



TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE

海马

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HAI MA



'This is Viagra. But not like Viagra. You have to take it regularly, it doesn't work fast'. Seahorses have warm properties, and are associated with the liver and kidney meridians; seahorse is used to treat dyspnea, infections of the throat, insomnia, skin infections, women infertility and abdominal pain. Seahorse is considered also an aphrodisiac, as it increases sexual potency. Approximately 150 million seahorses per year are caught and sold mainly as natural aphrodisiacs.

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is the oldest codified medical system of the planet. Enormous differences exist in between TCM and the Western Medical conception. TCM is characterized by several specific practices: acupuncture, moxibustion, pharmaceutical massages, food therapies, meditation, qi gong, Chinese Herbal Medicine. With at least 500 listed drugs and more than 100.000 recorded medicinal recipes in the ancient literature, Chinese Herbal Medicine deeply disciplines the use of plant, animal, and mineral products, which are combined between them and distributed through creams, herbal teas, powders, syrups, pills.

Is TCM effective? It depends, obviously, from several factors and aspects. It is a fact that TCM is the primary health care system for hundred of millions of people in mainland China. Chinese Herbal Medicine's effectiveness is scarcely documented following Western standards, and in many cases there is a lack of a scientific validation path generally recognized by the international scientific community, proving validity and efficiency of products, with documented data and generally accepted results.

This photo essays has been made in Yunnan, South-West China. 75 traditional medicine products found in traditional pharmacies, clinics and markets have been shooted. Lately those pictures were printed and showed to healers, health operators, vendors, patients, to check what they were used for. The goal of the project was to interact with these professionals through images, writings and words, in order to complete a sort of catalogue – obviously without any specific scientific validation – about an extremely serious and complex argument as the TCM is.

蛤蚧

GE JIE



It is considered useful for kidney and lung meridians, as it nourish kidney essence and tonify lungs. Soaked in alcohol, it can be used singly or combined with other lung and kidney-tonifying, and with others cough and dyspnea-relieving herbs. It can also threat impotence through tonifying kidney.

海五星

HAIWUXING



Seastar is used to cure rheumatism, ankle and legs pain, refresh blood swollen thyroid, special treatment for tonsils as an anti-pain; it gives order to the stomach, fight acidity, and it is used against diarrhea, epilepsy, and for its property of cleaning the blood.

龟甲

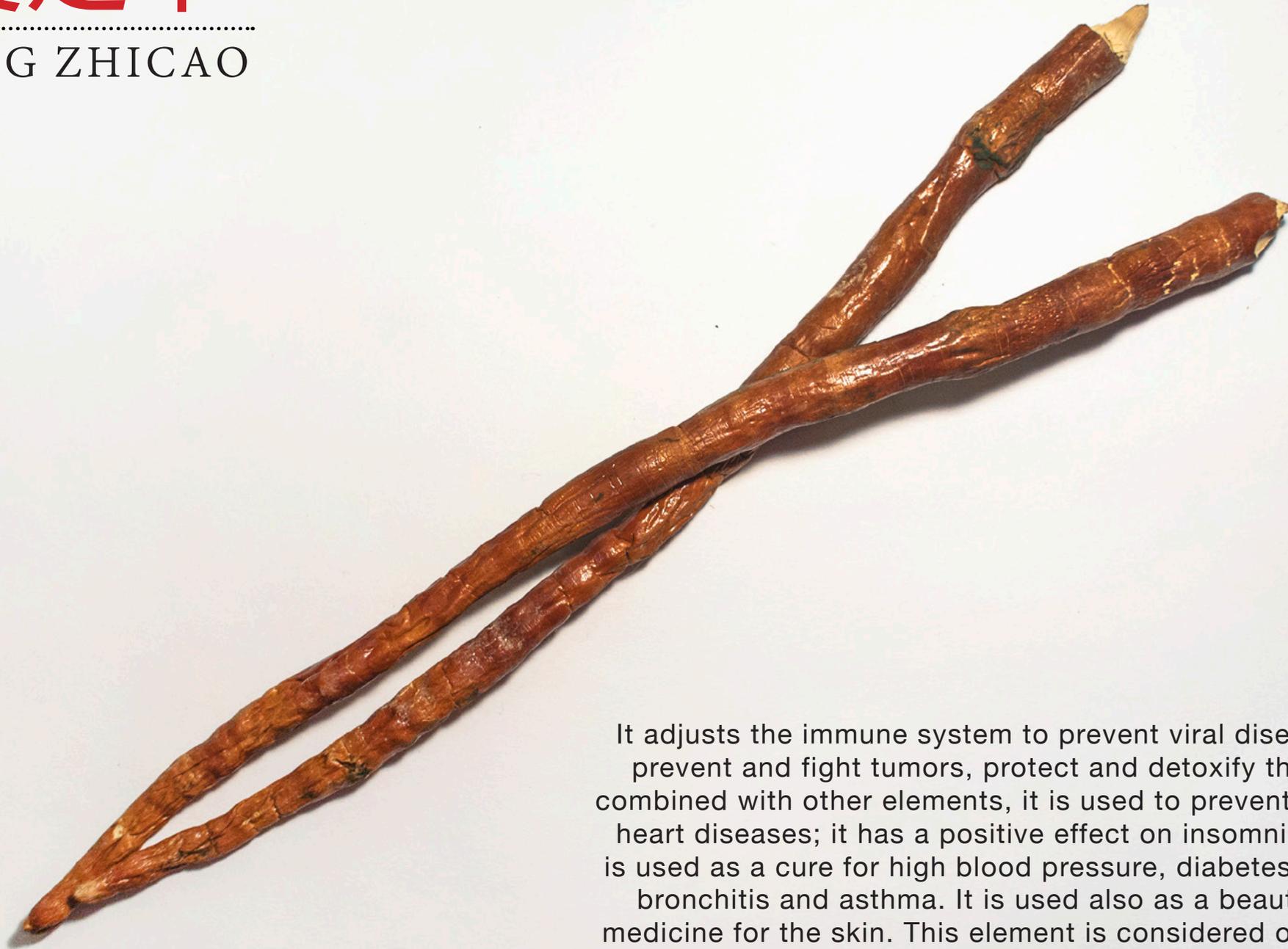
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GUI JIA



