

Appendix 3 Studies conducted in mainland China that were explicitly labelled as pragmatic trials

We searched PubMed and Chinese Biomedical Literature Database (CBM) to identify studies conducted in mainland China that were explicitly labelled as pragmatic trials, published as a full-text article either in English or Chinese. The following search strategy was used in the PubMed database, and modified in CBM database to find the relevant trials:

(((pragmatic[Title/Abstract] OR practical[Title/Abstract])) AND ((China[Title/Abstract] OR Chinese[Title/Abstract])) AND trial[Title/Abstract]

Our search yielded 556 reports, of which 25 were potentially eligible after title and abstract screening. A total of 16 RCTs were eligible upon reviewing full texts.

| Reference | Type of study | Study setting | Participants | Interventions | Primary outcome(s) | Follow-up | Funding |
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| Feng <i>et al.</i> (2007) ¹ | Three-arm pragmatic cluster RCT | Schools in Chengdu | 305 children with at least one visible white-spot lesion | Intervention arms: supervised daily teeth brushing with (1) a sodium fluoride, or (2) sodium monofluorophosphate dentifrice Control arm: supervised daily teeth brushing with a herbal, non-fluoride placebo dentifrice | DeltaQ (product of fluorescence loss and area) at a 5% threshold after 6 months of product use. | N/A | N/A |
| Wei <i>et al.</i> (2010) ² | Two-arm pragmatic RCT | A general hospital in Henan Province | 176 patients with myelodysplastic syndrome | Intervention arm: Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) formula for clearing away heat and detoxification + stanozolol Control arm: stanozolol + vitamin B ₆ | Effective rate at 6 months of follow-up | 6 months | N/A |
| Yu <i>et al.</i> (2010) ³ | Two-arm pragmatic RCT | General and TCM hospitals in Beijing, Tianjin, Henan, Hebei and Shandong | 300 inpatients with ischemic stroke | Intervention arm: standard care + TCM rehabilitation treatment Control arm: standard care + modern rehabilitation treatment | Change in the National Institutes of Health Stroke Scale (NIHSS) pre- and post-intervention | N/A | The National High Technology Research and Development Program of China (863 Program) |
| Tian <i>et al.</i> (2011) ⁴ | Two-arm pragmatic RCT | General and infectious disease hospitals in Beijing, Guangzhou, Kunming, Guangxi and Xinjiang | 153 HIV/AIDS patients with chronic diarrhoea | Intervention arm: Jianpizhixie granule Control arm: Loperamide capsules | Changes in Diarrhea Questionnaire score, total stool volume and frequency between baseline and post-intervention | N/A | National Science and Technology Major Program during the Eleventh Five-year Plan Period |

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| Ye <i>et al.</i> (2011) ⁵ | Two-arm pragmatic RCT | Twelve hospitals across China | 700 inpatients with acute ischemic stroke | Intervention arm: Kudiezi injection + standard care + TCM rehabilitation treatment Control arm: standard care and modern rehabilitation treatment | Changes in NIHSS score between baseline and 7, 14 and 21 days of treatment | N/A | National Science and Technology Major Program for “Significant New Drug Development”, National High Technology Research and Development Program of China (863 Program), independent project topic selection of China Academy of Chinese Medical Science |
| Li <i>et al.</i> (2012) ⁶ | Two-arm pragmatic RCT | Henan Province | 50 HIV/AIDS patients who were receiving highly active anti-retroviral therapy | Intervention arm: Chinese medicine dialectical treatment Control arm: Xuezhikang capsules | Changes in lipids between baseline and post-intervention | N/A | National Science and Technology Major Program |
| Li <i>et al.</i> (2014) ⁷ | Two-arm pragmatic RCT | Hospitals in Shanghai | 127 patients with chronic kidney disease | Intervention arm: usual care and TCM dialectical treatment Intervention arm: usual care and Losartan | Change in 24-hour urinary protein quantity between baseline and post-intervention | 6 months | Special Research Foundation for TCM industry, Three-year Program of Chinese Medicine in Shanghai, Budget Program of Shanghai Municipal Education Commission, Innovative Team in Higher Education of Shanghai Municipal Education Commission |

