

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

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Background

Disease originates from attenuations in body constitution. The body constitution of postpartum is characterized by fluctuations in deficiency and stasis. However, there are lack of empirical evidence on body constitution in postpartum.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to monitor the change of yang-xu, yin-xu, and stasis body constitution 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, 118 postpartum women with normal spontaneous delivery were recruited. 106 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.
- ◆ The Cronbach's α coefficient values of the yang-xu, yin-xu, and Stasis constitution scales were 0.86, 0.83, and 0.81.

Results

- ◆ The mean age of the participants was 30.3 ± 3.9 .
- ◆ Postpartum women's scores for yang-xu, yin-xu, and stasis in the six months after childbirth varied.
- ◆ The lowest scores of yang-xu, yin-xu, and stasis occurred in five weeks after childbirth, and were highest in six months after childbirth (Figure 1 & Table 1).
- ◆ Yin-xu and stasis scores five weeks after childbirth were similar to pre-pregnancy levels.
- ◆ Yang-xu 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 ($p < 0.05$) (Table 1).
- ◆ 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 ($p = 0.05$) (Table 1).

Conclusions

- ◆ 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.

Table1. The mean score of yang-xu, yin-xu, stasis body constitution in pre-pregnancy and postpartum women

variables		Yang-Xu body constitution		Yin-Xu body constitution		Stasis body constitution	
		mean	SD	mean	SD	mean	SD
pre-pregnancy (Pre)	N =118	31.61	8.44	31.25	8.01	25.61	7.46
3- weeks postnatal (3W)	N =117	30.10	8.09	32.58	9.00	26.62	8.58
5- weeks postnatal (5W)	N =115	28.53	7.21	31.64	8.63	25.68	7.94
3- months postnatal (3M)	N =110	29.33	7.82	32.01	9.18	26.61	8.70
6-months postnatal (6M)	N =106	31.67	9.46	33.58	10.76	27.32	9.01
F			9.660**		3.524*		2.382
Post hoc (LDS)			Pre>3W; Pre>5W; Pre>3M; 3W> 5W; 3W<6M; 5W< 6M; 3M< 6M		Pre<6M; 5W<6M; 3M<6M		Pre<6M; 5W<6M

*: $p < 0.05$ **: $p < 0.01$; Repeated measures of ANOVA

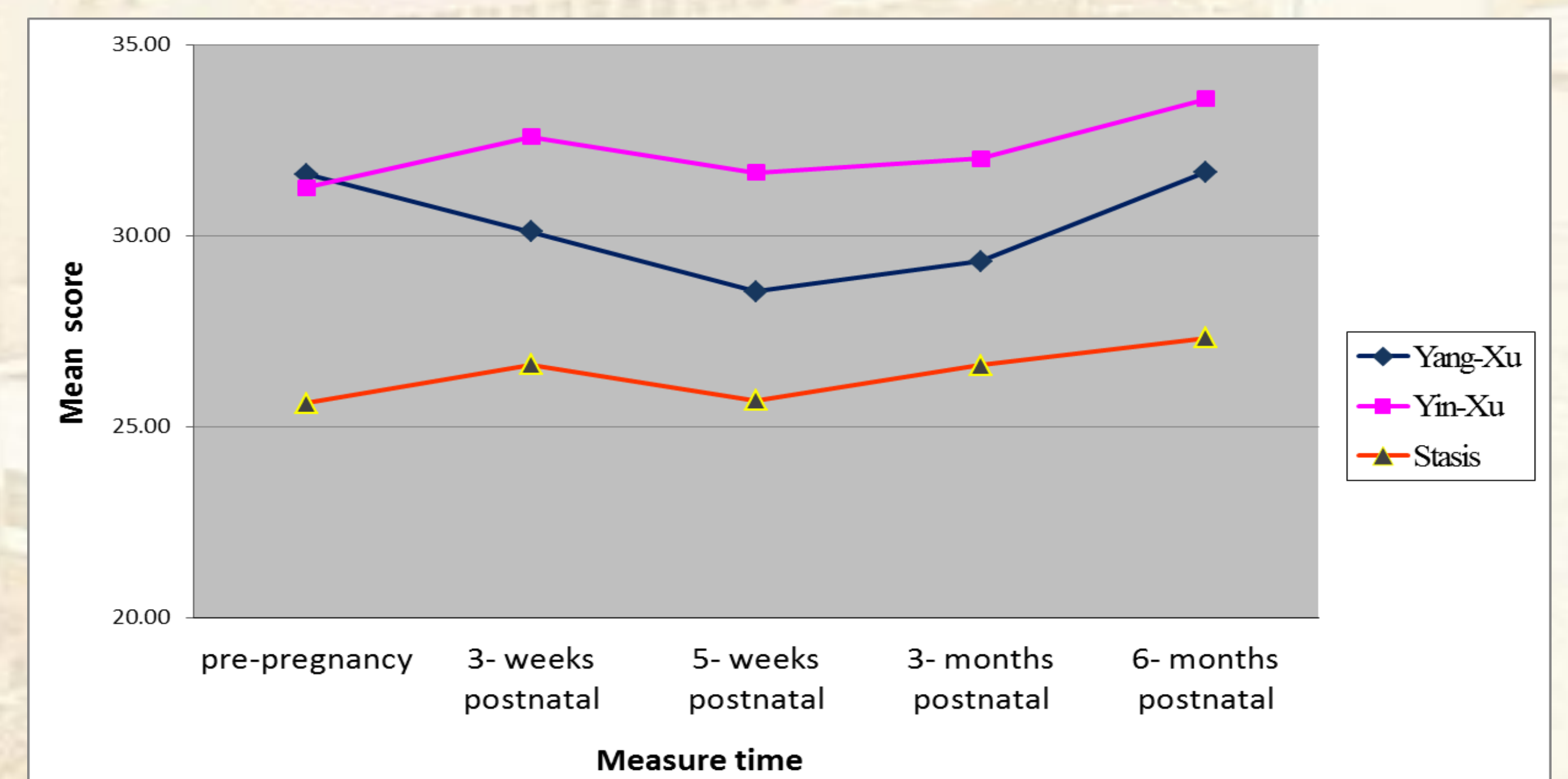


Figure 1. The mean score changes of yang-xu, yin-xu, and stasis body constitution in pre-pregnant and postpartum women.



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