



Could be Phytotherapy Implemented to Vaginal Discharge Treatment?

Tomáš Fait^{1,2*}

¹Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Faculty Hospital Motol and 2nd Faculty of Medicine, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic.

Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analyzed and interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

Background: Vaginal device NaturGyn Scarlett® (Shaanxi Zhongbang Pharma - tech. Co. Ltd) was developed thousands of years ago for treatment of vaginal discharge and discomfort. It contains 8 herbal substances at standardised percentage.

Methods: The efficacy of this corpuscle is nearly 90% according to some small observations studies but there is no evidence based on medical data. We reviewed the literature in MEDLINE for each of its substances.

Results: Efficacy of the corpuscle could be explained by contents of herbal drugs - Cnidii Fructus, Stemona Sessilifolia, Belvedere fruit, Wormwoodlike motherwort herb, Glabrous greenbrier rhizome, Chinese angelica root, Chinese ligusticum rhizome and borneol.

Conclusions: NaturGyn Scarlett® can be used either for chronic discharge management or as a part of therapy between eradication of pathogen and restitution of vaginal environment by probiotics.

Keywords: Phytotherapy; vaginal discharge; classical Chinese medicine; vaginal device.

*Corresponding author: E-mail: tfait@seznam.cz;

1. INTRODUCTION

In comparison to the western medicine, Classical Chinese medicine is based on different principles. Nonetheless its system is elaborated into the smallest details and it has worked successfully for thousands of years. Chinese medicine has two basic elements - acupuncture and pharmacotherapy.

The oldest Chinese pharmacopoeia - *bencao* - comes from the first century BC. The fundamental piece of Chinese pharmacology also comes from the same period – the Chan dynasty of (206 BC – 220 AD) - The Divine Farmer's Herb-Root Classic (simplified Chinese: 神农本草经; traditional Chinese: 神農本草經); written by Shennong. He is a mythical sage ruler of prehistoric China. Shennong belongs among Three Emperors, a group of mythological emperors. He lived approximately in 2737 – 2697 BC.

Most Chinese medicaments are prepared from unique compounds, but there are also universal therapeutic substances, which do not require individual diagnostic methods. Those are the substances, which are accessible to our therapeutic methods, even though we do not have the deep knowledge about the “mystical” Chinese medicine.

2. VAGINAL DEVICE NATURGYN SCARLETT®

Naturgyn Scarlett® is produced by Shaanxi Zhongbang Pharma - tech. Co. Ltd (E/FL, Block A, 65, Kejierlu Road, Xi'an, 710 075 China) according to a traditional recipe as standardised mixture of herbal drugs. It is distributed in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Switzerland and Poland by Medicaherba Ltd. under the supervision of SUKL (State Institute for Drug Control, Czech Republic).

Naturgyn Scarlett® is a vaginal device with diameter of 12 mm, which contains 7 herbs and Borneol Resin in small thread netting.

It should be inserted into a vagina for 72 hours. The earliest application is 5 days after the menstruation period and the latest insertion is 7 days before the next menstruation period. The corpuscle is recommended to be removed after 72 hours, following 24 hours brake and insertion of second globule for another 72 hours.

It is indicated for the treatment of chronic vaginal discharge, which is caused by known or unknown pathogens. Women should repeat the treatment procedure in 2 following months. If it is meant as prevention, it is recommended to insert one device for 72 hours each month. As mentioned before, it can be used between eradication of pathogen and restitution of vaginal environment by probiotics.

It is also possible to use NaturGyn Scarlett® during pregnancy.

An international team led by associate professor Unzeitig followed up 147 women between 17 – 55 years of age. They used 2 devices for two months and one device another two months as recommended before. Expressive improvement was reported by 76% of the women and another 20% reported moderate improvement. A clinical evaluation has been done at the end of the study. 58% of the women had pH up to 4.4, negative amine test and lactobacillus grading (LBG) I (grade one means optimal microscopy finding of lactobacillus). 29% of the women had LBG II (grade two means noninflammatory finding with balance between lactobacillus and other bacteria) [1].

There is also evidence of successful use as a detoxification device by Kestranek, who recommends the device for women with chronic discharge of unknown aetiology [2].

On the other hand, in some cases itching and massive vaginal discharge after application of NaturGyn Scarlett® was reported during the therapy.

3. COMPOSITION

Cnidium Monnieri – known also as Cnidii Fructus, in Chinese Shechuangzi, 蛇床. Only the seeds are used. Indication – vaginal discharge, back pain, impotency and sterility. In European herbalism, it is a one year growing herb known for a strong tonic, antiseptic (mainly against yeast infections) and aphrodisiac effects. One of the active substances is osthol (7-methoxy - 8 - (3-methyl-2-butenyl) -2H-1-benzopyran - 2 -one), which is an O-methylated coumarin. It works as a calcium channel blocker with experimentally confirmed neuroprotective, osteogenic, immunomodulatory, anticancer, hepatoprotective and antimicrobial effects [3,4].

Stemona Sessilifolia – also known as Bai Bu, 百部, *Radix Stemona*. Just the root of this herb is used against cough and parasites [5,6].

Belvedere fruit – also known as Di Fu Zi, *Fructus Kochiae*, 地肤子. It is indicated against vaginal discharge, incontinence or itching eczema. Belvedere fruit water extract inhibits contact dermatitis in mice [7]. Alcohol extract from Belvedere fruit has approved anti-inflammatory effects [8]. In general anti-inflammatory, anti-pruritic and anti-allergic effects of Belvedere fruit has been proved by some studies [9,10,11].

Wormwoodlike motherwort herb – also known as *Leonurus cardiaca*. Just the top of the plant is used against oedema, urinary system problems, ulcers and itching eczema. Wormwoodlike motherwort herb is used as a cardiotonicum drug, hypnoticum and sedative herb in European herbalism. It is also used against climacteric problems and liquid retention. Nevertheless bacterial anti-adhesion effect has also been proved [12].

Glabrous greenbrier rhizome – in Latin *Rhizoma Smilacis Galbrae*, in Chinese 土茯苓. The root of this herb is used against ulcers, abscess, burning sensation with urination, eczema or vaginal discharge. The anti-inflammatory effect has been proved [13].

Chinese angelica root also known as dong quai or "female ginseng" is a herb from the family *Apiaceae*. The roots are used. It is indicated for menstrual disorders, vaginal discharge, problems during the postpartum period, skin problems and ulcers. There is described a positive effect on vaginal environment. This can be explained by anti-inflammatory [14] and oestrogen effect [15] of this herb.

Chinese ligusticum rhizome – in Latin *Rhizoma Ligustici Chuanxiong*, in Chinese 川芎. It is indicated against headache or stomach-ache with diarrhoea. It can be used also for a treatment of chronic inflammation [16].

Borneol - also known as *Dryobalanops aromatica* Gaertn. The Borneol refers to the resin obtained from *Dryobalanops aromatica* and *Blumea balsamifera*. It is indicated for memory lost, spasm, ulcers, and eye infections. The effect on penetrability of the epithelium has been proved [17] and this is its main role in the mixture.

4. CONCLUSION

From the Western perspective, phytotherapy from Chinese medicine has some kind of mystery and due to its different theoretical background it can easily raise suspicion. On the other hand, there is a proved evidence of its positive effect.

Vaginal device Naturgyn Scarlett® contains 8 herbal substances. It is indicated as a part of chronic and recurrent vaginal discomfort therapy. It can be also placed between eradication and restitution of vaginal environment in the therapy of vaginal discharge. The effect can be explained by some studies following the western standards.

CONSENT

It is not applicable.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

It is not applicable.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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