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| Dong <i>et al.</i> (2014) ⁸ | Three-arm pragmatic cluster RCT | Schools in Chengdu | 177 school children with at least one visible white-spot lesion | Intervention arms: (1) chew 2 pieces of sugar-free gum for 20 minutes, 3 times per day; (2) chew 2 pieces of sugar-free gum for 12 minutes, 5 times per day Control arm: no gum | Fluorescence loss of white-spot lesions | N/A | N/A |
| Liu <i>et al.</i> (2015) ⁹ | Four-arm pragmatic cluster RCT | Rural counties and urban districts from Heilongjiang, Jiangsu, Hunan and Chongqing | 4,292 outpatients with new pulmonary tuberculosis (TB) | Intervention arms: reminders to take medications from text messages via (1) short message service, (2) a medication monitor, or (3) both. Control arm: standard care | The percentage of patient-months on TB treatment where at least 20% of doses were missed as measured by pill count and failure to open the medication monitor box | 6 months | Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation |
| Browning <i>et al.</i> (2016) ¹⁰ | Two-arm pragmatic cluster RCT | Community Health Stations in Fengtai district, Beijing | 669 patients with type 2 diabetes | Intervention arm: telephone and face-to-face motivation interviewing health coaching in addition to usual care Control arm: usual care | Glycated haemoglobin | 12 months | Fengtai Health Bureau, Beijing |
| Fu <i>et al.</i> (2016) ¹¹ | Two-arm pragmatic RCT | General hospitals in Beijing and Henan | 260 inpatients with ischemic stroke | Intervention arm: standard care and TCM injection Control arm: standard care | Changes in NIHSS between baseline and 7, 14, 21 and 90 days post-treatment | 90 days | Talents Training Plan Project of Beijing Municipal Administration of Hospitals, National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC), Beijing Natural Science Foundation, The |

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| | | | | | | | National High Technology Research and Development Program of China (863 Program) |
| Li <i>et al.</i> (2016) ¹² | Two-arm pragmatic RCT | A pancreas centre of a general hospital in Chengdu | 140 inpatients with severe acute pancreatitis accompanied with paralytic ileus | Intervention arm: electroacupuncture treatment and usual treatment Control arm: usual treatment | Change in self-reported abdominal distension severity pre- and post-intervention | N/A | N/A |
| Chien <i>et al.</i> (2017) ¹³ | Three-arm pragmatic RCT | Psychiatric out-patient clinics in mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan | 342 patients with schizophrenia spectrum disorders | Intervention arm: a mindfulness-based psychoeducation Control arms: (1) a conventional psychoeducation or (2) treatment as usual | Changes in duration of re-hospitalizations and mental state between baseline and 1 week, and 6, 12 and 18 months post-treatment | 24 months | Food and Health Bureau and The University Grant Council, Hong Kong |
| Wei <i>et al.</i> (2017) ¹⁴ | Two-arm, pragmatic cluster RCT | Township hospitals in central Zhejiang province | 28,130 patients at high risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD) | Intervention arm: an intervention package of CVD care Control arm: usual care | Incidence of severe CVD events (i.e., coronary heart disease and stroke) at 36 months of follow-up | 36 months | Partly funded by COMDIS-HSD, a research consortium funded by US aid from the UK government |
| Wu <i>et al.</i> (2017) ¹⁵ | Two-arm pragmatic RCT | Endocrinology and Acupuncture out-patient clinics of a general hospital in Beijing | 369 male smokers | Intervention arm: a brief physician advice and four brief telephone calls promoting smoking cessation Control arm: a brief physician advice and a telephone call on exercise and healthy diet | Self-reported 6-month prolonged abstinence rate at 12-month follow-up | 12 months | NSFC, Beijing Municipal Science and Technology Commission and Chinese PLA General Hospital |

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| Yang <i>et al.</i> (2017) ¹⁶ | Two-arm pragmatic RCT | Campus advertisements from several universities in Chengdu | 152 patients with primary dysmenorrhea | Intervention arm: Moxibustion Control arm: conventional drugs | Pain relief | 3 months | National Basic Research Program, China 973 program, Education Dept. of Sichuan Province, NSFC, and Chinese Scholarship Council |
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