Tortoise shells are one of the standard items of the Chinese Materia Medica, with consistent use since the earliest recorded medical books. Nourishing yin and suppressing hyperactive yang, and it's perfect to tonify the kidney and strengthening the bones, nourishing the blood and tonifying the heart.

灵芝草

LING ZHICAO



It adjusts the immune system to prevent viral diseases, to prevent and fight tumors, protect and detoxify the liver; combined with other elements, it is used to prevent and cure heart diseases; it has a positive effect on insomnia, and it is used as a cure for high blood pressure, diabetes, chronic bronchitis and asthma. It is used also as a beauty care medicine for the skin. This element is considered one of the most important in TCM in the prevention of diseases.

风流果

FENGLIUGUO



Anti-inflammatory activities, moderate inhibitory activities, sexual empowerment.

豪猪刺

HAOZHUCI



Istrix quills are used for its anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant and immune-booster properties, as well as for body detoxification. It is used to treat cancer, dengue fever, meningitis, herpes, throat infection, pneumonia, and it is considered to have an anti-infective in pre- and post-operation phases. Skin health, relieving wind, throat stress, cure gastric problems and heartburn are other usages. It also promotes muscle growth, removes toxins, and strengthens the immune system.

蜗牛

WO NIU



Snails are considered slightly toxic; snails help fighting diabetes, haemorrhoids, pharyngitis, mumps, centipede bites, epilepsy caused by wind-heat.

蛇皮

SHEPI



It fights reumathic and cardiac-related problems. It is used also in cases of reumathoid arthritis, or to heal skin diseases. Flexibility, speed, the characteristic of shedding their skin, and the poison of several species of snakes, are characteristics widely explored in Chinese Materia Medica from the ancient times; the flexibility suggested snakes could help in articular-related-diseases, as arthritis for example. Speed indicated that, as medicines, snakes could be considered useful to treat 'wind' syndromes as their substance can move quickly around the body. Sheeding of the skin suggested regenerative quality for treating chronic skin problems. Poisonous snakes are used medically for the treatment of convulsions epilepsy and paralysis.

枸杞

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GOU QI



It is one of most famous products in TCM also outside China, and is widely diffused and sold in Internet. It is collected in the Asian high plateaux of China, Tibet and Mongolia. It is recognized as an anti-oxidant and considered helpful in preventing and fighting tumors, boosting the cardiovascular system by improving blood circulation, protecting the liver and improving fertility. It has several counter indications: goji's usage could interfere with medicines used to regulate blood pressure and diabetes; people using anticoagulants or medicines that are metabolized at hepatic level, should use it carefully as it could have negative interactions, influencing speed of metabolization and decreasing the good result of the conventional cure.

杜仲

DU ZHONG



It works quite well on kidney and liver meridians, helps balancing nervous problems and bones pain. It balances energies in pregnant women. It is widely cultivated in China for its high TCM values.

墓头回

MU TOU HUI



It is considered useful for liver and heart meridians. It is used to cure malaria, it gives strength after a traumatic injury and help in blocking hemorrhagic crisis.

水蛭蚧

SHUI GE JIE



Soaked in alcohol, it is considered helpful against bronchitis and asthma; it replaces kidney diseases, breath diseases, cough.



Packaging of TCM products



parallelozero

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