



MATERIA MEDICA

For Martial Artists

JOSH WALKER

Materia Medica

For

Martial Artists

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Foreword

Dr Robert Asbridge



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July 12, 2012

Josh Walker
Owner, PlumDragon Herbs

Foreword

In traditional medicine as practiced in China, about 80% of all traditional Chinese medical patients are treated with herbs, while the remaining 20% are treated with acupuncture, Tui-na or Qi Gong. Herbal medicine is very potent in treating a wide variety of medical disorders and this modality offers tremendous advantages to those who employ it.

Materia Medica for Martial Artists is a practical guide for the application of herbs in *dit da*, the field of Chinese herbalism that deals with the healing and management of injury. Its intent is to demystify Chinese herbal medicine and to provide martial artists with a sound working knowledge of herbs.

The internal and external therapies of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), are equally important and essential. The external therapies discussed in the *Materia Medica for Martial Artists* are particularly useful in *dit da*.

The *Materia Medica for Martial Artists* is an important addition to the literature on Chinese medicine and is of material value to anyone needing to treat injuries arising from the practice of the martial arts, or other physical stressful conditions, including bruises, back injuries, and bleeding, as well as more serious injuries. It also excels in the area of preventing cumulative injuries due to conditioning in striking arts. It is highly practical in nature, written by someone with extensive experience in the martial arts and particularly in Iron Palm.

The herbs discussed here are exactly those needed for *dit da*. Herbs common in more general clinical practice are not included if they don't serve some function in the context of the martial

arts, while herbs uncommon in other contexts play a larger role here. For example, herbs such as *Kuan Jin Teng* are rarely seen in most materia medicas, and *Li Lu*, usually included but little discussed, is examined here in great depth.

A particularly useful feature of this reference is that a list of *dit da* formulas is given for each herb. As well as being helpful for understanding the use of particular herbs, this provides immediate applied knowledge for martial artists.

After reading the *Materia Medica for Martial Artists*, I was inspired to expand the use of external therapies with the management of injuries in my own clinical practice, and I have been very pleased with the results. This book is an example of the kind of book needed to ensure a faithful and creative transmission of Chinese herbal medicine, both to martial artists and to practitioners of Chinese medicine wishing to extend their abilities and clinical effectiveness.

Dr. Robert Asbridge



Disclaimer

It is important to note, as the author of this book, that I am not a doctor of any type, nor am I a physical therapist, acupuncturist, or any other type of licensed medical or healthcare professional, Chinese or Western. Nothing in this book is meant to diagnose, treat, cure, prevent, or mitigate any disease, illness, or ailment. I cannot and do not provide any form of medical advice here or anywhere else and provide this book to the martial arts and sports communities for strictly informational purposes only.

Please consult your local medical practitioner with any questions or concerns you have and before engaging in the use of any of the herbs or herbal formulas, or physical training methods. Josh Walker and any other individuals and references mentioned herein cannot be held responsible for the use or misuse of any of the herbal information or references that are discussed within.

Materia Medica

For

Martial Artists

PART I

Overview

ANTAGONISMS AND COUNTERACTIONS

Within Chinese herbalism, there exists a set of interactions between various herbs that has been empirically created through the history of working with these herbs. Although most herbs are safe to combine, we are fortunate to have a fairly distinct set of guidelines in terms of herbs that should *not* be combined. The Shi Ba Fan (Eighteen Incompatibilities) and Shi Jiu Wei (Nineteen Counteractions) represent these guidelines. Combining herbs from these categories can either cause potentially harmful side effects or cancel out the actions of the herbs.

The Eighteen Incompatibilities represents a set of herb interaction whereby the herbs listed are incompatible with one another. The Shi Ba Fan is as follows:

Cao Wu (Radix Aconiti Kusnezoffii), Chuan Wu (Radix Aconiti Preparata), and Fu Zi (Radix Aconitii) is incompatible with:

- Bai Ji
- Bai Lian
- Ban Xia
- Chuan Bei Mu
- Gua Lou Pi
- Gua Lou Ren
- Gua Lou Shi
- Tian Hua Fen
- Zhe Bei Mu

Gan Cao (Radix Glycyrrhizae) is incompatible with:

- Da Ji
- Gan Sui
- Hai Zao
- Yuan Hua

Li Lu (Radix et Rhizoma Veratri) is incompatible with:

- Bai Shao
- Bei Sha Shen

- Chi Shao
- Dan Shen
- Dang Shen
- Ku Shen Gen
- Nan Sha Shen
- Ren Shen
- Xi Xin
- Xuan Shen

When we look at this list, some obvious generalities come to mind. Namely, the Aconite roots are largely incompatible with herbs that have a phlegm-resolving, drying and warming nature. Therefore, it would be germane to consider not using other similar combinations unless absolutely necessary. Gan Cao is incompatible almost entirely with herbs that strongly purge water, often referred to as harsh expellants. These herbs are always very toxic and serve very low clinical utility. And Li Lu is incompatible with a more eclectic mixture of herbs; however, many of these herbs are either moving in nature or tend to pacify the Shen.

The Nineteen Counteractions represents a set of herbal interactions whereby these herb combinations antagonize each other and may often cancel out effects or produce antagonistic responses within the body. The Shi Jiu Wei is as follows:

Ba Dou antagonizes Qian Niu Zi
 Cao Wu antagonizes Xi Jiao
 Chuan Wu antagonizes Xi Jiao
 Ding Xiang antagonizes Yu Jin
 Lang Du antagonizes Mi Tuo Seng
 Liu Huang antagonizes Mang Xiao
 Ren Shen antagonizes Wu Ling Zhi
 Rou Gui antagonizes Chi Shi Zhi
 San Leng antagonizes Ya Xiao
 Shui Yin antagonizes Pi Shuang

To this list, some sources also add that Jiang Huang (Curcuma Longa) is also antagonistic with Ding Xiang.

With the above list of antagonisms, it is sometimes not difficult to discern various patterns. For example, Ding Xiang has a very Yang energy to heat the body where Yu Jin has a very cooling energy that clears heat and disperses. In other cases, the interaction may be more subtle and complex.

It should be noted that while these lists cover the important and high-percentage herb-herb interactions, it is not necessarily a complete list and new herb combinations should always be chosen with care and analytical thought. For example, combining 2 very strong or toxic herbs that serve the same function and produce a synergistic effect is probably not a good idea unless the situation is very severe and the individual using the herbs has a constitution that can handle this. Conversely, one would not generally combine a very strong and expensive Qi tonic with a very strong moving herb—it takes Qi to move Qi and the moving herb may tend to cancel out the effect of the Qi tonic, unless it is being used for a very specific reason.

Additionally, a couple of these interactions have been used or studied in present day and appear to have no immediate or severe consequences. Nevertheless, until more definitive proof of this is available, one should always abide by the interactions stated above.

UNDERSTANDING THE TEMPLATES

Pinyin Name

Throughout this text, the standard Pinyin name is used for each herb. These names are identical to those which can be found in other standardized Materia Medicas and are the same names that herbalists, including the herbs on PlumDragon Herbs website, use for spelling.

English Name

The standardized English name by which the herb is referred to. In cases where there is more than one English name associated with a single herb, the name that is listed below is the one which we feel is more commonly used. In the case that there is no evidence that one name is any more commonly used than the other, we will use our best discretion and experiences in listing the name that makes the most descriptive sense.

Pharmaceutical Name

The pharmaceutical name is structured to first list the part of the substance being used, in Latin; common names and the associated English translation are as follows:

- Bone (Os)
- Calculus (stone)
- Caulis (Vine or branch)
- Cornu (Horn)
- Cortex (Bark)
- Exocarpium (Outer peel)
- Fel (Gallbladder)
- Flos (Flower)
- Folium (Leaf)
- Fructus (Fruit)
- Gelatinum (Gelatin)
- Herba (Whole herb)
- Horn (Cornu)
- Lignum (Wood)

- Pericarpium (Skin or peel)
- Radix (Root)
- Rhizoma (Rhizome)
- Semen (Seed)

Following the part of the substance being used, the name of the substance is listed in Latin. In the case of living organisms, this is generally listed as the genus. Species are often omitted here because exact species used are often subject to change over time, and often more than 1 species is acceptable or concurrently used by different distributors.

For a complete species listing of each herb, please reference the botanical or Zoological name. These can generally be found fairly easily on the internet or in biology books relating to classification schema.

Properties

These are the listed properties of each herb, to include the flavors associated with the herb and the relative energetic temperature. In Chinese medicine, there are 5 basic flavors used:

- **Bitter** herbs are often very cold and drying in their action. These types of herbs clear various types of heat from the body, swellings and inflammation, dry dampness, and can sometimes act as purgatives.
- **Salty** herbs tend to be purgatives as well. Salty herbs usually have an ability to soften hardness and nodules. These herbs are also important because they often have an affinity for the Kidney meridian and tend to direct other herbs actions into the Kidney.
- **Spicy (also known as acrid or pungent)** herbs are usually categorized as herbs that release the exterior, have a dispersing, outward moving nature, or have a moving aspect. The herbs in this category can be warm or cold, but are generally depleting or taxing on the body.

- **Sour** herbs are usually binding types of herbs. They are often astringent and help to prevent the loss of fluids from the body, and can aid in closing up openings such as bleeding cuts, sores, and open pores.
- **Sweet** herbs usually have tonifying properties to build and strengthen certain functions or organs (the organ meridians, not necessarily the physical Western organ) of the body. The herbs in this category can often be heavy, and damp, or very warming, and can become obstructive or overbearing if used in too large a quantity.

The temperature rating is used to discriminate herbs on the energetic effect on the body. Temperature ratings used are very hot, hot, warm, neutral, cool, cold, and very cold. These ratings can experience some variation by source. Generally, this text will adhere to the more standard sources in use today.

Meridians

These are the meridians that each herb enters. There is some level of disagreement among various texts and Materia Medica sources available today. When in question, we will follow the meridians information as contained in Chen & Chens “Chinese Medical Herbology and Pharmacology” as this is the most up-to-date and authoritative text on the subject.

Of the many meridians that the herbs enter, the meridians that are of primary concern to the martial artist and athlete are:

- Heart/Pericardium
- Kidney
- Liver
- Lung
- Spleen/Stomach
- Triple Burner

Relevant Herbal Actions

Each herb has an associated action or set of actions that it performs. Some herbs have only very specific purposes and uses while other herbs tend to display as many as 4 or more therapeutic uses. In this text, we are concerned primarily with educating the martial artist and athlete on herbs and their applicable uses. For this reason, some classically significant actions are PURPOSELY omitted. We have included the relevant actions of each herb as they relate to the martial artist and athlete. For those non-relevant actions, some effort has been made to note these actions as well as pharmacological effects in the supplemental information. This information is not exhaustive, but accordingly also is suited primarily for the interest of the martial artist and athlete whom may or may not have a thorough understanding of classical Chinese medical jargon and is concerned primarily with understanding as easily as possible how a given herb is relevant to them and their practice.

In other cases, the primary action of the herb may not be entirely relevant to the martial artist but may be of very significant importance in understanding how the herb works, theoretically or categorically. In these cases, we have included the primary function in the first position because removing this information would be detrimental to the understanding and classification of the herb. We will then follow-up in greater detail with ancillary functions that are more useful to the martial artist.

An example of this is the heat-clearing category of herbs. Many of these herbs are used primarily for their benefit in clearing heat in the form of infection, toxins in the body, or other similar clinical uses. While these actions do not have a specific use for most martial artists, these actions define how the herb works and its importance. However, these herbs also have ancillary functions to dry dampness, reduce swelling and inflammation, invigorate Blood, and heal injury. Therefore, these actions will be duly noted either as relevant herbal actions or as supplemental information in individual templates.

Supplemental Information

There is a great deal of understanding, body of knowledge, and use in martial arts formulas about an herb that is not sufficiently contained in the actions. For this reason we have included a supplemental information section. This section will contain a wealth of information, sometimes ranging from chemical composition information, toxicity and processing information, additional uses not cited in the herbal actions or uses from perspectives outside of Chinese herbalism, its appearance in various herbal formulas, and results of clinical or lab studies.

Because the section on relevant herbal actions is largely structured in TCM rhetoric, it is likely that the layman reader will glean the most important information from the paragraphs under supplemental information. If it is important for a martial artist or athlete and it does not appear accordingly in the herbal actions section, it will show up here.

OMISSIONS

As you go through each of the templates, you may notice that there are some herbs which are not present in the text, and some select formulas that may not have received mention. This is because they either:

- Serve no real purpose for those interested in martial arts or sports formulas
- Serve very little purpose and show up in zero or nearly zero formulas and also may be very expensive or difficult to procure.
- Formulas may not receive mention due to either obscurity to the general public or have little to no benefit to martial artists.

While you the reader may find an herb that you may feel should not have been omitted, as the author I feel that I have provided a very large list of herbs that suit each specific categorical purpose

thoroughly. As such, I am aware that there are a couple herbs that have been intentionally left out. However, it is the opinion of the author that this book encapsulates THE full list of herbs that the martial artist or athlete should be aware of. If it is not necessary for martial arts or other enduring activity, it is not in this book. If you are an acupuncturist, you can use this text as a detailed source for herbs found in dit da, longevity tonics, and sports medicine that is poorly covered or not covered at all in collegiate coursework.

Additionally, many long arduous hours were spent referencing many hundreds, if not thousands, of injury and conditioning formulas, tonic recipes, internal injury medicines, classical and patent formulas, martial arts specific formulas from several countries, and others, both public and private. This requires combing through a myriad of sources, physical and electronic, continually referencing our formulas database. This is an arduous and tedious process that must be performed for each and every herb.

While I have covered a large cross-section of these formulas within, I have not mentioned them all either because they were too obscure and unknown or in an effort to respect those who wish for their formulas not to be mentioned. PlumDragon has received literally hundreds of special formulas over the years which are housed in a separate database that was very rarely tapped into for this book. Many of these formulas are unknown to the general public and serve no real purpose if mentioned. Therefore, many of those have been omitted entirely. Additionally, to be candid, I only have so much patience and decided to keep these lists abbreviated to our main database due to the overwhelming number of formulas in which certain herbs appear-there are many features I had hoped would appear in this book which are not present primarily due to time constraints. This book is the **first** of its kind to approach the listing of herbs and dit da-based formulas in this way. It is a starting point. Perhaps in time, this will become the standard, and the future writers of works such as this can continue with the unique position we have created here.

For details or questions about any of these fairly inconsequential herbs or formulas housed in databases we did not reference for this book, you the reader are always welcome to contact us for information regarding ANY herb or formula that does not appear within these most fabulous pages...

PART II

Herb Templates

Chapter 1

Herbs That Release Exterior Heat

Concept

Herbs that release heat from the exterior (Wind-heat) seek to remove heat-based pathogens from the exterior layers of the body, before they have a chance to penetrate inwards. These herbs are usually cool (with some being cold) and have a spicy or acrid flavor. They are used clinically to relieve issues such as initial fever and inflammation and generally have been shown to exhibit mild to moderate antibiotic and antivenin pharmacological activity in lab studies. Some of these herbs are very useful in martial arts and sports use due to their ability to reduce heat and therefore remove inflammation as well as their effects to reduce pain through various means.

Externally, these herbs tend to work primarily on the exterior regions of the body; they can reduce inflammation and pain

from injuries that are inflamed, and they seem to have some ability to pull deeper bruising up to the surface where it can be more easily dealt with. They are often found in both injury and iron palm liniments, and less often (although still occasionally) in training wines and tonic formulas.

Lastly, in addition to moderately addressing inflammation, some of the herbs in this category have additional use; these uses include the ability to treat Bi Syndrome, relax smooth muscle, and promote the movement of coagulations seen as excess dampness.

The herbs in this category can be moving and depleting to bodily resources through their ability to clear heat and mildly increase circulation, especially when used internally.

Preparation

Herbs that release exterior heat often contain volatile oils that are sensitive to heat. If you are cooking an herbal formula that contains herbs from this category, you should make it a general rule to post-decoct these ingredients so as to not destroy any important compounds. As little as 5-10 minutes of extreme heat can damage many of the compounds in these herbs.

Pinyin Name: Bo He

English Name: Mint, Field Mint

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba Menthae

Properties: spicy and cool

Meridians: Lung, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Release the Exterior to Dispel Wind-Heat

Bo He is useful for Wind-Heat patterns that display fever, hot flashes, sore throat, and other types of complaints in the initial stages of Heat patterns.

This action makes it useful for cooling the heat present in fresh closed injuries and maintaining smooth flow of blood for a more rapid healing process. It is also useful for pulling deep bruising up to the surface. Painful injuries that show no bruising may have deep blood stasis that is not visible. Bo He added to a formula can help to express this bruising to the external layers of the body.

2. Invigorate the Blood

Bo He has a mild action to increase local blood circulation when used externally. While not strong in this action, it can support the function of other Blood invigorators and pain killers that are stronger in this regard.

