

HEALTH

Edited by Suzanne Harrison suzanne.harrison@scmp.com

TCM

Rose Tse and
Angela Collingwood
info@shen-nong.com

Food for thought

In traditional Chinese medicine, purgation is believed to flush out any evils that have been ingested through food or liquid.

Kevin Lam, 37, does triathlons and runs marathons and was in excellent physical condition until he developed a sore throat and fatigue. At first he thought it was a cold, but several days later his condition deteriorated.

Lam developed pains in his joints, excessive thirst, sleepless nights and felt an unusual heat on the palms of his hands and soles of his feet. He also developed pain in a large lymph node under his chin.

A western doctor found that he had an infection and recommended antibiotics, but Lam decided to consult TCM

practitioner Chan Chun Hoi, who works in Tai Wai.

Chan told Lam that he was suffering from excessive damp-heat evils in his stomach, which could have come from food.

He prescribed a herbal drink for Lam to take for 12 days after his evening meal.

The treatment cost \$60 per day and included consultation, prescription and decoction services. Lam went to the herbal shop each day to drink his bowl of herbs and a few hours later he developed cramps and diarrhoea.

Lam says the pain in his joints went in two days, the heat in his

hands disappeared after four days and the lymph node and bowel movements returned to normal in almost a week.

"The decoction didn't improve my sleep or thirst, and it made me less energetic and caused loss of appetite, but I continued the treatment even when my symptoms improved," he says.

Chan told him that if he finished the course it would help eliminate any remaining toxins.

He also advised Lam to eat foods that can be easily digested and avoid the likes of seafood, mushrooms, spicy food, tea and alcohol, all of which can cause damp-heat in the stomach.

By the end of his treatment, Lam had lost seven kilograms. Chan helped him rebuild his strength with herbs such as ginseng and dendrobium, which Lam says had an instant effect and helped him sleep.

Before taking any medicine, consult your general or TCM practitioner

