

Table 1: Summary of findings: Traditional Chinese Medicine for sarcopenia

Outcomes	Illustrative comparative risks* (95% CI)	No. of participants (studies)	Quality of the evidence (GRADE)
Effects on muscle mass (SMI/ASMI/RASM)	The improvement in muscle mass in the TCM groups ranged from MD 0.23 to 0.99 kg/m ² higher than control	1088 (9 RCTs)	⊕ ⊕ ○○ LOW ^{a,b}
Effects on muscle strength (grip strength)	The improvement in muscle strength in the TCM groups ranged from MD 0.51 to 2.63 kg higher than control	1088 (9 RCTs)	⊕ ⊕ ○○ LOW ^{a,b}
Effects on muscle function (gait speed/FTSST)	The improvement in muscle function in the TCM groups ranged from MD 0.01 to 0.15 m/s higher than control	1088 (9 RCTs)	⊕ ⊕ ○○ LOW ^{a,b,c}

Note: *Effect estimates represent the range of mean differences across different TCM formulas (Buzhong Yiqi Decoction, Shenqi Paste, Bazhen Decoction, Shenling Baizhu Powder).

GRADE Working Group grades of evidence: High quality (⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕): Further research is very unlikely to change our confidence in the estimate of effect. Moderate quality (⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ○): Further research is likely to have an important impact on our confidence. Low quality (⊕ ⊕ ○○): Further research is very likely to have an important impact and likely to change the estimate. Very low quality (⊕ ○ ○○): We are very uncertain about the estimate.

Downgrading reasons: ^aRisk of bias: Most studies did not report allocation concealment and blinding. ^bInconsistency: Substantial heterogeneity across studies ($I^2 > 50\%$).

^cImprecision: Some results did not reach statistical significance.

Abbreviations: SMI, skeletal muscle mass index; ASMI, appendicular skeletal muscle index; RASM, relative appendicular skeletal muscle mass; FTSST, five-times sit-to-stand test; TCM, Traditional Chinese Medicine; MD, mean difference; CI, confidence interval; RCT, randomized controlled trial.