3. Resolve Liver Qi Stagnation

Bo He is sometimes used in clinical settings to release Liver Qi stagnation. It is often combined with other strongly-focused Liver herbs such as Chai Hu and Gou Teng for this purpose. Externally, these types of herbs can be useful in reducing tendon tightness and stiffness.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Mint has been in use for a very long time; not just in China but across the world both for its herbal therapeutic qualities as well as its culinary uses. Mint is available in a variety of species that are indigenous to different regions. The commonly used version of Chinese Field Mint (*haplocalyx*) is slightly different in essential oil concentration than other types of mints. In North America, there are several types of mint that grow wild and are sold in herb shops and grocery stores. Of these, peppermint is quite commonly known; it is a cross of 2 different types of mint and even within this there are various strains. Overall, peppermint has a very high concentration of active oils. These indigenous types of mint are often times preferable to the Bo He shipped from China because they are local, usually fresher, and often times more potent in their action due to their high concentration of oils.

Bo He leaf and Bo He stem work in slightly different ways; while the stems tend to be stronger in their function to regulate Qi, it is the leaves that contain most of the oils which dispel Wind-Heat.

Bo He appears in several injury and conditioning formulas: It is present in all 3 of the Fang Sou “ministerial” hand training formulas, Fang Sou Yi, Du Fang Sou Er, and Fang Sou San. It also appears in a Wong Fei Hung Hung Gar iron palm liniment, the Ancient Way jow formula (as menthol) and in the basic bruise dit da jow from PlumDragon.

As an ingredient used in training wines, it can be helpful to reduce the build up of heat in summer settings where body temperatures can reach dangerous levels. While Bo He is a cool herb, it is versatile and can be combined with warm exterior releasing herbs to promote the clearing of Wind-Cold.

Pinyin Name: Chan Tui

English Name: Cicada Shell

Pharmaceutical Name: Periostracum Cicadae

Properties: sweet and cold

Meridians: Liver, Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Heat

Chan Tui dispels Wind-Heat types of patterns mostly from the upper portions of the body, including the head, throat, eyes, and nose. According to Chen & Chen (p 73) the entire Cicada used to be used and was more effective for the interior parts of the body whereas the shell or casing is more appropriate for external patterns such as those near the surface of the skin.

2. Extinguish Liver Wind

Chan Tui can aid in relieving Liver Wind to address various types of spasms. It enters the Liver channel primarily and extinguishes Liver Wind and to address muscle tightness and stiffness, and spasms and cramps.

3. Relieve Itching and Rash

Chan Tui can be used for some dermatological disorders and is useful when combined with Bo He, Jing Jie, or Ge Gen, depending on the situation.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Chan Tui shells can be seen in a number of North American states around the country. In the South East, the shells can be found in numerous quantities on the ground in woody areas and on the sides of trees. Coincidentally, while they are common in nature, their use has become less popular and this herb is less available than it was 10 or 12 years ago.

Chan Tui rarely shows up in training formulas, but its Liver extinguishing action can be important for certain types of iron palm programs where many repetitions are performed on a bag with a soft material inside. This type of training can produce stiffness and cramping in the tendons and muscles. While Chan Tui is very rarely seen in dit da formulas, does appear in at least 1 internal training wine, sometimes referred to as the “Die Da Nail Turned Black Formula” where it is the chief herb. Its use here is likely to focus the herbs and functions on the exterior layers of the body, promoting the healing of the exterior layers of the body and the recession of inflammation from injury and heat from training. This formula is composed of other heat-clearing herbs and Blood invigorators.

Pinyin Name: Ju Hua

English Name: Chrysanthemum Flower

Pharmaceutical Name: Flos Chrysanthemum

Properties: spicy, sweet, bitter, and cool

Meridians: Lung, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Heat

Like other Wind-Heat herbs, Ju Hua has a pure action to dispel Wind-Heat as it is seen with early-stage patterns of the exterior. It is commonly used to address heat in the form of sore throat, fever, various types of headaches, swelling in the eyes and even dizziness.

2. Relieve Liver Disharmony

Ju Hua, like many other Wind-Heat herbs, has some ancillary benefit in calming the Liver to treat cramping and tightness as well as swelling and pain in the upper portions of the body.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ju Hua reduces inflammation in the exterior layers of the body. It is milder in its cooling properties than Chan Tui and is more suitable for long-term use where it has been used as a daily herbal tea for those who have a tendency to build excess Heat. It has a wide array of essential oils that appear in a number of other herbs. It has amounts of Borneol which can be seen in high concentration of Bing Pian; it also has traces of Camphor which is a much hotter chemical derivative of Borneol and is the primary compound in Zhang Nao. Because of this we can attribute to Ju Hua some degree of pure pain-relieving function and ability to dilate and relax the blood vessels. Camphor and Borneol are both useful for relieving pain and are both dispersing and penetrating in action.

Combined with its ability to clear heat and reduce inflammation without being overly cold or drying, it is a versatile and under-used herb in dit da jow formulas, where it can be quite useful in formulas that address injury by strongly reducing inflammation and tightness in an effort to return full range of motion at the site of injury.

Ju Hua is rarely used in dit da jow formulas, but is useful in clinical settings for its cooling ability and function on the Liver. It is used very rarely in injury/conditioning formulas but serves other important purposes, and is used in Wu Wei Xiao Du Wan, Qi Ju Di Huang Wan, and Ming Mu Di Huang Wan, patent formulas for traumatology and orthopedics.

Ju Hua comes in more than 1 variety. Most common are Ju Hua, which has a whitish flower and focuses its actions more strongly on the Liver meridian. Ye Ju Hua is the wild Chrysanthemum flower and is more effective at clearing heat and swelling. Both of these herbs are available today and are not expensive herbs.

Ju Hua should not be cooked but only for a few minutes to preserve its essential oils. For topical use, it is often crushed and added to oil or water and made into a paste.

Pinyin Name: Mu Zei

English Name: Scouring Rush, Horse Tail

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba Equiseti Hiemalis

Properties: sweet, bitter, and neutral

Meridians: Lung, Liver, Gallbladder

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Heat

Warmer than other exterior releasing herbs in this category, Mu Zei is more commonly used by acupuncturists for its benefit to the eyes. Redness, swelling, tearing, and pain in the eyes are often attributed to the heat which has developed in the Liver channel, since the Liver opens up into the eyes.

Topically, it is less useful for clearing heat and reducing inflammation than other Wind-Heat herbs.

2. Stop Bleeding

Mu Zei has some haemostatic ability. It is used in acupuncture clinics for internal problems with bleeding but it can be used topically for bleeding due to injury or heat.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Mu Zei shows up in very few martial arts-based formulas. Besides perhaps Dan Dou Chi, it has the least utility of all the Wind-Heat herbs for injury or conditioning, despite its importance in other circles.

Mu Zei does appear in a Hung Gar "Golden Bridge" training jow where it is one of the principal herbs in the formula. Its function in this formula is not however, supported by any other herbs which appear directly from this functional category. Mu Zei is utilized more commonly in clinical settings.

Pinyin Name: Ge Gen

English Name: Kudzu Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Puerariae

Properties: sweet, spicy, and cool

Meridians: Spleen, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Exterior Wind and Clear Heat

Ge Gen is used primarily for Wind-Heat conditions related primarily to stiffness that develops from heat invasion. Through this herb's interaction with the Spleen, clinically Ge Gen shows up in formulas where fever, headache, sore throat and general malaise are accompanied by muscle aches through the body. Ge Gen is the first of 3 herbs in this category that work primarily on the upper body.

Because Ge Gen is only mildly cooling, it shows up in formulas used for both Wind-Heat and Wind-Cold. It provides a degree of heat-clearing function but not as strong as other more cooling herbs.

Externally, Ge Gen can be mildly useful in reducing inflammation and treating swelling in the muscles. It has a mild faculty in this regard.

2. Relax Tension

Ge Gen is useful for treating tension throughout the body. It appears in internal formulas that treat Wind conditions with stiffness primarily in the upper body, especially the shoulders. While Ge Gen does not enter the Liver meridian, it is similar to Chan Tui in that it can relieve tension in the body. However, Ge Gen works primarily on the muscles where Chan Tui works primarily on the tendons.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ge Gen has also been shown to exhibit some ability to dilate blood vessels and increases blood perfusion. It also produces an anticoagulant effect.

Ge Gen appears in the Shoulder Relaxing Formula and Patent formulas such as variations of Gan Mao Ling. It has been used on rare occasion in external dit da jow formulas, notably in the now publicly available Wing Chun “Anti-contusion” formula, where it appears as one of the few cooling herbs in the ingredients list. Its use here is likely not just as a cooling and muscle-relaxing agent, but also offer support to stronger herbs for increasing local circulation and resolving blood stasis.



Sliced Ge Gen Root

Ge Gen is usually sliced thin and has a very chalky, powdery feel, with fine grains running along the root.

Pinyin Name: Chai Hu

English Name: Bupleurum, Thorowax

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Bupleuri

Properties: bitter, spicy and cool

Meridians: Liver, Gallbladder

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Harmonize the Interior and Exterior

Chai Hu is a very useful and important herb in some clinical formulas due to its ability to harmonize the exterior and interior. When a pathogen has penetrated beyond the external layers of the body but is not yet manifest as an internal disharmony, it can be more difficult for an acupuncturist to treat. Chai Hu can aid a formula in guiding these pathogens exterior so they do not develop internally.

2. Relieve Liver Qi Stagnation, Opens the Liver, Lift Yang

Chai Hu exhibits a spicy, aromatic flavor and is markedly dispersing in nature. Chai Hu can strongly break Liver Qi stagnation and spread Liver Qi. Often it is found in formulas which address mental and emotional tension, but because of its interaction with the Liver meridian, it can also be useful for tension in the tendons that causes cramping and pain, and cold or painful extremities. Some texts advise that it is useful for hypochondriac pain.

Chai Hu also exhibits an ascending nature. While it may show up in formulas used clinically for issues such as prolapse, it may be useful for external iron palm formulas for its dual ability to relieve cramping and raise the Yang.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Chai Hu is used in the Chan Ning Tong iron palm jow, Black Hand iron palm jow, some Chow Gar training formulas, and the Iron Goddess liniment. While its action of harmonizing the interior and exterior has fairly limited use in the world of martial arts and dit da, its penetrating and ascending natures are very useful. You may also find this herb appear in formulas from your doctor when you visit with symptoms of illness.

Chai Hu has been tested in a number of studies and exhibits moderate analgesic and anti-inflammatory actions. In formulas where the Yang raising qualities are of interest, Chai Hu is used in smaller doses while larger doses are used in formulas that are concerned more with Wind patterns.

Vinegar-frying Chai Hu brings about its ability to relieve Liver Qi stagnation and spread the Liver while raw Chai Hu focuses more strongly on releasing the exterior.

Pinyin Name: Sheng Ma

English Name: Cimicifuga

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizome Cimicifugae

Properties: spicy, sweet and cool

Meridians: Lung, Spleen, Large Intestine, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Release the Exterior, Clear Heat

Sheng Ma clears Wind-Heat patterns that are present as headache and fever in a similar manner as other Wind-Heat herbs. However, Sheng Ma is also useful for Wind-Heat in the form of Wind-Heat in the superficial layers, such as itching and rash.

Sheng Ma clears heat as can be seen in swollen gums and mouth and sore throat.

2. Raise Yang Qi

Sheng Ma is the third of 3 herbs in this category that is useful for lifting the Yang. While it may appear in formulas for prolapse, its inclusion in conditioning formulas is with the intent of focusing on the upper body.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Many of these functions of Sheng Ma are not useful for the martial artist. However, Sheng Ma does have some general utility in its ability to reduce inflammation. When this herb is used externally with this action in mind, it should be supported by other stronger anti-inflammatory herbs.

Like Chai Hu, Sheng Ma is used in small quantities when the Yang raising function is of prime interest.

Sheng Ma is almost never seen in formulas relevant to the martial artist or athlete. However, it does exhibit some minor anti-inflammatory and analgesic properties and works in similar ways to both Ge Gen and Chai Hu, making it worth noting. As a result, it does appear occasionally in internal training wines, such as the Shaolin Great Supplement Wine.

Pinyin Name: Dan Dou Chi

English Name: Fermented Soybean

Pharmaceutical name: Semen Sojae Praeparatum

Properties: spicy, sweet, bitter and cold

Meridians: Lung Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Releases the Exterior

Dan Dou Chi mildly addresses Wind-Heat conditions. Despite its cold temperature, this herb is actually quite versatile and can also be seen appearing in formulas for Wind-Cold as well.

Its dispersing function is said to disperse irritability as well.

2. Processing to Focus On Various Functions

Dan Dou Chi is an herb that easily takes on a variety of other actions based on the processing methods and ingredients. Those actions which are relevant to the martial artist include:

Dan Dou Chi can be processed in order to stop bleeding by dry-frying it with garlic. This makes it of minor use in external injury and iron palm formulas.

Dan Dou Chi can be processed in order to dispel wind by soaking it in alcohol and frying for a short time.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Dan Dou Chi should not be confused with Hei Dou, which is Black Bean and looks somewhat similar to a fermented soybean.

Dan Dou Chi is often processed with Hei Dou and this changes its natural temperature to neutral. Hei Dou, raw black soybean, is not covered in this text but the reader can note that Hei Dou is an herb that is found in the formula, “Shaolin Yu Gong Jiu”, or Shaolin Abundant Justice Wine. Hei Dou is better suited for that formula.

Chapter 2

Herbs That Release Exterior Cold

Concept

Herbs that release exterior Cold (Wind-cold) work in much the same fashion as herbs that release exterior Heat (Wind-Heat). Rather than release heat from the exterior layers, the action is focused more on pushing out cold from the exterior layers by inducing perspiration and promoting warmth in the muscles and outer tissues. Many Wind-Cold herbs tend to promote metabolic activity and may provide some function to raise body temperature or increase circulation to create perspiration.

Externally, these herbs are spicy, warm herbs which often exhibit functions to create circulation in the body, disperse cold, and warm and unblock the channels. Many of the herbs in this category show up in various iron palm jow formulas, less commonly in injury jow formulas, and occasionally in various

internal tonics and training formulas, as some of them have uses beyond treating symptoms of cold, some might also address Bi Syndrome or other similar uses for martial arts. However, these substances do not generally have the anti-inflammatory types of actions as their Wind-Heat counterparts.

The herbs in this category can be moving and depleting to bodily resources through their ability to clear, especially when used internally. They tend to house energetic compounds which sometimes work directly on the Central Nervous System (CNS).

While the primary action of releasing exterior Cold is not principally important for most martial arts and athletic uses (aside from fighting off illness), these herbs tend to have secondary functions which make them very useful to the martial artist.

Preparation

Similar to the processing of Wind-heat herbs, many herbs in this category should be added only at the end of cooking to preserve the volatile oils and other compounds.

Pinyin Name: Ma Huang

English Name: Ephedra

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba Ephedrae

Properties: spicy, bitter and warm

Meridians: Lung, Urinary Bladder

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Release the Exterior, Open Channels

Ma Huang strongly releases Wind-Cold from the exterior through its diaphoretic action. Ma Huang has a fantastic dispersing function. It appears in formulas for colds, headache and body aches, cough, and for various lung conditions.

Through the excellent dispersing and warming function of Ma Huang, it has the ability to open the channels, which is a significant function of importance in iron palm formulas.

2. Disperses Cold and Bi Syndrome

Ma Huang is warm and very dispersing and scatters Cold to warm the body and the channels. Additionally, the dispersing nature of Ma Huang makes it useful for dispelling Wind-Damp excess in the form of Bi Syndrome blockage, especially in the extremities in which case it can be paired with tonics or other dispersing or moving herbs to perpetuate this function.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ma Huang is among a handful of very thoroughly studied Chinese herbs. Research has shown its ability to affect the nervous system in a variety of ways through the action of a battery of ephedrine compounds present in the stems of this plant.

Ma Huang is a powerful herb that has great use in both internal and external formulas. Because it directly stimulates the

sympathetic nervous system, internal use strengthens and rapidly speeds up the rate at which other herbs take effect, and because of its strong stimulating and dispersing quality, it shows great use in dit da formulas of all kinds; it has been used in both the external "Tendon Lotion" and internal "Trauma Pills" formulas published by Tom Bisio, in a Hung Gar iron palm jow of the Wong Fei Hung lineage, and Shaolin formulas such as Winter-Time Troop Deployment Powder, Eight Immortals Powder, and Shang Jin Dong Gu Wan. Some PlumDragon customers also like to add it to the Comprehensive Iron Palm tonic.

Aside from martial arts use, it also is a key herb in the fight to the cure the common cold. Under the proper advice of a doctor, Ma Huang Tang taken early enough in the development of cold symptoms can stop a cold dead in its tracks in a matter of hours.

Unfortunately, Ma Huang also rests upon a double-edged sword. Due to its potency, it is also an herb which requires careful use, especially internally. In years past, it has sadly caused health problems due to improper use and has since been banned by the FDA from US borders. Even under direct guidance, there is a chance for minor overdose. While it does still make its way into the United States in the present day, most suppliers will simply not touch it due to the stigma that has been built over the years. Suppliers that do carry it charge large amounts of money for a relatively inexpensive herb and it can be very difficult to find. This is a very sad situation because Ma Huang can be quite useful for so many reasons.

