

Gene technology set to decode traditional Chinese medicine

Chinese scientists have launched a herbal medicine gene database project, which is expected to combine traditional Chinese medical science with gene pharmaceutical technology. The project, described as “the world’s largest native compound gene database”, will detect more than 5,000 effective elements of traditional Chinese medicine and put them into the herbal medicine gene database. For thousands of years, the Chinese have used mixtures of plant parts and animal bones to cure disease with a success rate that continues to baffle modern science.

After the native compound gene database has been established, Chinese scientists will use all the 5,000 effective elements discovered in traditional Chinese medicine to test disease-related human genes, in an effort to decipher traditional Chinese medicines. The native compound gene database will cover the most important of these plants from the most famous Chinese medical encyclopedia “Bencao Gangmu” (Compendium of Materia Medica), and another medical book “Zhonghua Bencao” published in 1995 and contains over 8,000 herbs. (<http://news.xinhuanet.com>)