Huai Qi Huang helpful for kidney disease
Chinese researchers have found that a herbal formula called Huai Qi Huang (HQH) can ameliorate proteinuria and haematuria in patients suffering from IgA nephropathy (IgAN, aka Berger’s disease). In this condition, immunoglobulin A (IgA) deposits form in the glomeruli, causing inflammation, which results in chronic kidney damage. HQH is a compound Chinese herbal medicine that contains Trametes robiniofila murr (Huaier), wolfberry fruit (Gou Qi Zi), and Polygonatum (Huang Jing). Forty-five adults diagnosed with IgAN who had haematuria and/or proteinuria were randomly assigned to receive HQH or no treatment for 12 weeks. The results showed that 24-hour urinary protein excretion was significantly reduced in the HQH group, compared with that in the control group at Weeks 8 and 12. A much higher rate of complete remission of proteinuria was observed in the HQH group compared with the control group at Week 12. HQH administration also significantly reduced the extent of haematuria compared with the control group at Week 12. The authors conclude that HQH could offer a new conservative therapy for IgAN patients who cannot tolerate steroids and immunosuppressive agents. (Huai Qi Huang ameliorates proteinuria and hematuria in mild IgA nephropathy patients: A prospective randomized controlled study. J Formos Med Assoc. 2013 Dec;112(12):766-72).

Acupuncture helps dialysis patients
A Korean pilot study suggests that acupuncture can help with symptom management in patients undergoing haemodialysis. Twenty-four patients received individualised acupuncture treatment for their symptoms twice a week for six consecutive weeks. Patients experienced a significant improvement of symptoms they considered most bothersome, reporting a decrease of 1.87 and 2.08 points on a 0-6 symptom scale at 7 weeks and 11 weeks, respectively. Disease-related symptom scores showed significant improvement at 7 weeks (effects of kidney disease, burden of kidney disease, role-limitations physical, emotional well-being, and energy/fatigue) and 11 weeks (physical functioning and energy/fatigue). (Acupuncture for symptom management in hemodialysis patients: a prospective, observational pilot study. J Altern Complement Med. 2011 Aug;17(8):741-8).

CHINESE HERBS AND STEROID-DEPENDENT NEPHROTIC SYNDROME
37 children with steroid-dependent nephrotic syndrome (SDNS) were treated with Chai-Ling-Tang (Sairei-to). After treatment, relapse was markedly improved, time for negative conversion of proteinuria shortened, prednisone dosage significantly reduced, and side effects eased. It is considered that Chai-Ling-Tang may be a useful substitute for patients with SDNS who fail to respond to or manifest severe toxic effect from cytotoxic agents. (Am J Chin Med 1995;23(3-4):255-60).