While Ma Huang can be purchased, in a pinch Ban Xia can be substituted in its place. Ban Xia has a smaller concentration of ephedrine alkaloids and can perform in part, the same task.

There are several websites claiming to sell Ma Huang. Please note that these sites often sell Ma Huang Gen but label it as Ma Huang. Ma Huang Gen is the root of the same plant. Ma Huang is the twig and works in a drastically different way than the root. Ma Huang Gen is sweet and neutral and acts primarily as an astringent to stop night sweats and spontaneous sweating. Ma

Huang Gen does stimulate the CNS, but in a very different manner than Ma Huang. Be cautious of what you purchase, as Ma Huang Gen will not provide the same effects as Ma Huang.

Ma Huang for use in martial arts is often used in its raw, unprepared form as this is the strongest form for dispersing Wind. When cooked for internal use, Ma Huang is often pre-decocted. Foam appears on the surface of the decoction and this can be spooned off the top. This foam can be responsible for digestive irritability. Through experimentation, we have first-hand experience with this—skimming off the foam does indeed make a difference!

Pinyin Name: Gui Zhi

English Name: Cinnamon Twig

Pharmaceutical Name: Ramulus Cinnamomi

Properties: spicy, sweet and warm

Meridians: Heart, Lung, Urinary Bladder

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Releases the Exterior

Gui Zhi has a moderate function to release the exterior and warm the Yang by inducing perspiration. While its function is milder than that of Ma Huang, Gui Zhi is often found in Wind-Cold formulas along side of Ma Huang for synergistic effect.

Gui Zhi also has utility in regulating the opening and closing of the pores. Through this aspect, Gui Zhi can be quite useful in expressing deep injuries that are painful but not visibly bruised or damaged.

2. Warms and Opens the Channels

Gui Zhi has a moderate ability to warm and open the channels and collaterals to address Wind-Cold and Wind-Damp patterns resulting in Bi Syndrome. Its function here is also not as strong as Ma Huang but is still very useful when combined with other Wind-Damp herbs.

Like the Wind-Heat herb Ge Gen, Gui Zhi works on the more external layers of the body and can be useful for pain or soreness in the muscles. Gui Zhi can also be used to guide these functions to the upper part of the body through its ascending and dispersing nature.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

While Gui Zhi does not display the sheer strength of Ma Huang, it has been a very common addition in dit da formulas. It is readily available in good quality and is very inexpensive to purchase.

Gui Zhi shows up as an envoy herb in the Ku Yu Cheong and similar variations of iron palm formulas; it is used as a guiding herb in the formula, “Dit Da Kuan Jin Yao Jow”; it appears in several Bak Mei/Bak Fu Pai formulas to include the Fung Doe Duk Coconut Break, in Yang Jin Hua Yao Jiu and Warming and Quickening Wine, and in the Clouds in Heaven conditioning jow; it shows up in countless other formulas as well. It is likely the most common ingredient in dit da from the exterior releasing category of herbs.

Gui Zhi has also been studied to some degree in a number of research settings and has been shown to provide some degree of anti-arthritic, analgesic, and cardiovascular effects. The essential oils in Gui Zhi are also mildly capable of dilating blood vessels which can increase local circulation when used externally, making it useful for mildly stimulating the healing process in injuries, reducing pain, and mildly aiding in Wind-Damp blockage.

Gui Zhi is the twig of the Cinnamomum Cassia plant. It has noticeably different actions than the bark, Rou Gui. Both do have a similar "temperament".



Gui Zhi Twig

Pinyin Name: Zi Su Ye

English Name: Perilla Leaf

Pharmaceutical Name: Folium Perillae

Properties: spicy and warm

Meridians: Lung, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Release the Exterior and Dispel Cold

Zi Su Ye releases Wind-Cold patterns from the exterior and is useful for dispelling Wind and Cold through its warm and spicy nature.

2. Regulates Qi

Zi Su Ye can be combined with Qi regulating herbs to aid in resolving Qi stagnation and regulating Qi. It is often combined

with drying and/or moving herbs such as Chen Pi and Ban Xia (Er Chen Tang).

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Despite its warm energy, Zi Su Ye contains several essential oils such as menthol, which are found in Bo He. For this reason, it has been seen as an herb with mild anti-inflammatory functionality that can also be useful for mildly dilating blood vessels.

Zi Su Ye is rarely seen in dit da jow but does appear in Wong Fei Hung #2 and Hong Zi Su Ye Gao (Carthamus and Perilla Plaster), and other formulas that are used in some Hung Gar circles. Gui Zhi also appears in this plaster. This is a formula made as a plaster rather than an alcohol extraction.

Pinyin Name: Sheng Jiang

English Name: Fresh Ginger

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizome Zingiberis

Properties: spicy and warm

Meridians: Lung, Spleen, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Releases the Exterior

Sheng Jiang has a mild perspiration inducing action which makes it useful in the early-stage Wind-Cold patterns. Sheng Jiang is a commonly used herb to help deter cold from developing and often combined with Gui Zhi for this purpose. It is used in this capacity in a number of Eastern countries, including Japan and the Philippines, to good effect. Ginger powder is a common commodity in Eastern grocery stores, packaged in powder form

which can be dissolved in warm water to make a tasty heating tea.

The warming action of Sheng Jiang is also useful for harmonizing the stomach and can be useful for an upset stomach.

2. Eliminates Toxicity

Sheng Jiang appears in formulas which address seafood poisoning as the compounds in Sheng Jiang tends to have an interesting capability to neutralize the toxicity of rancid seafood. Coincidentally, Sheng Jiang is also helpful for minimizing the toxicity of other herbs. Both Ban Xia and Tian Nan Xing are often processed using ginger juice to mitigate the strong unwanted toxicity of these herbs.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Sheng Jiang is the raw, fresh ginger root. When it is dried and/or roasted, the properties of this herb change and it is then referred to as Gan Jiang. Sheng Jiang is not usually carried by herbalists as it should be used fresh. Fortunately, it can be purchased at any grocery store in America in good quality.

Sheng Jiang has several volatile oils (camphene, zingiberol, terpineol, and borneol to name a few) which make it useful for injuries. In both the East and West, fresh ginger is crushed up and applied topically to injuries as a paste. It can decrease pain, mildly increase local circulation, and aid in the management of mild cases of joint pain and arthritis.

Sheng Jiang appears in several formulas, both internal and external, including the Ark Wong iron palm formula and several internal and external Vietnamese troop formulas.

Pinyin Name: Jing Jie

English Name: Schizonepeta

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba Schizonepetae

Properties: spicy and mildly warm

Meridians: Lung, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Releases the Exterior

Jing Jie is only a mildly warm substance, making it versatile and useful for both Wind-Heat and Wind-Cold conditions. Its ability to release the exterior is only mild and is usually combined with other herbs as support to this function.

2. Dispel Wind and Relieve Spasm

Jing Jie enters the Liver meridian to address cramping, tightness, and spasms, especially in the muscle layer. It also vents Wind from the skin to address itching, rashes, and sores. This function of Jing Jie is for situations where spasms are a result of external Wind as opposed to internal Liver Wind.

3. Stop Bleeding

When Jing Jie is charred, it has significant utility in stopping bleeding through its haemostatic function to shorten the coagulation time. Charring of many herbs tends to bring out an herbs focus on stopping bleeding.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Jing Jie has been shown to have minor analgesic effects in addition to its exterior relieving action.

Because of its influence on the Lung meridian, Jing Jie tends to operate well on the upper and outer parts of the body. This fact makes it useful for iron palm formulas that have a preference to focus on the arms and hands. This herbs utility with the

stoppage of bleeding and dispelling Wind has made it popular with certain groups in iron palm formulas; it shows up in a variety of Bak Mei/Bak Fu Pai formulas, the Shattering Palm conditioning formula, an uncommon Ho Chun iron palm mixture, Ten Thousand Respondings plaster, as well as the Black Hand iron palm formula that is becoming more popular in current day.

It is also used in some internal formulas such as the Shaolin Winter-Time Troop Deployment powder.

Pinyin Name: Fang Feng

English Name: Siler Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Saposhnikoviae

Properties: spicy, sweet and mildly warm

Meridians: Urinary Bladder, Liver, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind from the Exterior

Fang Feng has an excellent action to dispel both Wind-Cold and Wind-Heat from the exterior of the body, based on which herbs it is combined with. It also comes with the advantage of not being nearly as drying as many other herbs that release Wind from the exterior.

Fang Feng is used in combination with other herbs to dispel Wind as well as treat skin complaints where it is sometimes paired with Jing Jie and to build Wei Qi where it is sometimes combined with Huang Qi.

2. Dispel Wind from the Interior to Relieve Spasm

Fang Feng is also useful in negating internal Liver Wind where it addresses cramps and spasms in the muscles and tendons,

trembling in the hands, tightness, and other forms of tension.

3. Dispels Wind-Damp Bi Syndrome

Fang Feng can combat Wind-Damp that permeates the muscles and joints, causing obstruction of the channels and painful Bi Syndrome to occur. Bi Syndrome left unchecked can lead to poor circulation and nourishment and may develop into arthritic or painful joint problems. Many impact sports and conditioning programs such as iron palm can develop Bi Syndrome over the years if the proper herbs are not used.

4. Stops Bleeding

The charred form of Fang Feng has exhibited a haemostatic function to stop bleeding. For this purpose it is usually charred to the point of ash and the ashes are used to staunch bleeding.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Fang Feng is one of the most useful herbs in this category of herbs. It is the only herb that treats nearly all forms of Wind in one way or another. It is useful for external Wind, and most importantly for the martial artist, internal Wind and Wind-Damp where Bi Syndrome can develop. It is quite a helpful herb for maintaining healthy joints and sinews with hard impact conditioning and it can be easily charred for use as a stop bleeding herb. For this purpose, other stop bleeding herbs are often used in addition.

Fang Feng is often found as an assistant herb in dit da and iron palm formulas for its ability to treat general Wind and assist other Wind-based herbs in their job. From the Ku Yu Cheong iron palm formula to the Lau Gar Die Da Jiu Fang training jow to Ho Family jow, it appears in many formulas. Usually, it will appear in half (or less) of the chief herbs to act as a supporting herb for other dispersing and clearing herbs.

Fang Feng also appears in the cold-prevention formula, Jade Windscreen, where it makes an appearance with Huang Qi and Bai Zhu.

Fang Feng is one herb that is very useful in training where muscular exertion and overtraining can often lead to instances of excessive tightness and cramping in the muscles. For this use it is often combined with other more focused herbs for that purpose.

Pinyin Name: Qiang Huo

English Name: Notopterygium Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizome/Radix Notopterygii

Properties: spicy, better and warm

Meridians: Urinary Bladder, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Cold

Qiang Huo has quite a strong function to disperse Wind-Cold. It is often used for this purpose on the upper portions of the body. It figures into some classically used formulas for specific types of headaches and can be useful for Wind-Cold where dampness also creates feelings of malaise and lethargy with little or no desire to move or be active.

2. Dispels Cold and Wind-Damp

Qiang Huo shines in martial arts formulas primarily for its excellent ability to dispel Wind-Damp and Cold in the joints and muscles that develop into Bi Syndrome and arthritic types of pain. It has been used clinically for various arthritic types of complaints and blockage that creates pain and weakness in the joints.

Qiang Huo works best on the upper part of the body, making it ideal for iron palm jow and training formulas where its use can benefit the joints and muscles of the limbs.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

The price of Qiang Huo has risen somewhat recently and will likely not come back down. This herb is still not unreasonably expensive, however and well worth the additional cost.

When of good quality, Qiang Huo is an excellent smelling herb, with a fresh woody aroma. This is due in part to its aromatic oils; Qiang Huo has concentrations of limonene, coumarin, and multiple pinene compounds, which are not surprisingly found in other aromatic woody herbs that resolve Wind-Damp, such as Song Jie, Qian Nian Jian, and Hai Feng Teng. These aromatic, penetrating oils are partially responsible for the scent of woody, pine-based compounds that seem to universally penetrate Wind-Damp effectively.

Qiang Huo also has shown in tests to have some purely analgesic function and to increase blood circulation. Because of these and the above, it's no wonder it is a popular herb in iron palm formulas, where it shows up commonly, to include Ku Yu Cheong and its variations, the White Dragon iron palm jow made in-house at PlumDragon Herbs, in both an internal and external Bak Mei Tieh Sao Jow/Wan collection, various Bak Fu Pai conditioning jows, and in very sizeable quantities in the Li Family iron palm formula.

Unquestionably, while there are more powerful herbs than Qiang Huo which take care of functions important to the serious trainer, Qiang Huo is still of a much lower cost than many of the very strong powerhouse herbs which justifies its continued use as one of the better bang-for-the-buck herbs. With that said, there have been consistent price increases in Qiang Huo even since the writing of this text began. If the price continues to go up over time, it will begin to become cost prohibitive.

Pinyin Name: Gao Ben

English Name: Ligusticum, Lovage

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Ligustici

Properties: spicy and warm

Meridians: Urinary Bladder

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Cold

Gao Ben, like other Wind-Cold herbs is useful for releasing exterior Cold and treating pain from general Wind-Cold conditions. Some acupuncturists use this herb as a guiding herb, which can guide a formulas action to the upper portions of the body. Of interesting note, Chuan Xiong is in the same family of herbs as Gao Ben and is also used for headaches dealing with Wind-Cold.

2. Dispel Wind-Damp and Cold

The action of Gao Ben shines through for its utility in breaking Wind-Damp and Cold conditions that create Bi Syndrome. Gao Ben can address Wind-Damp attacking the muscles and joints. It aids dispersing this Wind-Damp stasis and in unblocking the channels due to Wind-Damp that has impeded proper circulation, causing pain and tightness.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Gao Ben has displayed some ability to reduce inflammation despite its warmth.

It is unfortunate that Gao Ben is incredibly rare to find in dit da formulas. It is less expensive than Qiang Huo and has a good penetrating property to it. It also has an incredible aroma.

Gao Ben (*Ligusticum Sinense*) is one of several *Ligusticum* species. Chuan Xiong (*Ligusticum Walichii* or *Ligusticum*

Chuanxiong) is a Blood invigorator that is found very commonly in injury formulas, although it works in significantly different ways. Additionally, Tie Da Yin Chen, Osha Root (*Ligusticum Porteri*) is another type of *Ligusticum* that is indigenous to North America. This herb works in a very similar manner to Gao Ben but is considered in many respects to be of superior potency. It has an amazing aroma, is significantly stronger, and available here in the US.

Both Gao Ben (*Ligusticum Sinense*) and Osha Root (*Ligusticum Porteri*) have been used in the Ho Family *dit da jow* and its derivative, Shaolin *Die Da Shen Liang Fan*. While Gao Ben is acceptable and commonly used, true Osha Root is decidedly a much more powerful herb and is one of the most important herbs in the Ho Family *jow*.

Pinyin Name: Cong Bai

English Name: Scallion

Pharmaceutical Name: *Bulbus Allii Fistulosi*

Properties: spicy and warm

Meridians: Lung, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Releases the Exterior

Cong Bai is mildly warming and has a minor ability to address Wind-Cold type invasion. Clinically, it appears in formulas where there is also heat present.

2. Vitalizes the Yang

The warming energy of Cong Bai can be useful for situation where cold is impeding the Yang. In this way, Cong Bai can help warm the interior and warm the channels. As such, it makes a reasonable addition to foods such as soup, especially

prior to or following a training session in the winter months when cold is prominent.

3. Relieve Toxic Swellings

Cong Bai is sometimes used topically to treat and relieve toxic heat in swellings and sores. As such, it is one herb that is safe for open sores.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Cong Bai has only minimal use to the martial artist. However, it does show up in Gua's Imperial Fire external training liniment and one other similar external liniment, as well as the occasional internal concoction. Note that its use here has only a minimal impact on the external formula.

Throughout the years, I have been part of training groups that would train late into the night, and follow up training (or eat and train concurrently) with a great meal or some drinks, whether it be at a Chinese or sushi restaurant or in a more comfortable setting at one's home.

Cong Bai is best used in these circumstances as a simple addition to soups and other foods in cool months. It can be purchased at the grocery store and is a perfect addition to your contemporary meal after some traditional training.

Pinyin Name: Bai Zhi

English Name: White or Fragrant Angelica

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Angelicae Dahuricae

Properties: spicy and warm

Meridians: Lung, Stomach, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Cold

Bai Zhi releases Wind-Cold from the exterior and is useful for reducing aching in the muscles. It is also used for certain types of headaches, in a similar manner as Qiang Huo.

2. Disperses Cold and Dampness, Relieves Pain

Bai Zhi has a versatile nature which allows it to find utility in relieving pain due to Cold, Dampness, and Wind-Damp. Its drying and warming nature make it useful to the martial artist; this herb is a common addition for muscle aches and pain where it is commonly paired with Qiang Huo to warm the muscles and joints and provide a penetrating nature to clear Damp.

