

## The Benefits of Insomnia Treatment Using an Herbal Combination Pao Fuzi, Renshen, Baizhu, Ganjiang, and Zhigancao

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** Insomnia is a disorder that causes sufferers to have trouble sleeping or not be able to sleep properly. Insomnia can affect physical and mental health, resulting in suboptimal quality of life and daily routines. Insomnia is usually followed by daytime sleepiness, accompanied by fatigue, speechlessness, irritability, sweating alone, and a depressed mood. Herbal medicine therapy is an alternative that can be used to treat insomnia. **Objective:** The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of Pao Fuzi, Renshen, Baizhu, Ganjiang, and Zhigancao for medication therapy in insomnia sufferers with the syndrome. **Method:** This research uses the case study research method. The research subject is Mr. Y, who has insomnia with spleen and kidney deficiency syndrome. **Result and Discussion:** The results of research using the combination herbs for insomnia sufferers have proven effective. The Insomnia Severity Index (ISI) score before therapy was 28 and after therapy was 3. Complaints of insomnia decreased gradually, and the quality of life became better. **Conclusion:** Besides that, sufferers had no difficulty starting to sleep again, and when he woke up, he felt more refreshed.

**Keywords:** Baizhu; Ganjian; Herbs; Insomnia; Pao Fuzi; Renshen; Zhigancao;

### Introduction

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Insomnia is a disorder that causes sufferers to have trouble sleeping or not be able to sleep properly. Insomnia can affect physical and mental health, resulting in suboptimal quality of life and daily routines. This will certainly cause a person to feel tired and susceptible to disease. The ideal bedtime and good sleep quality greatly affect one's body health and quality of life (Simon, 2017). In Indonesia, the prevalence of insomnia in the elderly is around 10%, meaning that approximately 28 million out of a total of 238 million Indonesians suffer from insomnia (Widya, 2017).

Based on information, it is known that in Indonesia, the incidence of sleep problems among people between the ages of 50 and 60 is more than 68%. The prevalence of sleep disturbances in the elderly is very high; 50% of the elderly over the age of 65 experience sleep problems. Based on gender, it was found that insomnia can occur in women aged 50–74 years by as much as 79% (Wardah, 2018).

There are many causes of insomnia, mental problems, and certain medical conditions, including environmental factors such as noise, lights that are too bright, and temperatures that are too cold or too hot; bad habits before going to bed, such as using a computer or smartphone, watching television, and eating too much; psychological disorders such as stress, anxiety, and depression; and consumption of caffeine and alcohol (Singh, 2022). In the treatment of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM).

Sleep is part of the natural rhythm of yin and yang qi in the body (Bing and Hongcai, 2010). Several factors cause yin and yang imbalances: dietary habits such as overeating, heavy meals, and consumption of caffeinated and alcoholic beverages; emotions such as anger, sadness, and extreme happiness; fatigue from activities such as excessive exercise or overstimulation of the brain; prolonged illness; and old age (Maciocia, 2005).

In conventional medicine, the most used drugs are benzodiazepines. It is effective but also has significant side effects. Treatment of insomnia must identify the causative factors (Dauvilliers, 2007). Identification of causative factors is necessary to optimize the management of medical disorders, pain management, drug abuse, and psychiatry. The use of sleeping pills can cause side effects in the form of dizziness and increase the risk of fainting. Chronic insomnia can be cured if it is medically or psychiatrically evaluated and treated properly (Stepanski and Rybarczyk, 2006).

The level of insomnia was measured using the Insomnia Severity Index (ISI) questionnaires. The ISI is a questionnaire that measures the patient's perception of their insomnia. The ISI consists of seven questions using a scale ranging from 0-4. The final score is determined by adding up all the answer scores, then interpreted into a mild scale (score 8-14), moderate (score 15-21) and severe (score 22-28).

An insomnia score of 0-7 is categorized as not experiencing insomnia. The questionnaire assessed sleep severity and difficulty with sleep maintenance (both at night and early in the morning), satisfaction with current sleep patterns, interference with sleep problems with quality of life, identifiable disturbances associated with sleep problems, and degree of distress or worry caused by sleep problems (Espie et al., 2018).

In recent decades, traditional Chinese herbs have been widely used in several countries. Many clinical studies, including randomized controlled clinical trials and

studies on the mechanisms of pharmacological action of herbs for the treatment of insomnia, have been conducted. One of the herbs used for insomnia is the herbal combination of Pao Fuzi, Renshen, Baizhu, Ganjiang, and Zhigancao (Jin et al., 2013).

Fuzi has the scientific name *Radix Aconiti Lateralis Preparata*. Fuzi has the effect of treating fatigue, improving blood circulation, increasing hypoxic resistance, reducing inflammation, inhibiting the formation of stomach ulcers due to stress, and relieving back and leg pain. Renshen, or *Radix Panax Ginseng*, has the properties of strengthening the spleen, nourishing the lungs, calming the shen, strengthening heart function, and regulating blood pressure.

Baizhu, with the scientific name *Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae*, functions to expedite qi, dry dampness and diuresis, antiperspirant, calm the fetus, treat spleen deficiency, malnutrition, flatulence, and diarrhea, dizziness and palpitations due to phlegm and retention, edema, and spontaneous sweating. Ganjiang, or *Rhizoma zingiberis*, is used to treat vomiting, diarrhea, weakness, and cold relief.

