

# Can traditional chinese medicine offer treatments for dementia and Alzheimer's disease?

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A new study of classical Chinese medical texts identifies references to age-related memory impairment similar to modern-day Alzheimer's disease, and to several plant-based ingredients used centuries ago—and still in use today—to treat memory impairment. Experimental studies of five of these traditional Chinese medicines suggest that they have biological activity relevant to Alzheimer's disease, according to an article in *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*.

Charlie Xue, PhD and coauthors from Guangdong Provincial Academy of Chinese Medical Sciences and Guangdong Provincial Hospital of Chinese Medicine, China, and RMIT University, Australia, performed a comprehensive, systematic search of the Encyclopedia of Traditional Chinese Medicine, a database of more than 1,000 Chinese medical books dating back to the fourth century.

In the article "Memory Impairment, Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease in Classical and Contemporary Traditional Chinese Medicine ([online.liebertpub.com/doi/full ... 0.1089/acm.2016.0070](http://online.liebertpub.com/doi/full...0.1089/acm.2016.0070))," the authors describe specific mentions of signs and symptoms of [memory impairment](#) associated with aging and the formulas and ingredients most commonly used to treat these disorders.

"Recent research out of UCLA that was the subject of the JACM editorial in August shined a spotlight on the potential role of natural

agents in a whole person protocol for reversing Alzheimer's disease. Dr. Xue and his colleagues have provided an important addition from traditional Chinese medicine to this emerging literature," says The *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* Editor-in-Chief John Weeks, Seattle, WA.

**More information:** Brian H. May et al. Memory Impairment, Dementia, and Alzheimer's Disease in Classical and Contemporary Traditional Chinese Medicine, *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* (2016). [DOI: 10.1089/acm.2016.0070](https://doi.org/10.1089/acm.2016.0070)

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