Bai Zhi also has a very good ability to reduce pain. It is used in patent tea pills for this action (alongside of Yan Hu Suo) and is one of the most important uses for martial arts based formulas.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Bai Zhi is a very versatile herb. In lab tests, it has been shown to exhibit fairly strong effects to reduce inflammation, provide analgesic support, and relax muscles and sinew to relieve spasms and cramps. In addition, it has some rudimentary haemostatic function.

Like Qiang Huo, Fang Feng, and Gui Zhi, Bai Zhi has been a historically important herb in martial arts, the treatment of injury, and the conditioning of the body, in addition to the other important functions it serves. It is used a vast number of formulas for a variety of reasons. And Bai Zhi has the distinction of being less expensive than similar herbs such as Qiang Huo, while the quality is usually very good.

While it appears in the more common iron palm formulas such as Ku Yu Cheong/Ark Wong, and similar variants, it is also present in the following abbreviated list of formulas: Golden

Lotus formula, a rare Bak Mei “Dim Mak” dit da jow/dit da wan pair, Hua Tuo’s Eight Immortals bruise liniment, Jade Goddess, Extract Toxins and Engender Flesh powder, Original Brightness powder, Red Origin powder, Toad Skin plaster, Return Spring plaster, Shaolin Temple Music plaster, Medical Ulcer plaster, Ten Thousand Respondings plaster, Gentleman’s Companion plaster, as well as academic dit da jow formulas used in various acupuncture schools around the country.

Bai Zhi is also used in the following internal formulas: Precious Jade powder, Quicken the Blood elixir, Extend the Sinews elixir, Nine Tigers elixir, Level Wind elixir, Winter-Time Troop Deployment powder, Eight Battle Formations elixir, Shaolin Spirit Connecting powder, Protect the General wine, Shaolin Toxin Expelling decoction, Prescription for Effusing and Scattering the Upper Part, and Soothe the Sinews elixir and in patent pills such as Gan Mao Ling (for Wind-Heat infection) and “Herbal Aspirin”.

Pinyin Name: Cang Er Zi

English Name: Xanthium Fruit

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Xanthii

Properties: bitter, spicy and warm

Meridians: Lung, Liver

TOXIC (when raw)

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Cold, Relieves Pain

Cang Er Zi dispels conditions of Wind-Cold, usually in the upper parts of the body. Clinically, Cang Er Zi is often seen in formulas that treat headache and the sinuses.

2. Dispel Wind and Dampness

Cang Er Zi dispels Wind-Damp pain that has developed into Bi Syndrome blockage. This substance can dispel Wind-Damp and relieve pain and spasm from tight, cramped, or sore muscles and joints. For this use, Cang Er Zi is often combined with other herbs that have stronger Wind-Damp function.

Cang Er Zi can also be useful for skin that has developed itch or rash and is sensitive.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Cang Er Zi is toxic in its raw form. Much of the toxin is located in the sharp spikes that cover the outside of the fruit. Through dry-frying this herb, the toxicity is reduced to a safe level and extraction of active constituents can occur more efficiently. It is usually sold in an already prepared state.

Cang Er Zi is almost never seen in martial arts based formulas. Most commonly, acupuncturists use this herb for cough and cold symptoms. While its use in martial arts formulas is almost entirely unheard of, and while it has only a minimal of value, we feel that this is unfortunate. Cang Er Zi can be a great supporting herb for stronger Wind-Damp herbs and has been shown to reduce localized inflammation in laboratory tests. It is not as strong as herbs such as Qiang Huo, but is also significantly less expensive and readily available, where Qiang Huo supplies can sometimes run short.

Pinyin Name: E Bu Shi Cao

English Name: Centipeda Herb

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba Centipeda

Properties: spicy and warm

Meridians: Lung, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind and Cold

E Bu Shi Cao disperses Wind-Cold conditions. Clinically, its use is primarily in relation to the eyes and nose.

2. Dispel Wind-Damp and Benefits the Joints

E Bu Shi Cao has a useful function to dispel Wind-Damp that obstructs circulation in the joints, especially as a result of traumatic injury. E Bu Shi Cao can help address arthritic pain and reduce pain from injury through its ability to benefit joint health.

Through its interaction with the Liver meridian, E Bu Shi Cao can be used externally to reduce pain from Wind-Damp and remove tension from the sinews.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

E Bu Shi Cao is another Wind-Cold herb that has been rarely seen in past formulas. However, as of late it has become a bit better known. It appears in some versions of the Chan Ning Tong iron palm jow and has become a worthwhile herb being recommended to customers to support joint health.

Both this herb and Cang Er Zi may become more popular as we move into the future and some other herbs become either expensive, hard to procure, or of lesser quality through over-cultivation and the like.

Chapter 3

Herbs That Clear Heat

Concept

Herbs that clear heat provide functionality that reduces heat, usually at deeper levels within the body than herbs that release exterior Heat, which work on the superficial layers of the body. Heat-clearing herbs are often very cold and bitter, and very drying in nature. As such, many heat clearing herbs exhibit very strong antibiotic and antipyretic functions, having the ability to ward off bacterial, viral, and fungal infections as well as dry up coagulations of fluids. Some herbs that clear Heat are not drying.

From a martial artist's perspective and usage, the heat-clearing herbs presented here are useful for more serious inflammation or swellings due to injury. Additionally, some herbs in this category are helpful for various reasons, such as spurring the healing process and promoting the generation of new tissues,

stopping bleeding through cooling the Blood, and drying up coagulated dampness in the form of blood and fluids at the site of injury. A few of these herbs can also increase local Blood circulation.

In iron palm formulas, these herbs often help keep inflammation in check during intense conditioning sessions. Strong tonics and training wines often use these herbs as a method of balancing the warm and hot energies of some powerful tonifying herbs.

In injury formulas, they help reduce inflammation more effectively and more safely than ice, so that proper circulation can resume. Additionally, they can stop the leakage of blood out of damaged tissues and blood vessels, while aiding in the body's natural function to push these fluids out from the location of the injury.

Herbs that clear Heat are often broken into a few distinct smaller categories. These categories are as follows:

- Heat-clearing and Fire-Purging
- Heat-clearing and Dampness-Drying
- Heat-clearing and Blood-Cooling
- Heat-clearing and Toxin-Eliminating
- Heat-clearing Due to Deficiency

While each sub-category is characterized by subtle differences, these herbs all work in much the same way. For a more in-depth understanding of each of the heat-clearing categories, please consult a text on Chinese medical theory.

Many of the antibiotic herbs in this category are used in herbal clinics and “herbal antibiotics”. And not surprisingly, many of these herbs can exhibit herb-drug interactions with pharmaceutical antibiotics. You should also consult your doctor when using these types of herbs.

Preparation

Heat-clearing herbs are almost always herbs which should be well extracted through either cooking or aging (when used in liniments or tonics). There are rarely ever volatile substances in these herbs, but rather they are often dense and woody, and require full cooking times. In cases where special methods of *Pai Zhi* are used in martial arts setting, it will be noted individually for each template.

Pinyin Name: Shi Gao

English Name: Gypsum

Pharmaceutical Name: Gypsum Fibrosum

Properties: spicy, sweet and very cold

Meridians: Lung, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clears Heat, Drains Fire

Shi Gao has one of the coldest energetic natures and has significant properties to clear heat both internally and externally in the form of toxic swellings, infection, and inflammation. It is used in formulas that address both Heat and Wind-Heat and can be used externally for its incredibly cooling nature.

While most heat-clearing herbs are bitter and drying, Shi Gao is somewhat unique in that it is sweet and is not drying. In fact, it has been used to relieve thirst and generate bodily fluids. What is important is that it will not cause dryness like many heat-clearing herbs, which provides some versatility.

2. Promotes Healing

Shi Gao can also be useful for promoting the healing of injuries, burns, and open sores. Topically, it can aid in stopping bleeding and reducing inflammation through its cooling functions while it also tends to help generate flesh and reduce time necessary for healing of injuries. For this function, it is usually used in its calcined state.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Shi Gao is an interesting substance that is composed of a number of elements, including Aluminum, Copper, Iron, Zinc, and principally Calcium Sulfate dihydrate.

While the lack of extremely drying action makes Shi Gao versatile, its incredibly cold nature makes it unsuitable for long-term use. For this reason, it does not appear in any training wines but its use in a very cooling injury liniment is not out of the question, and because of the apparent usefulness of it, it's surprising it does not show up more: Aside from its anti-inflammatory functions, calcined Shi Gao has been used with good success in lab settings for acute sprains, burns, and even reduces the healing time of broken bones in mice (Chen & Chen p 109).

Shi Gao is a dense mineral with low solubility; therefore, it requires prolonged cooking or aging for good extraction. Calcining this substance not only focuses the actions of Shi Gao on healing, but also aids in the extraction process.

Pinyin Name: Zhi Mu

English Name: Anemarrhena

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Anemarrhenae

Properties: bitter, sweet and cold

Meridians: Lung, Stomach, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clears Heat, Tonify Yin

Zhi Mu, being both bitter and sweet, is a strong herb for both clearing heat as well as tonifying the Yin to nourish fluids. Like Shi Gao, this herb is not damaging to the Yin and can be used for Liver and Kidney Yin deficiency. It is also not as cold as Shi Gao and more suitable for longer term usage.

2. Balances Strongly Heating Herbs

Zhi Mu is one of a number of herbs that can be used to keep strongly heating herbs from being overly heating in formulas. It

can cool off overly hot formulas and it can slightly moisten very drying formulas that require a cold energy.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Zhi Mu is rarely used in formulas that the martial artist or athlete is concerned with. However, it does have some useful properties to reduce inflammation without being drying, making it worthy of mention.

Zhi Mu and Shi Gao often appear together for these complementary actions in the patent formula, White Tiger Decoction (which has nothing to do with White Tiger Kung Fu).

Pinyin Name: Han Shui Shi

English Name: Mirabilite

Pharmaceutical Name: Mirabalite

Properties: salty and very cold

Meridians: Stomach, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat, Sedate Fire

Han Shui Shi is a mineral of very cold energetic properties. With its drastic cold temperature, it strongly clears various types of internal heat when used clinically. Topically, Han Shui Shi can clear heat that manifests as red swollen patches of skin, burns, or inflammation.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Han Shui Shi is the mineral Sodium Sulfate and is formed as a precipitate from a saturated solution of Glaubrier salt (Mang Xiao) when the solution is cooled. This substance is significant in the world of mineral trade and a great deal of information is available on the internet and in chemistry textbooks.

True Han Shui Shi has a decent water solubility at high temperatures. Many substitutes for Han Shui either have very bad water solubility or are not water soluble at all.

While Han Shui Shi is chemically very similar to Mang Xiao, these 2 herbs have distinctly different functions. For a discussion on the properties of Mang Xiao, please consult the Chapter on Purgatives.

Han Shui Shi appears in an obscure iron palm hot soak in small quantity. While its ability to clear heat is important in a warming iron palm soak that contains a number of very heating and moving herbs, it is also useful for soaking formulas due to its ability to treat heat and burns. While soaks are NOT meant to cause burns, they are heated and they can cause redness in the skin due to the skin taking in a great deal of heat from the hot water. Han Shui Shi will help to reduce heat in the exterior layer from this type of situation.

Pinyin Name: Tian Hua Fen

English Name: Tricosanthes Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Tricosanthis

Properties: bitter, sweet and cold

Meridians: Lung, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clears Heat and Reduces Swelling

Tian Hua Fen is used in clinical settings for its ability to clear heat in various parts of the body without being drying, to clear heat and reduce the pain that results from swelling and inflammation, especially due to external injury. For this purpose, Tian Hua Fen is combined with suitable Blood invigorators for maximum effect and applied topically in the form of powder or as part of a larger dit da jow formula.

While Tian Hua Fen is not particularly moistening, it is mildly sweet and will not cause dryness like many of the other heat-clearing herbs will. Tian Hua Fen is only in a handful of herbs (others include Shi Gao and Zhi Mu) that have a significant heat-clearing ability which are not drying.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Tian Hua Fen is the root of the *Tricosanthes* plant. This plant has several other parts that are used for medicinal purposes. These other parts have significantly different actions but underlying similarities. They are not interchangeable.

Tian Hua Fen appears in the Shaolin Ten Thousand Respondings Plaster, the modified “Five Yellows Plaster” (which includes the more drying Huang Bai, Huang Qin, and Huang Lian) and other occasional Shaolin-based formulas.

Pinyin Name: Zhi Zi

English Name: Cape Jasmine, Gardenia

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Gardeniae

Properties: bitter and cold

Meridians: Heart, Lung, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clears Heat, Cools Blood to Stop Bleeding

Zhi Zi is a very commonly used herb, both clinically and in dit da formulas, for its action to clear heat and cool the Blood. Heat in the Blood can often create bleeding, so Zhi Zi seeks to counteract this heat in an effort to reduce bleeding. Its bitter and quite cold properties have made this herb popular, making it a substance that is seen in a vast number of formulas.

Many herbs are charred to potentiate their ability to stop bleeding. Zhi Zi is often available in charred form. This processed form is more effective than raw Zhi Zi for stopping bleeding.

2. Reduce Swelling, Relieves Pain

Through its cold properties, Zhi Zi is useful for reducing swelling and inflammation from injuries. In China, it is used for injuries of all kinds, from basic bruises up to serious sprains and fractures. It can reduce inflammation and concurrently relieve pain both indirectly through relieving inflammation as well as through some purely analgesic function.

3. Sedate Fire and Irritability

Sometimes referred to as, “The Happy Herb”, Zhi Zi has a somewhat sedative Shen calming effect that is sometimes used as a mild sedative in post-training wines and also to relieve heartburn.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Zhi Zi is a unique herb in that it has several useful properties that make it worthwhile. While it can be used for swelling and inflammation, it also has some purely analgesic capability; it can be useful for relaxing muscles, spurring the healing process of injuries, and in addition, has a mild sedative property that makes it useful for those who partake in serious qigong and meditation training.

Zhi Zi makes appearances in a vast number of injury and iron palm formulas. Everything from the PlumDragon White Dragon iron palm jow to the Ho Family injury liniment, to the strong San Huang San variation and trauma liniment published by Tom Bisio. Several Hung Gar conditioning and injury formulas use it, as do Lau Gar lineages, Chow Gar, and Northern Long Fist liniments. Simple, mild formulas and complex strong formulas alike use this herb in varying measurements for its ability to reduce inflammation and pain, staunch bleeding, and aid in the overall healing process of injuries.

Pinyin Name: Lu Cha

English Name: Green Tea

Pharmaceutical Name: Folium Camellia Sinensis

Properties: bitter and cold

Meridians: Stomach

NOTABLE MENTION

1. Clear Heat, Dispel Dampness

Bitter and cold, Lu Cha clears heat and has a drying function making it useful for mild inflammation.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Green tea principally contains caffeine, which is responsible in large part for its stimulating effect on the CNS. It is also very high in a variety of compounds that protect various types of cell in the body and provide antioxidant benefits. It is usually taken as a tea where it is currently boasted as a health beverage, which can help cut fat through its drying action, and harmonize the stomach.

Lu Cha is certainly one of the most popular teas among the modern world, where it has spread from the East and is one of a number of trendy teas in the US now. It is served abundantly on domestic and international airline flights, in restaurants, and within a plethora of commercially bottled beverages too. It appears in soaps, facial creams, and a variety of similar products.

Green tea has little use in martial arts formulas, although it has been known to be used as a base for some plasters and poultices due to its heat clearing nature. However, it gains notable mention in this text due to its relatively common use by martial artists as a tea. Certainly, many martial artists gather around a table for post-training tea...

Oolong tea, or Wu Long Cha, is the fermented form of green tea. It is not as harshly cold as Lu Cha, slightly sweeter with a deeper taste, and is useful for detoxification purposes. Otherwise, it shares much the same actions.

Pinyin Name: Huang Qin

English Name: Skullcap Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Scutellariae

Properties: bitter and cold

Meridians: Lung, Gallbladder, Stomach, Large Intestine

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat and Dry Dampness

Huang Qin has bitter and cold properties, making it very cold and very drying in nature. Huang Qin clears heat and is often found in formulas which address heat in the form of viral infection. Huang Qin exhibits substantial anti-viral properties.

Huang Qin is also useful for swelling and inflammation, and redness due to heat from burn or injury. Pain can be reduced by using this herb to relieve inflammation.

2. Cools Blood to stop bleeding

Huang Qin is used in clinical settings for a number of complaints related to bleeding due to excess heat patterns. Charring the herbs will more strongly bring out this function of stopping bleeding.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Huang Qin is in a series of herbs that have strong heat-clearing functions. Huang Qin is one of the Three Yellows Powder, San Huang San, originally composed of Huang Qin, Huang Bai, and Huang Lian—today many martial artists substitute out Huang Lian and use Da Huang instead. This combination has several powerful uses. In clinical use, it may form part of a strong battery of antibiotic herbs; to the martial artist, it is one of the most effective formulas for reducing inflammation of fresh injuries.

Huang Qin is said to work best on the upper part of the body.