Zhigancao or *Radix Glycyrrhizae* has the effect of relieving toxic or excessive effects of other herbs, relieving irritation due to inflammation, strengthening the body's immunity, and healing stomach ulcers (Japaries, 2010). The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of herbs combination medication therapy for insomnia sufferers.

## **Method**

This research uses the case study research method of pretest-Post test one-group design with a qualitative approach. Qualitative research can be interpreted as a research method that is based on philosophy and is used to research scientific conditions (experiments) where researchers collect data and analyse it qualitatively with more emphasis on meaning (Erlisy and sugiyono, 2020).

The number of research subjects is 1 person with the following inclusion criteria: experience insomnia; do not consume sedative-type drugs; do not smoke; live at home with environmental conditions that can promote sleep hygiene; and be cooperative in carrying out herbal treatment therapy.

The research was conducted from October 5 to October 15, 2022. The level of insomnia was measured using the Insomnia Severity Index (ISI). Insomnia is treated using a combination of herbs, including Pao Fuzi 15g, Ganjiang 10g, Renshen 15g, Baizhu 15g, Zhigancao 10g. Herbs are boiled in water and taken warm, two times a day, 150 ml each time.

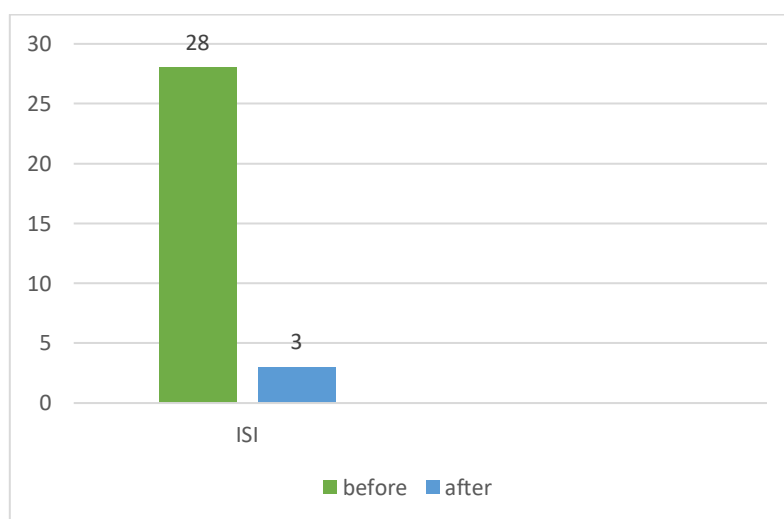
## **Result and Discussion**

### **Result**

### 1. Anamnesis of respondents

Respondent Mr. Y, a 46-year-old male, became manager of a company in 4 months and experienced insomnia for 4 months. After becoming a manager, he developed the habit of eating junk food. His complaints are difficulty sleeping, easily waking up in the middle of the night, difficulty sleeping long after waking up, sometimes even difficulty sleeping all night, anxiety, unstable emotions, likes to drink hot drinks, easy bloating after eating, stomach feels uncomfortable, watery bowel movements about 3 times a day, hands and feet are cold, afraid of cold, waist and knees are limp, face is pale, tired, and lethargic, tongue is pale and fat, tip of tongue is red, coating of tongue is thick and greasy, and pulse is deep and stringy. The result of the respondent's observation is that the respondent's syndrome is a deficiency of the spleen and kidneys.

### 2. Level Insomnia



**Figure 1.** ISI scores

In Figure 1, the score of the Insomnia Severity Index (ISI) before treatment (Pretest) is 28. A score of 28 indicates severe insomnia. The score of the Insomnia Severity Index (ISI) After Treatment Therapy (Posttest) is 3. The score of 3 indicates that you are not experiencing insomnia.

### Discussion

Figure 1 shows that insomnia is treated using a herbs combination of pao fuzi, renshen, baizhu, ganjiang, and zhigancao that has proven successful. The success of treatment is due to the selection of the right herbs for insomnia. According to TCM, the principle of treatment for this case is to warm the spleen and kidneys, restore the spleen and kidneys, and tonify Qi. Pao Fuzi and Ganjiang are the main herbs that can restore yang, warm the heart, dispel cold, warm the spleen, and strengthen the kidneys. Renshen and Baizhu are companion herbs to strengthen yuan qi, strengthen the spleen, nourish qi and blood, and calm the nerves and mind. Baizhu to strengthen the spleen, tonify qi, and

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expel dampness. Fulfilling to get rid of dampness, strengthen the stomach and spleen, and calm the heart. Zhigancao as accompanying herbs to tonify and harmonize the middle qi jiao.

In addition to using herbal treatment, respondents were also advised to manage the environment, regulate the condition of the house so that it is not too noisy, and not consume junk food. After the therapy, the respondent felt that his illness was cured; he slept better, his stomach was no longer bloated, normal bowel movements became once a day, and he felt his body was healthier.

**Conclusion**

Herbal combinations of pao fuzi, renshen, baizhu, ganjiang, and zhigancao drug therapy in insomnia sufferers with spleen and kidney deficiency syndrome are very effective in reducing insomnia scale. The respondent's Insomnia Severity Index (ISI) score before therapy was 28 and after therapy was 3. From severe insomnia to no insomnia, sleep quality improved.

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