obstetric medical professionals planning for six months postpartum TCM body constitution healthcare measures basis.

Content Outline:

TCM experts suggest that body constitution is characterized by deficiencies in both blood and gi and by excessive stasis during the postpartum phase. At present, there are very few longitudinal studies in the literature on postpartum changes in body constitution. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the yang-xu, yin-xu, and stasis of body constitution before pregnancy and up to 6 months postpartum.

Participants were recruited from the postnatal ward of a medical center in central Taiwan. A total of 118 postpartum women with normal spontaneous delivery were recruited. A structural questionnaire was used. Results found the mean age of the participants was 30.3 ± 3.9 . Postpartum women's scores for yang-xu, yin-xu, and stasis constitution in the six months after childbirth varied. Repeated measures ANOVA analysis revealed that the mean score of yang-xu, yin-xu, stasis body constitution were statistically different between pre-pregnant women and postpartum women. The results might provide obstetric medical professionals planning for six months postpartum TCM body constitution healthcare measures basis.

First Primary Presenting Author

Primary Presenting Author

Li-Li Chen, PhD, RN

China Medical University

School of Nursing

Associate Professor

Taichung

Taiwan

Professional Experience: I am an associate professor of school of nursing in China Medical University and was graduate from Chinese Medical Science. Teaching Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) in nursing education and studying in this area for more than 10 years. I had published many TCM in nursing related articles. I also had oral presentations in Asia nations such as Korea, Mainland China. The nearest publication was as following: SEED: the six excesses (Liu Yin) evaluation and diagnosis scale. *Chinese Medicine*, 2015 Oct, 10.

Author Summary: I am an associate professor of school of nursing in China Medical University and was graduate from Chinese Medical Science. Teaching Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) in nursing

education and studying in this area for more than 10 years. I had published many TCM in nursing related articles. I also had oral presentations in Asia nations such as Korea, Mainland China.

Second Author
Jun-Dai Lin, PhD, MSN
Asia University
Department of Nursing
Assistant Professor
Wufeng
Taichung
Taiwan

Professional Experience: Major in Mental health and Traditional Chinese Medicine in Nursing. Graduated from School of Chinese Medicine, China Medical University. I am an assistant professor in department of nursing, Asia University. I am major in both Traditional Chinese Medicine and Mental health.

Author Summary: I am an assistant professor in department of nursing, Asia University. I am major in both Traditional Chinese Medicine and Mental health. I had published TCM in nursing related articles.

Third Author
Amy Shu-Chuan Lin, MSN, RN, NP
Department of Nursing
Dean of nursing department of Show Chwan Health Care System
Changhua
Taiwan

Professional Experience: 1.1994-1998-RN, General medical ward, Taiwan. 2.1998-present--Nurse practitioner, Hema-Oncology center, Taiwan. 3.2008-2010--Instructor, Department of Nursing, Chung-Jen College of Nursing, Health Science and Management, Taiwan. 4.Responsible for development and implementation of nursing education and training for nurse practitioner (2008-present). 5.Author or coauthor of 32 publications and book chapters primarily relating to cancer nursing care and traditional Chinese medicine body constitution. Numerous presentations at scientific meetings.

Author Summary: Nurse practitioner, Hema-Oncology center, Taiwan. Dean of nursing department of Show Chwan Health Care System. Author or coauthor of 32 publications and book chapters primarily relating to cancer nursing care and traditional Chinese medicine body constitution.