Huang Qin is sometimes used as a weaker substitute for Xiong Dan. While it only approximates a portion of the functions of Xiong Dan, other herbs can take up the slack of these shortcomings.

Huang Qin appears in a Fukien Shaolin iron palm liniment, Xing Yi hand wash, sometimes in Ho Family dit da jow when Huang Lian is either too expensive or unavailable, and in small amounts in various other dit da jow formulas.

Good quality Huang Qin has dark green striations running through the inside of the root.

Pinyin Name: Huang Lian

English Name: Coptis Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Coptidis

Properties: bitter and cold

Meridians: Heart, Liver, Stomach, Large Intestine

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat and Dry Dampness

Huang Lian is an extremely cold and drying herb, ranking among the top of herbs for its heat-clearing and dampness drying properties. As such, Huang Lian has a strong function to reduce inflammation as a result of Heat and Dampness, manifesting in burns, sores, swelling and inflammation.

2. Sedate Heart Fire

Huang Lian has some sedative action that gains it inclusion in a couple classical formulas used to resolve irritability, and it has been shown to be useful for cases of hypertension when administered properly.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Huang Lian has a significant concentration of berberine, a compound that is responsible for much of its heat-clearing aptitude. This compound is shared among Huang Bai as well as the Western herb Goldenseal. It has been suggested that these 3 herbs are potential substitutes for one another due to a somewhat similar chemical makeup. However, Huang Lian is stronger than the other 2 herbs in its actions.

Huang Lian is currently a moderately expensive herb and it is often on shorter supply than many herbs. Certainly, it is the most expensive and least available of the “Three Yellows”. Because of this, it becomes much more reasonable to make substitutions for this herb if necessary. Huang Bai and

Goldenseal are the 2 most similar herbs and can be used in larger dosage.

Aside from its use in San Huang San and other heat-clearing formulas, Huang Lian is a very important herb in classical formulas that Calm the Shen, such as Huang Lian E Jiao Tang and Zhu Sha An Shen Wan. Its use in martial arts formulas is less common today due to cost.

Huang Lian is said to work best on the middle regions of the body.



Huang Lian

Pinyin Name: Huang Bai

English Name: Phellodendron Bark

Pharmaceutical Name: Cortex Phellodendri

Properties: bitter and cold

Meridians: Kidney, Urinary Bladder, Large Intestine

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat and Dry Dampness

Huang Bai exhibits a similar bitter and cold energy to that of Huang Qin and Huang Lian, making it useful for a variety of heat-clearing needs, varying from infection to Jaundice to inflammation from injury.

2. Sedates Fire

Huang Bai has mild function to sedate Fire; this provides Huang Bai with a minimal level of sedative ability to calm the Shen. It is usually used in smaller quantities combined with other Shen calming herbs to allow it to work for this purpose.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Like Huang Qin, Huang Bai contains an amount of berberine, giving it part of its Heat-clearing and sedative properties. Huang Bai is unique among the yellows in that when it is combined with the proper herbs, it is useful for Bi Syndrome that causes pain and swelling. Because of its affinity to the Kidney meridian, it is most useful on the knees and lower back.

In addition to San Huang San, Huang Bai appears in its fair share of formulas as well, from a long list of dit da jow formulas from Anhui College to Xing Yi iron palm wash. Aside from being useful in the mixtures for its ability to cool inflammation, it has the interesting additional action of entering the Kidney to address Bi Syndrome. This makes it a popular addition, as very few of the Heat-clearing herbs have this ability.

Pinyin Name: Long Dan Cao

English Name: Gentiana

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Gentianae

Properties: bitter and cold

Meridians: Liver, Gallbladder, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat and Dry Dampness

Long Dan Cao is used clinically for certain Damp-heat patterns, namely Jaundice but also exhibits the general antibiotic effects seen from many Heat-clearing herbs, making it useful in some settings for addressing fever, STDs, and redness and swelling in the eyes.

2. Sedate Liver Fire

Long Dan Cao sedates Heat from the Liver. Through this influence over the Liver, Long Dan Cao can be useful for convulsions and forms of tension. Liver Fire can manifest into Liver Wind over time, at which point Long Dan Cao is no longer as useful.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Long Dan Cao has little utility to the martial artist. Because it is incredibly cold in thermal property, it makes a good anti-inflammatory. However, the price has gone up in the past couple years and there are other Heat-clearing herbs that work better for inflammation and swelling due to injury; conveniently, these other herbs are also less expensive to purchase and more commonly used.

Long Dan Cao does appear in a version of the Chan Ning Tong iron palm formula but is otherwise, mostly devoid from common formulas.

Long Dan Cao has a sedative effect on the CNS when used in large doses, and a stimulatory effect when used in small doses.

Pinyin Name: Sheng Di Huang

English Name: Raw Rehmannia Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Rehmanniae

Properties: sweet, bitter and cold

Meridians: Heart, Liver, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat and Cool the Blood

Sheng Di Huang (often referred to as Sheng Di) is a commonly used herb to clear heat especially in the presence of bleeding caused by heat. Clinical manifestations include rash, blood blotches beneath the skin, and other dermatological issues, as well as menstrual problems in women.

Sheng Di can be useful topically for injuries that are warm to the touch and accompany bleeding under the skin.

2. Tonify Yin to Promote Generation of Fluids

The sweet flavor of Sheng Di makes this herb capable of generating bodily fluids. While it is not strictly classified as a Yin or Blood tonic when in its raw form, it is dampening by nature and has a capacity to tonify Yin to generate bodily fluids. A moist herb such as this can be useful for injuries where bruising is developing. Many heat-clearing herbs are very dry and can cause dryness and cracking of the skin. Sheng Di can be used in cases where individuals are susceptible to dry skin in order to circumvent cracking of the skin.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Sheng Di has some interesting compounds within, including catalpol and mannitol; each has an interesting list of medical uses, ranging from reducing inflammatory injuries to increasing androgenic yield in the body. Sheng Di has also been shown in lab studies to be useful in the treatment of arthritis, the reduction of inflammation, reduction of bleeding, and the stimulation of adrenocortical hormones.

Sheng Di is sometimes used side by side with Shu Di in acupuncture clinics as well as in internal training formulas like Golden Phoenix Liquor and Shaolin Abundant Justice Wine where both herbs are present together. It appears alone in its fair share of dit da formulas, including a series of Bak Mei/Bak Fu Pai dit da jow and dit da wan formulas in substantial quantities, a Bisio/Butler trauma liniment, and the occasional Hakka injury liniment. And lastly, it appears in formulas such as 10,000 Abilities to Stop Bleeding Powder for its affinity to clear heat and stop bleeding.

Pinyin Name: Xuan Shen

English Name: Scrophularia, Figwort

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Scrophulariae

Properties: bitter, sweet, salty and cold

Meridians: Lung, Stomach, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat, Tonify Yin

Xuan Shen exhibits mildly sweet properties that allow it to clear heat without being drying. It is moist in nature and can aid the nourishing of Yin to promote generation of fluids while still

having a significant drying capability. Clinically, dry sore throat is one very common use.

2. Disperse Nodules

Xuan Shen can reduce and disperse heat-induced nodules and masses which are swollen and painful. Hematoma, blotches, and other nodules fall into this category. It is used both internally and topically for this purpose.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Xuan Shen is quite rare to find in martial arts based formulas because there are generally other herbs that perform the same function and have stronger action or more desirable ancillary benefits, such as Sheng Di with its ability to stop bleeding.

However, Xuan Shen is also one herb that may be underutilized. Because it exhibits cooling and Yin tonifying properties, it is worthwhile as an herb used in post-training decoctions. Additionally it has shown sedative action, making it an even more worthwhile addition.

Pinyin Name: Mu Dan Pi

English Name: Tree Peony Bark

Pharmaceutical Name: Cortex Moutan

Properties: bitter, spicy and cool

Meridians: Heart, Liver, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat and Cool the Blood

Mu Dan Pi works fairly strongly to clear heat and cool the blood. While its clinical use borders along menopause and

menstrual complaints, it has a strong anti-inflammatory action. Through this heat-clearing ability, Mu Da Pi cools the blood and can stop or reduce bleeding and address swelling, bruising, and skin blotches when used externally.

2. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Dispel Stasis

Mu Dan Pi has the interesting capability to invigorate the Blood to dispel bruising and stasis and providing additional fresh oxygen to surrounding cells.

Mu Dan Pi is often used to treat injuries, ranging from bruising, pain and inflammation, to sprains and strains and basic fractures. It is often combined with stronger Blood invigorating herbs for this purpose.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Because Mu Dan Pi has a dual function to clear heat (reduce inflammation and stop bleeding) as well as invigorate Blood circulation to expedite healing of injury, it is among a small list of important herbs that are very useful for acute swollen traumatic injuries.

Processing of Mu Dan Pi significantly alters its use. The raw substance most strongly clears heat while the alcohol-fried form is best at invigorating the Blood. Charring the herbs has the effect of concentrating its action on stopping bleeding.

Mu Dan Pi appears in quite a few injury formulas including the Wanham Shaolin dit da jow, Die Da Jiu Fang trauma wine, Clouds in Heaven dit da jow, “Qi Conditioning” liniment, and the Ark Wong iron palm jow.

Pinyin Name: Chi Shao

English Name: Red Peony

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Paeoniae Rubrae

Properties: bitter and cool

Meridians: Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat and Cool the Blood

Being only slightly cool, Chi Shao mildly clears heat but also treats bleeding due to heat. Manifestations generally include blotches on the skin and bleeding due to traumatic injury as well as red swollen sores.

2. Invigorates Blood Circulation, Dispel Stasis

While some clinical uses include amenorrhea and abdominal masses, Chi Shao is useful to the martial artist for its action to increase local circulation, relieving Blood stasis and pain due to injury.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Paeoniflorin, one active compound in Chi Shao (which is not found in Mu Dan Pi), is responsible for a mild sedative effect on the CNS.

Chi Shao is listed primarily as a Blood invigorator in some sources and primarily as a heat-clearing herb in other sources, so it is apparently up for debate. Our perspective is that while Chi Shao does indeed increase circulation rate, its primary action to resolve stasis is through its ability to inhibit platelet formation at the site of injury, thereby reducing the significance of bruising, pain, and swelling.

While Chi Shao is only mildly cool, its functionality seeks to reduce inflammation and heat and belongs more appropriately as

a heat-clearing herb that invigorates the Blood, rather than a Blood invigorator that clears heat. Chi Shao is useful for a number of types of Blood stasis, both internally and externally.

Chi Shao appears in several Hung Gar iron palm formulas and the Ku Yu Cheong and Wong Fei Hung iron palm recipes... all in nearly identical measurements. It is not a stretch to say that all these formulas likely originated from the same source and evolved in their own directions over the years. Chi Shao also appears in an old Ho Chun Shuai Chiao training formula, which is not related to those previously mentioned.

Pinyin Name: Zi Cao Gen

English Name: Lithospermum

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Lithospermi

Properties: sweet and cold

Meridians: Heart, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat and Cool the Blood

Zi Cao Gen is most useful for its ability to clear heat from the exterior layers of the body. Clinically, this includes healing of measles and sore throat. However, Zi Cao Gen is also effective to cool the Blood to stop bleeding, bloody patches under the skin, and inflammation. It can be used for burns and painful swellings, and is also acceptable for use on broken skin such as lacerations.

Zi Cao Gen is also useful for itchy skin, rashes, and has been used in classical formulas for poison ivy and similar types of ailments.

2. Invigorates Blood Circulation

Zi Cao Gen has a mild action to move Blood. In addition to its Blood cooling properties, this makes it useful for fresh inflamed injuries where there is bleeding, with or without broken skin. While it is of lower potency than other herbs that move Blood, it is an herb with broad uses.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Zi Cao Gen, often referred to as Zi Cao, has been used for inflammation due to injury but is likely more effective for burns, making it less useful for martial arts and sports training injuries. As such, it appears very rarely in dit da formulas.

It has been used in oil-based salves for inflammation and skin redness and shows up in formulas primarily as a modification of a base formula. Its inclusion here is primarily for potential utility in formulas.

Pinyin Name: Jin Yin Hua

English Name: Lonicera, Honeysuckle

Pharmaceutical Name: Flos Lonicerae

Properties: sweet and cold

Meridians: Lung, Stomach, Large Intestine

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat, Dispel Toxins

Jin Yin Hua has a substantial ability to clear both Heat and Wind-Heat. It is used in a number of very well-known classical formulas for its ability to treat heat in the form of infections, swelling of the throat, common colds, influenza, and other upper respiratory tract infections. It is often paired with Lian Qiao for this purpose.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Jin Yin Hua is said to eliminate toxic heat in the form of sores and lesions, blotches on the skin, and common viral and bacterial infections. Through this “herbal antibiotic” action, It is an important herb in Yin Qiao San and variations of Gan Mao Ling as well as other similar formulas that expel Heat, Wind-Heat, and to some extent, Wind-Cold. It is also useful for heat and swelling of all kinds, which includes those due to injury.

Jin Yin Hua is a very important herb in the pharmacy of the herbal healthcare professional and is commonly found alongside Lian Qiao. Jin Yin Hua’s primary claim to fame is its use as one herb in a series wide-spectrum “herbal antibiotics”, which can quickly dispatch with Heat-based infections such as the Flu. This task is supported by a number of compounds.

Aside from Jin Yin Hua’s anti-inflammatory and antibiotic functions, it also has been shown to act as a mild CNS stimulant, providing an effect that is a fraction of that of caffeine.

While Jin Yin Hua may seem at first to be less important to the martial artist and more important for the general practitioners, Jin Yin Hua actually shows up in a number of formulas of Shaolin origin, many of which are not mainstream names. Shaolin Medicated Thread, Return Spring Plaster, and the Shaolin Ba Du Sheng Ji San are just a few of a number of formulas that use this herb for its effectiveness of clearing heat and removing inflammation. It also appears in some Golden Flower internal trauma pills.

Pinyin Name: Lian Qiao

English Name: Forsythia

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Forsythia

Properties: bitter and cold

Meridians: Lung, Heart, Gallbladder

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat

Lian Qiao, like Jin Yin Hua, is an important herb for clearing both Heat and Wind-Heat. It also is used in Yin Qiao San and Gan Mao Ling variations for its ability to clear heat in the form of infections. Its wide-spectrum antibiotic effect makes it useful against a number of viral infections. It is often paired with Jin Yin Hua for this purpose.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Lian Qiao serves a very important role as an “herbal antibiotic” and commonly is used in combination with Jin Yin Hua for this purpose. Not surprisingly, Lian Qiao also has actions to reduce inflammation and swelling.

Aside from strictly anti-inflammatory and antibiotic actions, Lian Qiao also has among its list of compounds, pinene essential oils. These oils also appear in a number of woody herbs such as Song Jie. While Lian Qiao is not commonly seen in dit da jow formulas, it is easy to understand why it might serve some purpose, given both its anti-inflammatory, heat-clearing ability as well as the presence of pinene oils in this herb.

Lian Qiao appears in many of the same Shaolin formulas as Jin Yin Hua, most of which serve some goal based on reducing inflammation, stopping bleeding, or healing injury.

Pinyin Name: Pu Gong Ying

English Name: Dandelion

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba Taraxaci

Properties: bitter, sweet and cold

Meridians: Liver, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat, Dispel Toxins

Pu Gong Ying serves as a general heat clearing herb. It clears heat in the form of infection and in the form of swelling and pain due to injury, burns, or redness on the skin, sore throat, or redness in the eyes; it is used for internal heat and external heat; and it is used for various types of redness, swelling, and pain in areas all around the body.

Because it is bitter and cold, it is drying and useful for clearing heat in the presence of dampness, for example, fluid coagulation at the site of injury. Clinically, it is often used for Liver disharmony.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Pu Gong Ying is an interesting herb because it can be found in most peoples' backyards. Furthermore, it can often be found in acupuncture offices as an anti-phlogistic tincture, given as a supplement to patients who have signs of viral infection such as fever. And while it is infrequently seen in dit da jow formulas, it is a worthwhile herb to be aware of due to its relatively easy access in our everyday lives.

Coincidentally, it is also used in the common modified version of San Huang San, alongside of Huang Bai, Huang Qin, Da Huang, Hong Hua, and Zhi Zi. It fits very well into these types of formulas for its bitter cold temperature that can help break up coagulation and reduce localized swelling.

Pinyin Name: Zi Hua Di Ding

English Name: Viola Herb

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba Vilae

Properties: bitter, spicy, cold

Meridians: Heart, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat, Dispel Toxins

Zi Hua Di Ding can strongly clear toxic heat and has some ability to cool the Blood as well. This herb is commonly used to address redness and pain as a result of swelling, and is employed for toxic snake and insect bites.

Zi Hua Di Ding is both bitter and spicy, making this herb more penetrating and dispersing than many other heat-clearing herbs.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Zi Hua Di Ding is seen in a small but significant number of dit da and training formulas. It appears in the Leen Goang Jau recipe, as well as the similar Shaolin Iron Sand Palm hot soak. Both of these formulas have strong heating herbs, and in the case of these soaks are used after being physically heated up. It is fairly clear that herbs like Zi Hua Di Ding are important herbs in formulas like this where heat buildup can take place, causing excess inflammation, redness, and pain. The antipyretic function of Zi Hua Di Ding can balance formulas like this.

