**How to safely and effectively apply Chinese medicine?**

1. Same as Western medicine, the toxicity of Chinese medicine depends on dosage and period of administration. The toxicity of some herbal ingredients will increase with higher dosage or prolonged administration.

2. The toxicities of some Chinese herbs were actually caused by adulteration. For examples, guan-mu-tong and guang-fang-ji, which contain renal toxic aristolic acid，are respectively the substitutes, rather than the authentic mu-tong and fang-ji.

3. One of the main purposes of formulating Chinese herbal medicine is to enhance the efficacy and decrease the toxicity. The side effect of one ingredient can often be attenuated by the others in the formula. For example, a study has shown that the side effects of evodia in evodia decoction could be significantly reduced by cooking it together with ginseng, jujube and ginger in the formula.

4. Another way to enhance the efficacy and decrease the toxicity is processing the raw herbal materials. Many of the toxic components in raw materials can be decomposed by processing with heating or other methods. For example, toxic aconitine in Aconitum can be significantly decomposed after boiling for 2 hours. It is also proved that toxicity of raw fo-ti to liver can be reduced by heating.

5. For many Chinese herbs, while they are being purified for higher efficacy, their toxicity may also increase because they act more like Western drugs.

6. The toxicities of Chinese herbs have been well documented in TCM books. Similar to chemotherapy cancers, some herbs are used specifically for their toxicities.

7. If being used improperly, the toxicity of Chinese herbs is not limited to the liver and kidney, but also on other organs or systems. In fact, clinical and pharmacological studies have shown that some herbs can effectively improve liver and kidney function.