

## Role of Kampo medicine in preventing and treating acne scars

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Acne vulgaris is characterized by erythematous papules and pustules that may lead to acne scars, namely, hyperpigmented bumps and/or depressions of the skin. Clinicians are most likely to be consulted when the scars become cosmetically unappealing keloids or hypertrophic scars, which can keep growing and cause considerable distress. However, clinical advice is also often sought for mini-scars and atrophic scars. All of these scars are difficult to treat and difficult to reverse. To prevent their formation, it is important to treat acne aggressively during the early inflammatory phase, which dictates the strength of the subsequent wound healing phases and whether extracellular matrix is laid down in excessive or insufficient amounts. In addition to Western treatments, Kampo medicines may be effective scar-limiting acne treatments. In our clinic, we observed that two Kampo medicines, which are heat stimulants and blood thinners, significantly improve acne-associated inflammation. Therefore, in our clinic, we currently prevent and treat acne scarring by adding or modifying Kampo medicines such as Saireito.