Zi Hua Di Ding also appears in some internal formulas, among them Shaolin Abundant Justice Wine, Return Spring Plaster, and Shaolin Lian Gong Fang.

The root (Zi Hua Di Ding Gen) is also used as an herb and appears in the Shaolin Medicinal Thread formula.

Pinyin Name: Ye Ju Hua

English Name: Wild Chrysanthemum Flower

Pharmaceutical Name: Flos Chrysanthemum Indici

Properties: bitter, spicy and cool

Meridians: Lung, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat, Dispel Toxins

Ye Ju Hua is the wild Chrysanthemum flower and has great actions to clear heat and dispel toxins in the form of redness, swelling, and pain. It is used clinically for a number of dermatological conditions and exhibits some antibiotic capability.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ye Ju Hua differs from Ju Hua in several ways. Most importantly, Ye Ju Hua has a significantly higher concentration of essential oils. While Ju Hua has both Camphor and borneol within, Ju Hua has these 2 compounds in opposite concentrations. Ye Ju Hua has higher levels of Camphor and lower levels of Borneol. It also has significant quantities of eucalyptol and pinene, which is found in various types of aromatic woods such as Song Jie.

While Ye Ju Hua is classified as a heat-clearing herb and does possess specific heat-clearing actions, it has a number of other important pharmacological effects. Namely, it has displayed the ability to increase blood perfusion to the limbs of the body. Additionally, it has shown some effectiveness in reducing platelet formation and coagulation of blood, which may be useful in reducing bruising if used on a fresh injury where damaged tissues leak blood under the skin.

Ye Ju Hua is an interesting herb that deserves notable mention. It is not commonly used but could fill a place in a variety of injury formulas if a similar herb needs to be substituted.

Pinyin Name: Niu Huang

English Name: Cattle Gallstone, “Bezoar”

Pharmaceutical Name: Calculus Bovis

Properties: bitter and cool

Meridians: Liver, Heart

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clears Heat, Dispel Toxins

Niu Huang was used in the past for serious heat-based infections that were accompanied by painful swellings. Niu Huang was effective for reducing inflammation and swelling.

2. Extinguish Liver Wind

Niu Huang also had some utility to address Liver Wind that manifested as cramps and spasms, and other forms of tension. Niu Huang has some degree of sedative property and is relaxing to the CNS and also as a muscle relaxant.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Niu Huang is the Gallstone of cow and is very rare to come by due to the obscure nature of such a substance and the very high cost due to supply. There are substitutes which are created through artificial means. While these substances still display similar effects, even these are not easily located or procured.

Niu Huang has appeared in some versions of the Shaolin Die Da Shen Lian Fan formula and the Shaolin Five Treasure Elixir.

Niu Huang is not so special or important that it need be used if it is not available. It can easily be substituted for by those who are aware of how to produce a good substitution; often these substitutions can work more effectively than Niu Huang if this is the desired effect.

Pinyin Name: Zao Xiu

English Name: Paris Rhizome

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Paridis

Properties: bitter and cool

Meridians: Liver

SLIGHTLY TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat

Zao Xiu clears heat that manifests as swelling and inflammation with pain. Zao Xiu strongly clears heat both internally and topically.

Zao Xiu is used topically to address injuries that result in painful swelling and inflammation and bleeding. It is also used internally for this purpose but it should be used cautiously for this use.

2. Extinguish Liver Wind

Zao Xiu has some effect to extinguish Liver Wind in the form of tension such as cramps and spasms.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Zao Xiu is most notable for its inclusion in the Yunnan-based remedies Yunnan Baiyao and Yunnan Hongyao Jiaonong capsules, debatably one of the most popular patent bleeding and injury pills on the market.

Zao Xiu is not carried by many distributors, but is available in some locations. It is usually fairly expensive and rarely used in other formulas. It is also mildly toxic, making its use potentially dangerous. Nevertheless, for its appearance in Yunnan Baiyao and Yunnan Hongyao, it is worth citing.

Pinyin Name: Xiong Dan

English Name: Bear Gallbladder

Pharmaceutical Name: Fel Ursi

Properties: bitter and cold

Meridians: Gallbladder, Heart, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat, Dispel Toxins

Xiong Dan was historically used to clear toxic heat internally and externally. It has a powerful effect to clear heat internally in the form of sore throat and classical Western Jaundice.

Externally, Xiong Dan strongly dispels heat and is effective for reducing painful swelling and inflammation.

2. Extinguish Liver Wind

Xiong Dan also has some capacity to aid in extinguishing Liver Wind that presents as spasms, cramps, tension in the muscles and sinews, and hypertension.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Xiong Dan is listed under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species and of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in Appendix I. This means that the trade and sale of Xiong Dan is STRICTLY prohibited. Due to the ethical and legal ramifications of trade in this “herb”, it is highly recommended that anyone who is aware of the trade of Xiong Dan contact the local authorities immediately so this sort of practice can be kept from taking place. This form of trade should not be allowed to take place.

It is only listed here for much the same reason it is listed in other herbal resources: To provide an accurate historical reference.

Pinyin Name: Bai Hua She She Cao

English Name: Hedyotis Herb

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba Oldenlandia

Properties: bitter, sweet and cold

Meridians: Stomach, Large Intestine, Small Intestine

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat, Drain Dampness

Cold and drying in nature, Bai Hua She She Cao is used clinically for a wide variety of issues, ranging from sore throat, snake and insect bites, sores and redness on the skin. It has even been used for the reduction of growths such as cancer cells.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Bai Hua She She Cao is quite rarely seen in formulas pertaining to dit da, but it is used in the Chan Ning Tong iron palm formula for its ability to reduce heat. Heat can often build up during iron palm training, especially with intense sessions in the warmer

months. Therefore, herbs like Bai Hua She She Cao can help reduce heat in the hands following sessions that might produce redness or inflammation.

Its cold dry nature makes it useful for heat patterns that are accompanied with dampness.

Pinyin Name: Tu Fu Ling

English Name: *Glabra Smilax*

Pharmaceutical Name: *Rhizoma Smilacis Glabrae*

Properties: sweet and neutral

Meridians: Liver, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat, Dispel Toxins

Tu Fu Ling is useful in cases of toxic heat. Clinically, it appears in formulas for infections to include STDs but is also effective for heat conditions on the skin, including redness and inflamed regions that are affected with coagulations and nodules. To this end, it has also been used for cancer treatments.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

The action of Tu Fu Ling to clear heat from the skin layers and address swellings and formations (cancer being the extreme) makes it useful for certain types of formulas. It is included in the popular Tendon-Relaxing Soak where it helps to reduce heat from painful inflamed injuries while balancing out the relatively warming energy of many of the other herbs in the formula.

Pinyin Name: Ma Bo

English Name: Puffball Mushroom

Pharmaceutical Name: Lasiosphaera Se Calvatia

Properties: spicy, cool

Meridians: Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACITONS

1. Clear Heat, Dispel Toxins

Ma Bo has a mild cooling energy which makes it most useful for general heat-clearing use, including sore throat and heat in the Blood. Ma Bo is mildly inhibitory to various heat-based infections.

2. Stop Bleeding

Ma Bo can be used internally or applied topically to staunch bleeding as a result of traumatic injury and/or bleeding due to heat.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ma Bo is a very messy little material, creating puffs of powder with only very minor manipulation. It should be wrapped in cheesecloth or similar containment prior to cooking.

Ma Bo appears in the Iron Goddess hand training liniment, an old formula appearing in more than 1 public source in the past. It also shows up in a circulating version of the Shaolin Die Da Shen Lian Fan; however, Ma Bo is not present in the original version of this formula. Ma Bo also appears in formulas used to stop bleeding, such as the 10,000 Abilities to Stop Bleeding Powder.

Pinyin Name: Ya Dan Zi

English Name: Brucea Seed

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Brucea

Properties: bitter and cold

Meridians: Large Intestine, Liver

SLIGHTLY TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat, Dispel Toxins

Ya Dan Zi is used clinically for patterns of toxic heat. This herb has gained some clinical notoriety for its use on special types of cases of Dysentery (amoebic Dysentery), and cancer.

2. Softens Hardness

Ya Dan Zi is used in some applications for its ability to soften and reduce nodules and unnatural coagulations. While clinically this can present as a number of items from warts to cancer, it can be useful for softening inflamed coagulations of Blood stasis and “bumps” as well.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ya Dan Zi is slightly toxic and should not be used internally; it should be used with care externally.

Ya Dan Zi is harshly bitter and very cold. Despite these properties, Ya Dan Zi is not noteworthy for its ability reduce swelling and inflammation, but does show promise for nodule type problems.

This herb is rarely used in dit da formulas, although it does appear in an old version of the Ho Family/ShaoLin Die Da Shen Lian Fan and this is the sole reason it is listed. Its use is limited and of little importance.

Pinyin Name: Hong Teng

English Name: Sargentodoxa Vine

Pharmaceutical Name: Caulis Sargentodoxae

Properties: bitter and neutral

Meridians: Large Intestine

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat, Dispel Toxins

Hong Teng has a mild action to clear toxic heat. It exhibits some antibiotic effect. Its neutral nature makes it versatile in formulas but is only of minor use for this clinical use. Hong Teng can be mildly useful in reducing pain as a result of inflammation, swelling and bruising or other types of traumatic injury.

2. Invigorates Blood Circulation

Hong Teng is one of a handful of heat-clearing herbs that is useful for its ability to invigorate Blood circulation. This dual action to invigorate the Blood and clear heat make it useful in injury formulas and Bi Syndrome.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Hong Teng has shown an action to inhibit platelet formation at the site of injury and increase blood perfusion. Used early on in the course of injury, it can help to reduce the significance of bruising and can also help to reduce pain and dispel stasis if used continually after the injury.

Hong Teng looks very similar to Ji Xue Teng, and these 2 herbs have been mislabeled on some dit da jow-based websites selling whole herbs. While the herbs are apparently interchangeable in China, their actions are quite different. Please pay special attention to the observable differences in the pictures of these 2

herbs and reference Ji Xue Teng for differences in herbal actions.

Hong Teng appears in an Ark Wong injury formula and shows up in occasional modifications of smaller formulas. Otherwise, it is not commonly used because there are other herbs that generally have strong functions to clear heat or invigorate Blood circulation.

Pinyin Name: Lu Dou

English Name: Mung Beans

Pharmaceutical Name: Semen Phaseoli Radiati

Properties: sweet and cold

Meridians: Heart, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat, Dispel Toxins

Lu Dou is used to clear patterns of toxic heat, including heat on the exterior of the body. Additionally, Lu Dou is also a useful herb for its ability to mitigate the effects from overdose with other herbs which are toxic, especially herbs like Fu Zi and Ba Dou that have very hot toxic energetic effects.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Lu Dou is listed here primarily because many schools of Chinese martial arts use Lu Dou as their initial training material for iron palm. The claim is that the heat-clearing, therapeutic properties of this bean seep through the bag as it is hit and the beans break down, coating the hands with their heat-clearing properties. Ultimately, this is a very poor way to use this herb and is likely a 100% waste of time and money. It would be of

better use inside the dit da jow rather than the bag.

Nevertheless, for beginners who are worried about damaging their hands with intense training, Lu Dou is a very soft substance that can be struck with minimal fear of injury, even with a relatively weak dit da jow.

Pinyin Name: Di Gu Pi

English Name: Lycium Root Bark

Pharmaceutical Name: Cortex Lycii

Properties: sweet and cold

Meridians: Lung, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat, Cools Blood

Di Gu Pi clears heat in the body to relieve what is commonly referred to as steaming bones sensation. Di Gu Pi, translated as “Earth Bone Skin”, clears heat deep in the bones through its interaction with the Kidney meridian.

2. Stops Bleeding

Di Gu Pi has some affinity to reduce and stop bleeding as a result of heat driving the Blood out of the vessels.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Di Gu Pi appears in a moderate number of injury and iron palm formulas for its ability to clear heat and stop bleeding, as well as its affinity for the bones and Kidney meridian. The Ancient Way iron palm jow, a couple of Bak Mei injury liniments, Shaolin Return the Spirit wine, and at least 3 iron palm soaks (Ho Chun hot mix, Iron Sand Palm hot soak, and Leen Goang

Jau) for its ability to balance the heat produced from these types of formulas.

Some websites claim that this herb can be used alone as an iron palm soak. Please be aware that using a soak consisting of just Di Gu Pi is simply NOT sufficient for any serious iron palm training.

Di Gu Pi is a nice soft bark and is easily ground or crushed. For maximum benefit, Di Gu Pi should be crushed or ground coarsely but need not be powdered.

Chapter 4

Herbs that Act as Purgatives

Concept

Herbs that work energetically as purgatives are often herbs that are used clinically for their ability to treat constipation and sometimes diarrhea. They are clinically used as laxatives and diuretics, or use some other means to expel or excrete substances or pathogens from the body. For this reason, these herbs are often called “Downward Draining herbs”.

While these herbs usually serve little or no internal use whatsoever for the martial artist or athlete, they do have some redeeming qualities for the purposes of this book. Externally, many of the Purgatives tend to have some type of purgative quality that translates to sufficiently breaking up stasis from injury, invigorating Blood circulation, or softening hard masses or nodules in the form of bruises or hematoma. As a result, some of these herbs will appear in a large number of formulas.

The list of Purgatives is short and to the point. These herbs often have a cold and bitter energy and are sometimes toxic.

This cold and bitter nature can also sometimes make them useful for inflammation and bleeding due to heat.

They are useful primarily when combined with other relevant herbs in external formulas.

Preparation

Purgatives often come with certain processing guidelines. Treating many of these substances tends to alter their use or potency. Some are also processed to remove toxicity, other are processed to mitigate one function while allowing another to persist.

Pinyin Name: Da Huang

English Name: Rhubarb Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix et Rhizoma Rhei

Properties: bitter and cold

Meridians: Spleen, Stomach, Large Intestine, Liver, Heart

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Purges Accumulations

Da Huang has a strong effect to break and purge accumulations. Clinically, large doses of Da Huang are used for complaints of constipation.

2. Invigorate Blood Circulation

The Purgative function of Da Huang allows it to be quite effective at invigorating Blood circulation to dispel stasis. Da Huang is used both for the treatment of injuries and bruising in addition to increasing local circulation in iron palm formulas.

3. Clear Heat

Da Huang is a very cold and bitter herb which has strong functionality to clear heat, both internally and topically. Da Huang is used to reduce inflammation and swelling of injuries that result in pain. It is also useful for its ability to remove the heat that manifests in burns.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Da Huang is an interesting herb in that it has very strong functions to clear heat and it also can powerfully activate Blood circulation. It is stronger in general than many of the explicit heat-clearing herbs that invigorate the Blood. Furthermore, it happens to be an abundant and inexpensive herb that is easy to procure; it even grows in a number of areas in the United States.

Da Huang contains several interesting compounds, most notably emodin, and several other emodin-based compounds. The combined effects of all these compounds are responsible (in part) for the strong purging function of Da Huang. Da Huang can also be paired with a number of other herbs to vary the strength at which it performs this task; generally, very strong invigorating formulations pair Da Huang with other strong Blood invigorators.

Da Huang shows up principally in the well-known Three Yellow Powder, San Huang San. Originally, this formula was usually filled with Huang Bai, Huang Qin, and Huang Lian; these 3 herbs actually complement each other better than does Da Huang. However, due likely to cost, Huang Lian is now usually replaced with Da Huang, which serves a better function for the martial artist in that filling San Huang San with Da Huang retains most of the original anti-inflammatory ability of the formula, but adds to it a significant capacity to move out Blood stasis from injury. In this iteration, San Huang San is one of the best formulas for reducing inflammation in a fresh injury.

Da Huang also appears in a number of injury and iron palm formulas. An abbreviated list of these formulas includes: Ho Family healing jow, PlumDragon basic bruise dit da jow, Jun Fan/JKD jow, Robert Chu modified Qi Li San, and Bruise JIUce, Brian Gray's modified Qi Li San, Leung Jan dit da jow, Lau Family training liniment, the Monks Fist/Ancient Way iron palm jow, Iron Goddess hand liniment, Xing Yi hand wash, Bak Mei Tieh Sao Jow, Bak Fu Pai All Purpose dit da jow, Die Da Hao Fang dit da jow, Li Family Iron Palm jow, Ten Thousand Ability to Stop Bleeding Powder, Mew Hing Level 2 iron palm, Taos 12 Herb Soak, Tom Bisio Trauma Liniment, Wong Fei Hung Ten Tigers iron palm jow and some Ku Yu Cheong variants, and multiple dit da jow/dit da wan pairs.

It is also used in a few internal injury formulas, most notably in Zhi Ti Fa Bagua Internal dit da wan and Golden Flowers tieh ta wan patent tea pills.

Given its ubiquity among formulas from various locales and lineages, Da Huang belongs among the list of herbs that form the base set of ingredients utilized in dit da jow and iron palm recipes.



Da Huang

Pinyin Name: Mang Xiao

English Name: Mirabilite

Pharmaceutical Name: Natrii Sulfas

Properties: salty, bitter and cold

Meridians: Lung, Stomach, Large Intestine

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Purges Accumulations, Softens Hardness

Mang Xiao has a fairly strong effect to break and purge accumulations, especially in the case of constipation when combined with Da Huang.

2. Clear Heat

Mang Xiao can disperse heat and stagnation such as phlegm that obstructs the channels and may lead to clinical issues such as fever, physical swellings, and cough.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Mang Xiao is chemically Sodium Sulfate, and is derived by dissolving Glaubier salt in water and filtering out impure substances. This more pure substance is then suitable for both internal and external use.

Mang Xiao has what many sources refer to as an osmotic purgative effect, and works synergistically with Da Huang for that clinical purpose. Together, they form a very significant ability to induce peristalsis.

Mang Xiao appears in far fewer formulas than Da Huang because Da Huang has a more pronounced ability to invigorate Blood circulation to reduce Blood stasis. However, it does appear in some formula, often times with the absence of Da Huang. Such formulas include: Wong Fei Hung #2, Eagle Claw Finger Strengthening formula, and classical formulas such as Tao He Cheng Qi Tang.

Pinyin Name: Lu Hui

English Name: Aloe

Pharmaceutical Name: Aloe Ferox; Aloe Vera

Properties: bitter and cold

Meridians: Liver, Large Intestine

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Purges Accumulations, Clear Heat

Lu Hui is most commonly used for constipation that is accompanied with signs of heat. This causes dryness and inhibits natural intestinal movement. Lu Hui has a laxative effect which aids in purging accumulations downward.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Lu Hui as used in Chinese medicine is in a dry resin form and has a significantly different appearance than aloe-based products usually seen in household lotions and other products. However, it is still often used externally as well, primarily for itchy skin or other skin disorders. The primary components in Lu Hui (Aloemodin and Alon) have also exhibited some antibiotic properties, and more importantly, some capacity to inhibit cancer cell growth.

Lu Hui is very rarely used in *dit da*. However, it can be, and has been, added to formulas that tend to aggravate the skin, either due to dryness, itching, or formulas that are very hot and tend to cause redness or excess local heat. It is also used in one small Long Fist formula that is ground and added to open medium for striking.

Pinyin Name: Ba Dou

English Name: Croton Seed

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Crotonis

Properties: acrid and hot

Meridians: Stomach, Large Intestine

TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Purge Accumulations of Cold and Phlegm

Ba Dou is a very potent herb for the accumulation of stagnation and accumulations of water and phlegm in the presence of Cold. As a purgative, this strongly moving herb has a history of use for digestive issues once the seed has been defatted.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ba Dou is an extremely toxic (but potent) herb that is only included in this text for educational benefit. Overdose can occur at less than a single gram. In some cases, even direct contact with the skin can cause rashes and burning sensations. Chen & Chen states that external application is contraindicated. For obvious reasons, its use has been discontinued and this herb is not available through present day wholesalers in the USA.

Ba Dou was used in some old dit da jow formulas for its strong purging property, much in the same way that Mang Xiao and Da Huang are used today.

If you happen to come across this herb through whatever channels, please just leave it be and move on. There is danger simply in handling this herb and it is not worth the risk. Find other herbs to suit your needs.

Chapter 5

Herbs that Dispel Wind-Dampness

Concept

Herbs that dispel Wind and Dampness are herbs that seek to remove pathogenic stagnation lodged within the muscles and joints of the body. Wind-Damp herbs treat blockages commonly known as Bi Syndrome that present patterns such as stiffness in the joints, arthritic/rheumatic pain and inflammation, numbness, aches and pains, and to a degree, spasms and cramps. Continual injury to a certain joint or region can cause Wind-Damp to accumulate over time if the injury does not heal properly or fully. Bi Syndrome pain can then result and cause any of the above types of symptoms. Due to the constant impact that is part of martial arts training and more so iron palm training, Wind-Damp herbs serve a critically important purpose. While other herbal categories are peppered with herbs that serve primary purposes that have little to do with martial arts use, the

herbs in this category are one of the categories where each and every herb serves a specific primary purpose for martial arts and other sports activities.

Wind-Damp herbs are penetrating in energetic quality. They can be hot or cold but are usually drying in nature. Many of these herbs therefore, have spicy flavors, some also being bitter.

Wind-Damp herbs are very important substances in the arsenal of the iron palm practitioner. While Blood invigorating herbs serve one extremely important purpose, Wind-Damp herbs fill another, being capable of keeping the joints and sinew healthy with repeated trauma from training, fighting off arthritis and pain. Often stories of those who condition their hands include details about the crippled useless joints they produce over the years; in some cases, stories elaborate about individuals not being able to solidly grasp objects due to their training—Wind-Damp herbs in an iron palm jow is one reason why the hands will remain healthy and **not** end up like this. With proper herbal supplementation, iron palm training should build up the hand and provide additional health, not the opposite.

Wind-Damp herbs have several unique properties that make them useful to the martial artist, above and beyond their already useful Wind-Damp qualities:

- Some Wind-Damp herbs enter the Kidney meridian and are also useful for strengthening bone and sinew.
- Some Wind-Damp herbs have a special affinity for unblocking and opening the channels. These herbs are not “moving” in the same way that Blood invigorators are, but they do open the meridians so that organs can work properly and maximum circulation can be achieved. In some cases, these herbs do increase local circulation as well.
- Some Wind-Damp herbs have a very strong analgesic effect to relieve pain in the musculoskeletal system.

- Lastly, some herbs in this category can have a mild anti-inflammatory effect due to their ability to break up obstructions that cause pain in the joints. These work with a different mechanism than do heat-clearing herbs.

Some herbs in this category are toxic and should be treated with great care, even externally.

Preparation

Coincidentally, many sources claim that alcohol extracts are the most desired solvent for Wind-Damp herbs. Because many of the substances used by martial artists and athletes are in the form of alcohol-based external liniments or alcohol-based internal training wines, this works out nicely.

Very few, if any, Wind-Damp herbs have cooking restrictions and can be cooked with decoctions without worry.

Pinyin Name: Du Huo

English Name: Pubescent Angelica Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Angelicae Pubescentis

Properties: spicy, bitter and warm

Meridians: Liver, Kidney, Urinary Bladder

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp, Relieve Pain

Du Huo is a warm herb that dispels Wind, Dampness, and Cold. Through its interaction with the Liver and Kidney, it benefits the health of joints by dispersing Wind-Damp lodged in the meridians, which causes painful Bi Syndrome.

Du Huo has some purely analgesic function and is effective for reducing pain in the muscles and joints, and most effectively treats Wind-Damp and pain in the lower back.

2. Release Exterior Cold

Du Huo is spicy and can disperse Wind-Cold conditions. Especially important here is the ability of this herb to address aches and pains in the muscle layers. For this purpose, it is often combined with other Wind-Cold herbs which have a secondary function to treat Bi Syndrome.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Du Huo is one of a number of types of Angelica Root. This particular herb is less strong in its ability to address stagnation through invigorating Blood circulation, but is stronger in its ability to reduce pain and address stagnation as a result of Wind-Damp.

Du Huo also may reduce inflammation and may mildly inhibit platelet formation at the site of injury.

It is not surprising that Du Huo is a relatively common addition in formulas for both injury and conditioning. Du Huo appears in Tom Bisio's published Sinew-Bone Poultice as well as his Warming Soak, and in Shu Jin Luo Huo Tang. Du Huo also appears as one of the chief herbs in very large quantity in the Li Family iron palm jow, Yang Jin Hua Yao Jiu, Broad Application Tendon Trauma Liniment, Chow Gar dit da jow, Bak Mei Tieh Sao Jow, multiple Bak Fu Pai conditioning jows, Fung Doe Duk, Golden Lotus, Hua Tuo Eight Immortal hand liniment, Lau Family jow, Shaolin Fukien iron palm jow, Mew Hing Level 2, and a small handful of classical formulas used to heal and strengthen the lower back.

Pinyin Name: Wei Ling Xian

English Name: Chinese Clematis Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Clematidis

Properties: spicy, salty and warm

Meridians: Urinary Bladder

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp, Relieve Pain

Wei Ling Xian is a strong herb with significant ability to penetrate and disperse Wind-Damp conditions and address Bi Syndrome. It is useful for musculoskeletal issues and can relieve pain as a result of repetitive injury to joints that has caused a manifestation of Wind-Damp.

Wei Ling Xian has strong pain relieving properties.

2. Unblock and Open the Channels

Wei Ling Xian enters the channels to break Bi Syndrome. Wei Ling Xian has a strong penetrating function that makes this herb very useful for opening the channels in iron palm liniments.

Through this effort, it can help protect the hands, reduce pain, and allow for a more intense training session.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Wei Ling Xian is one of several herbs that provide an important “Behind the Scenes” job in iron palm jows. While it does appear in the occasional injury liniment, its primary importance is through its ability to open the channels and benefit the joints. To this end, it is seen as an important herb in many formulas. A small list of these include the Ku Yu Cheong iron palm jow, Ark Wong, and other numerous variations thereof, Lau Family dit da jow, Shaolin Return the Spirit jow, Worm Wine, Broad Application Tendon Trauma Liniment, Bak Fu Pai #2, PlumDragon's White Dragon iron palm jow and Southern Fist Iron Body jow, the Iron Lotus iron palm jow, Black Hand formula, and Golden Lotus. It also is used in Huo Luo Xiao Ling Dan for its ability to open the channels and relieve pain.

Wei Ling Xian is almost always easy to obtain, not very expensive, and the quality is generally very good. There is no question that this will continue to be a very important upper-level herb in conditioning liniments in a world where many strong herbs are becoming more expensive and difficult to procure.

Pinyin Name: Fang Ji (Han)

English Name: Stephania Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Stephania Tetandrae

Properties: spicy, bitter and cold

Meridians: Urinary Bladder, Lung, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp, Relieve Pain

Fang Ji has very good dispersing properties and is useful for dispelling Wind-Damp and reducing Bi blockage in the joints and channels. Fang Ji is a cold, bitter herb and therefore is useful for Wind-Damp with signs of heat, as may be common from overtraining.

Fang Ji promotes the elimination of physical dampness such as edema or other coagulations in the body.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Fang Ji is useful not only as a Wind-Damp dispelling herb, but also exhibits good analgesic and anti-inflammatory effects in research studies.

Fang Ji is most useful on the lower parts of the body. As such it is rare to find in iron palm-based formulas. However, for individuals who partake in the conditioning of the lower part of the body, Fang Ji perfectly fills the gap. It is used in the Dit Da Kuan Jin Yao Jao Ho formula to focus the formula on the lower body. It also is seen in the Shaolin Wan Ying Gao, a plaster which has directions for use on acupoints, many of which are on the lower half of the body.

It should be noted that Han Fang Ji or Fen Fang Ji is a different herb than Guang Fang Ji. While Guang Fang Ji is stronger for use as a Wind-Damp herb, it is also toxic and is generally not available. Han Fang Ji is commonly available, reasonably priced, and non-toxic.

Pinyin Name: Can Sha

English Name: Silkworm Droppings

Pharmaceutical Name: Excrementum Bombycis Mori

Properties: sweet, acrid and warm

Meridians: Liver, Spleen, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp

Can Sha opens the channels to dispel Wind and Dampness and treat Bi Syndrome and dermatological disorders ranging from joint pain in the extremities, painful cramps, spasms, and headaches, and skin conditions such as eczema.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Can Sha is dried and processed fecal matter of the silkworm. It is noted here primarily for historical mention. Because it is a substance that can be seen by the West as “disgusting”, its use is minimal in favor of other herbs with similar functions that are more easily accepted by clinical patients and students of martial arts. And it appears in few formulas, none really worth mentioning. With that said, it can be an effective herb for the joints, especially in external formulas for conditioning the hands and feet and has been used at least to some degree for that purpose. Additionally, it is inexpensive and as of this writing (2012) is still available in the United States. However, as time passes, expect to see herbs such as this one to pass into obscurity and potentially become unavailable due to FDA restrictions on use.

Pinyin Name: Song Jie

English Name: Pine Node

Pharmaceutical Name: Lignum Pini Nodi

Properties: bitter and warm

Meridians: Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp, Relieve Pain

Song Jie is used both for pain due to Bi Syndrome obstruction as well as pain related to injury. Song Jie enters the Liver meridian to address tight painful joints that are either damaged due to injury or are tight, causing arthritic pain in the joints. Bi Syndrome can build up with repetitive training or injury; Song Jie is useful for maintenance of the joints in repetitive training.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Song Jie contains pinene essential oils, along with many other coniferous woods and are an important constituent of turpentine. These pinene compounds may be responsible for some of the Wind-Damp dispelling properties in this herb and other herbs which have traces of pinene compounds.

Song Jie has the benefit of being very inexpensive and vastly abundant.

Song Jie appears primarily in iron palm formulas, such as the Fung Doe Duk Coconut Break formula and the Golden Lotus, Broad Application Tendon Trauma Liniment, Hung Gar Golden Bridge, Bak Mei Southern dit da jow, Shaolin Return the Spirit jow, Bak Fu Pai #2, Iron Lotus, and Lau Family dit da jow.

While Song Jie is an effective herb for killing pain and dispelling Wind-Damp, it does not have the strength of some other Wind-Damp herbs and works better as a supporting herb.

It should be combined with more moving herbs or stronger Wind-Damp herbs for maximum effect. Alone, or with just other Wind-Damp herbs, it is not fully maximized.

Pinyin Name: Qin Jiao

English Name: Gentian Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Gentianae Macrophyllae

Properties: bitter, spicy and cool

Meridians: Stomach, Liver, Gallbladder

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp, Open Channels

Qin Jiao has a moderate penetrating and dispersing effect to dispel Wind-Damp, making it useful for Bi Syndrome where inflammation or redness is present. Qin Jiao is useful in training liniments for its ability to open the channels.

2. Relax Sinew

Qin Jiao enters the Liver meridian to relax sinews, relieve tightness, spasms and cramps. Allowing sinews to remain free from cramps and stiffness is important in certain types of training programs where hand formations can cause cramping in some muscles.

3. Clear Heat

Qin Jiao is cooling energetically and is useful for removing heat. In clinical settings, it is used internally to address heat due to Yin deficiency based on its cool nature that will not create dryness. Externally, it can be used to reduce inflammation and heat from training. Some herbs are very drying and cause skin problems. Qin Jiao will not cause dryness like some other anti-inflammatory herbs, making it useful for those with a tendency towards dry skin.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Qin Jiao has a moderate ability to dispel Wind-Damp, open the channels, and relax the sinews. It has some sedative and anti-inflammatory properties and is a useful herb in supporting similar functions of other strong herbs. As such, it is used in PlumDragon's White Dragon iron palm jow, meant for beginner and intermediate use. It also appears in both the Fung Doe Duk and Golden Lotus iron palm formulas (note that these 2 formulas tend to have a high concentration of Wind-Damp herbs in them) and Qian Nian Jian paste, used for herniated conditions of the lower back.

Qin Jiao also has a presence in the internal Warming and Quickening Wine formula, The Shaolin Flying Dragon elixir, some Chow Gar and Wing Chun internal tonics, as well as some commercial "bitters" extracts.

Pinyin Name: Mu Gua

English Name: Papaya

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Chaenomelis

Properties: sour and warm

Meridians: Liver, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp, Open Channels

Mu Gua effectively unblocks and opens the channels, addressing problems associated with Bi Syndrome. Its warm nature penetrates Wind-Damp to mitigate weakness and pain in the muscles.

2. Relax Sinews

Mu Gua enters the Liver and is beneficial to tendons, effectively addressing issues related to spasms, cramps, weakness, and tightness in the musculoskeletal system. For this use as an antispasmodic, it is quite common and adept.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Mu Gua is an important herb for conditioning and for flexibility. Because it benefits the sinews and joints through its Wind-Damp actions, and effectively relaxes sinew and muscle, it can be found in a number of training formulas. It appears as the chief ingredient in PlumDragon Flexibility Wine, Shaolin Temple Tiger Fighting Elixir, Internal Strength and Balance wine, the Li Family iron palm jow, Golden Lotus iron palm formula, Lau Family dit da jow, Xing Yi hand soak, Bak Fu Pai #2, Wong Fei Hung Ten Tigers, a Shuai Chiao training jow, and the Sinew-Bone Poultice.

Mu Gua is most effective on the lower half of the body, making it useful for increasing flexibility of the major muscle groups of the waist, hips, and legs as well as a conditioning herb for the shins.

Pinyin Name: Luo Shi Teng

English Name: Star Jasmine Vine

Pharmaceutical Name: Caulis Trachelospermi

Properties: bitter and cool

Meridians: Heart, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp, Open Channels

Luo Shi Teng is used for musculoskeletal problems as a result of Wind-Damp and Bi Syndrome. Luo Shi Teng has a moderate ability to unblock and open the channels, making it useful for pain and stiffness, arthritic aching, and in training or conditioning formulas.

2. Cool Blood to Reduce Swelling

Luo Shi Teng is used clinically for swelling and inflammation, usually manifests as sore throat. However, it is cooling in energy and can provide some mild anti-inflammatory aid in addition to its Wind-Damp actions.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Luo Shi Teng is one of the more rarely used Wind-Damp herbs in martial arts formulas. While it does show up in the Lau Gar Training jow and the Wong Fei Hung Ten Tigers iron palm jow, it is rarely seen in other formulas. This may be due to the fact that it is not particularly strong in either of its functions and often, we desire to find the “strongest” herbs we can, often forgetting the important aspects of other herbs.

Luo Shi Teng works well to treat Bi Syndrome in the extremities.

Pinyin Name: Sang Zhi

English Name: Mulberry Twig

Pharmaceutical Name: Ramulus Mori

Properties: bitter and neutral

Meridians: Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp, Open Channels

Sang Zhi has a mild effect to dispel Wind-Damp and unblock the channels to treat Bi Syndrome resulting in pain, tightness, and cramping. Sang Zhi enters the Liver meridian and is beneficial for the tendons; it can help relieve aches and pains, even in the muscles, spasms, cramps, and other forms of tightness, primarily in the upper body and arms.

2. Reduces Swelling

Sang Zhi is neutral in nature and has very little cooling property that allows it to reduce inflammation. Rather, it can mildly penetrate coagulations of fluid (clinically, such as edema) to reduce swelling.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Sang Zhi is of a moderate action. Its ability to dispel Wind-Damp is improved when alcohol-fried prior to use.

Sang Zhi appears in only a few martial arts formulas. It does show up in a simple iron palm base formula which resembles a simplified version of the Ku Yu Cheong; however, it does not appear in the Ku Yu Cheong or other similar formulas. It also shows up in the Iron Goddess formula, as well as the internal Iron Bone Training Powder.

Sang Zhi is one of a few parts of the Mulberry plant. Sang Bai Pi, Sang Ji Sheng, and Sang Shen Zi also come from the same plant but have different functions.

Pinyin Name: Qian Nian Jian

English Name: Homalomena

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Homalomenae

Properties: bitter, spicy and warm

Meridians: Kidney, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp

Qian Nian Jian treats Bi Syndrome that includes pain, numbness, weakness in the joints, and spasms, especially in the lower back.

Qian Nian Jian is very useful for unblocking and opening the channels, making it ideal for use in training liniments.

2. Strengthens Bone and Sinew

Qian Nian Jian enters both the Kidney and Liver and is an important herb for its ability to strengthen bone and sinew. It is particularly useful for weakness and degradation of bones and sinew in the limbs and joints.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Qian Nian Jian contains a number of important essential oils, including both types of pinene compounds, isoborneol, limonene, and patchouli alcohols. These all are important in the useful function of this herb and likely contribute to its wonderful woody and fresh aroma as well.

Being a Wind-Damp herb that does a good job of strengthening bone and sinew makes Qian Nian Jian a very important herb because it serves the same functions as Hu Gu, which is an unethical and illegal substance. Qian Nian Jian is often used in formulas in place of Hu Gu for its preservation of function and is a significantly more accurate substitution than the use of Long Gu, which has different overall actions.

Qian Nian appears in Cao Chong dit da jow, in both the PlumDragon White Dragon iron palm and Ancestors Advanced iron palm jows, in the Chan Ning Tong formula, Return the Spirit jow, and the Black Hand mixture. It has been used in place of Hu Gu in the Ku Yu Cheong and associated formulas, in internal formulas such as Strengthen the Sinew and Connect the Bone Elixir, Shaolin Heroes Pill, Shaolin 10,000 Respondings Plaster, and others. Where a formula calls for Hu Gu, Qian Nian Jian is the best substitute, despite the widespread use of Long Gu, which works but not as well as Qian Nian Jian.

Crops of Qian Nian Jian have been subject to dry weather, causing fluctuations in potency. Nevertheless, Qian Nian Jian is still of good potency, very inexpensive, and easily available.



Qian Nian Jian

Pinyin Name: Hai Feng Teng

English Name: Kadsura Stem

Pharmaceutical Name: Caulis Piperis Kadsurae

Properties: spicy, bitter, warm

Meridians: Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp, Open Channels

Hai Feng Teng has an excellent action to address Bi Syndrome resulting in painful joints due either to build up of Wind-Damp or from repeated injury or conditioning. Hai Feng Teng is a very useful herb in conditioning formulas due to its dispersing nature that treats painful and weak joints and for its ability to open the channels.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Hai Feng Teng is a strong Wind-Damp herb and very useful for its single focused action on dispelling Bi Syndrome and opening the channels. It is one of a number of herbs that contain pinene and limonene compounds.

Hai Feng Teng is seen in a number of iron palm formulas such as: The Fung Doe Duk and Golden Lotus, which have large concentrations of Wind-Damp herbs, use Hai Feng Teng. It appears in PlumDragon White Dragon iron palm jow, the Chan Ning Tong formula, Leung Jan Wing Chun training jow, Bak Fu Pai #2, Iron Lotus, the iron palm formula of Ying Xing Chan, a healthy list of Shaolin formulas, and classical formulas like Juan Bi Tang.

Pinyin Name: Hai Tong Pi

English Name: Erythrina Bark

Pharmaceutical Name: Cortex Erythrinae

Properties: bitter, spicy and neutral

Meridians: Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp, Open Channels

Hai Tong Pi has good dispersing functions and is quite drying, making it useful for dispelling Bi Syndrome in the form of achy and painful joints, musculoskeletal injuries and cramping. Hai Tong Pi enters the Liver and helps to relax and benefit sinew.

Hai Tong Pi opens the channels and has some pain relieving properties, making it a useful herb for conditioning.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Hai Tong Pi is neutral in nature, making it more versatile than some herbs which are very warm or cold. It can be combined with warm or cool herbs based on need, and can be combined with stronger pain killers or Wind-Damp herbs as a supporting herb.

Hai Tong Pi works in a very similar way as Hai Feng Teng. It is a good, useful herb, but is decidedly weaker in action than Hai Feng Teng. As a result, Hai Feng Teng is often the choice of herb in iron palm formulas and Hai Tong Pi generally appears less often, or when a weaker formula is needed. It does show up in small dosage in the Leung Jan training formula and the occasional classical formula for chronic joint pain and lower body pain.

Pinyin Name: Wu Shao She

English Name: Black Snake

Pharmaceutical Name: *Zaocys* spp.

Properties: sweet, salty and neutral

Meridians: Spleen, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp, Open Channels

Wu Shao She has a strong penetrating and dispersing function. This is one of the stronger herbs for the treatment of Wind-Damp Bi Syndrome. Clinically, it is sometimes used for issues as serious as a stroke. Used externally, it strongly treats musculoskeletal pain and Bi Syndrome.

2. Stop Convulsions

Wu Shao She enters the Liver meridian to relieve convulsions in the form of spasms and cramps in the musculoskeletal system. Clinically, it is used for seizures, convulsions, etc. Externally, tension, cramping, and weakness in the joints due to training is a more mild extension of these clinical uses.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Wu Shao She is commonly the *Zaocys Dhumnades* species, referring to a type of rat snake. Although this is the common species used, many species of snake within the colubrid family are acceptable for use here. While the *Zaocys* genus of snakes is non-venomous unlike their more potent distant cousin, Bai Hua She, Wu Shao She is still a very strong herb with strong Wind-Damp actions. Often times, Wu Shao She is all that is needed for most uses.

Wu Shao She is fairly expensive and somewhat rare to find. However, it is generally available and the cost is not nearly as prohibitive as Bai Hua She.

Wu Shao is used in a very small handful of formulas, as many martial artists who have formulated dit da jow recipes in the past prefer to use the stronger venomous Bai Hua She or Qi She. It does however appear in one very large iron palm formula out of China, which also uses Bai Hua She concurrently. Wu Shao She is also an important ingredient in Tri-Snake Powder, a patent formula used for skin conditions.

Wu Shao She does appear in Shaolin formulas like Live-Dragon Wine, where it is not clear whether these snakes are venomous or not. It is very likely that the monks, being martial artists and not herpetologists, were using non-venomous Wu Shao She for these types of wines.

Pinyin Name: Bai Hua She/Qi She

English Name: White Flower Snake, Pit Viper, Bungarus

Pharmaceutical Name: Bungarus Parvus/Agkistrodon

Acutus/multicinctus

Properties: sweet, salty and warm

Meridians: Liver

TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp, Open Channels

Bai Hua She and Qi She have very powerful effects to penetrate Wind-Damp, dispel Bi Syndrome, and open the channels. Bai Hua She is among the strongest of herbs for these functions. It enters the bone and sinew to very strongly extinguish serious musculoskeletal spasms, cramps, and chronic pain. Like Wu Shao She, it is used in clinical settings for serious conditions such as stroke.

The salty nature of this animal leads it into the Kidney meridian where it treats deep in the body, addressing Wind-Damp deep in the joints and bones.

2. Stop Convulsion

Bai Hua She/Qi She enters the Liver to dispel Wind and stagnation from the sinew and muscles, including severe cramps and spasms. Clinical use includes seizures, convulsions, tetanus, and other serious ailments.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Bai Hua She and Qi She in the current day are somewhat rare and expensive items to procure. The price has gone up significantly in recent years and regulations seem to be cracking down on these types of animal "herbs". While they are still available, it is likely that in the future, it will be up to martial artists and herbalists to procure their animals from local individuals whose profession is to catch these animals for sale. If that were not difficult enough, gutting and drying these animals properly is not a trivial task either...

Bai Hua She refers specifically to the Elapid snake called *Bungarus Parvus* or *multicinctus*; this is the many-banded Krait, a very venomous sea snake. These specimens have longer bodies with thin heads and the general public is less aware of the use of this genus. Cobras and mambas are part of this group as well.

Qi She refers specifically to the *Agkistrodon* species, including *Agkistrodon bilineatus* and *Deinagkistrodon acutus*. These species are correctly true Pit Vipers, whereas the Bai Hua She species are NOT. Qi She tends to be shorter and stumpier with aggressive wide wedge-shaped heads. Common names for Qi She are Russell's Viper and Hundred Pace Viper; Rattlesnakes are also categorically part of this group and work quite well if Qi She is not available. Gutted Copperheads and Diamondbacks can be purchased in various parts of the USA . This is the type

of snake that most individuals think are used for Bai Hua She, despite the fact that Qi She is probably more common in the marketplace.

Coincidentally, both the Pit Vipers and the Elapid Kraits have very different functions in how their toxins act on their prey, but each one has very similar therapeutic functions and are almost identical in their respective potency. Often times, Qi She is sold as Bai Hua She and the common misnomer is that all of these animals are Pit Vipers.

The venoms from both of these animals have been shown in laboratory settings to have a very impacting effect as an anesthetic. It should be noted that while Bai Hua She and Qi She are strong analgesic herbs when used whole, the venom alone is significantly more powerful than morphine in its ability to kill pain. Additionally, both Bai Hua She and Qi She have strong effects on clotting, being very effective as an anticoagulant; this is not the case with Wu Shao She, and it is likely that this difference is due to the venom inherent in these venomous species.

Qi She and Bai Hua She are rare in the grand scheme of formulas, showing up in perhaps zero injury formulas and only a handful of iron palm jows. However, they are very common if you look at only the intermediate to advanced level of iron palm jows.

This type of snake makes notable appearances in the Ku Yu Cheong and similar "big hand" formulas, where it is likely most well-known. It is also hidden away in the Iron Goddess hand liniment and the Ancestors Advanced iron palm jow, and is an addition in the Ng Family version of the Golden Lotus formula. Also, while it is not present in the ingredients list for the Ark Wong and Wong Fei Hung formulas, it is an addition that is likely used by a number of herbalists or martial artists who have those formulas filled.

In addition, Bai Hua She/Qi She appears in Yang Jin Hua Yao Jiu (Worm Wine), Ten Thousand Respondings Plaster, and the occasional Shaolin internal wine, such as Huo Long Jiu.

Alcohol-fried Bai Hua She/Qi She is stronger for treating Bi Syndrome and opening the channels.

For more information on various snakes and their uses, please contact PlumDragon Herbs. Multiple full-length articles have been written on the subject and are available for those who are interested in reading more in-depth information.



Bai Hua She (Sea Krait)



Qi She (Western Diamondback)

Pinyin Name: She Tui

English Name: Snake Skin

Pharmaceutical Name: Periostracum Serpentinis

Properties: sweet, salty and neutral

Meridians: Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp, Open Channels

She Tui dispels Wind-Damp and opens the channels. She Tui can reduce inflammation by breaking up Wind-Damp and unblocking the channels. She Tui has a more mild effect than the other 2 snake-based herbs in this chapter.

She Tui enters the Liver to treat spasms, cramping, and tension, and relieve itching on the skin.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

She Tui is of less importance to the martial artist than Wu Shao She and Bai Hua She; it is significantly less powerful in its action and less common in traditional training liniments. However, because it is only the shedding of a snake, it does have the advantage of being much more abundant and more cost-effective. And as herbs like Bai Hua She and Wu Shao She become more difficult to buy, it is likely that She Tui will fill that spot to some degree.

She Tui appears in an old Shuai Chiao hand soak and the Jia Wei (modified) version of Immortal Monk. It has more recently been added to various formulas such as Black Hand and some people even like to add it to Chan Ning Tong although it really is not a very well thought addition in these formulas.

Pinyin Name: Chuan Shan Long

English Name: Yam Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Dioscorea Nipponica

Properties: bitter and cool

Meridians: Liver, Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp, Open Channels

Bitter and drying in nature, Chuan Shan Long relieves Bi Syndrome patterns that result in weakness and pain in the joints and pain and stiffness from injury. Chuan Shan Long breaks phlegm stagnation to unblock and open the channels, making it a very useful conditioning herb; it enters the Liver to also benefit the sinew.

2. Invigorates Blood Circulation

Chuan Shan Long has a mild ability to invigorate the Blood. Combined with its effect to open the channels, this makes Chuan Shan Long useful not just for tightness and pain in the joints, but also of moderate action to dispel Blood stasis in the form of bruising, pain, and swelling.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Chuan Shan Long is definitely one of the lesser known and used herbs in the Wind-Damp channel opening category. This may be due to the fact that it is used clinically for a variety of other uses and is only of moderate relative strength

Chuan Shan Long is a fairly hard wood that should be broken up as well as possible before use. Depending on the size of the chunks, grinding is not always an option—sometimes a hammer works best!

The only noteworthy formula this herb appears in is the Lau Family training wine.

Pinyin Name: Lao Guan Cao

English Name: Geranium

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba Erodii seu Geranii

Properties: spicy, bitter and neutral

Meridians: Liver, Large Intestine

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp

Lao Guan Cao dispels Wind-Damp conditions to address painful Bi Syndrome pain in the joints and tendons. It enters the Liver to relax the tendon and sinew, while also having some capacity to invigorate Blood circulation and is sometimes used for traumatic injury resulting in pain and soreness, especially in the limbs.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Lao Guan Cao is quite a rare herb as used in dit da formulas. While it is not a particularly strong herb, it has a very useful combination of traits in the eyes of the martial artist; namely, it is both beneficial for joint health while also increasing local circulation for healing purposes. Lastly, its neutral energy makes it quite versatile in use both in warming and cooling formulas.

This herb is used in only the rare formula. The only notable mention is its use in a formula that is purportedly used by Ying Xing Chan, the famous present day iron palm breaker in China.

Despite lack of use and knowledge about this herb, this is one to look towards as more of the exotic herbs gain price and obscurity, and lose quality in the coming years. It is common and easy to procure and inexpensive.

Pinyin Name: Shen Jin Cao

English Name: Club moss

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba Lycopodii

Properties: bitter, spicy and warm

Meridians: Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp, Open Channels

Shen Jin Cao addresses Bi Syndrome pain in the joints and problems due to injury or overtraining. It is spicy and warm, but also bitter, dispersing and penetrating. It is quite useful for pain, weakness, and injury manifesting as Wind-Damp blockage in the joints and sinews.

2. Relax Sinew

Shen Jin Cao enters the Liver and is capable of helping to relax sinew, especially as a result of repeated injury and Bi Syndrome. Shen Jin Cao can be used internally and topically for this purpose.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Shen Jin Cao contains a number of alkaloids and acid compounds that may or may not be responsible for any pharmacological effects that are visible from this herb.

Shen Jin Cao is a fairly warm herb that has found a good deal of use in various martial arts formulas. It appears in Tom Bisio's published Tendon-Relaxing Soak for its ability to relax the sinews; it appears in the Iron Goddess as an assistant herb, in PlumDragon Ancestors Advanced iron palm jow, a large modified version of Ku Yu Cheong iron palm, and small dosages in the Comprehensive Iron Palm tonic and Iron Bone Training Powder. People have been known to add it to the Chan Ning Tong iron palm jow and Ancestors Advanced.

Pinyin Name: Sang Ji Sheng

English Name: Taxillus Mulberry

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba Taxilli

Properties: bitter and neutral

Meridians: Liver, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp

Sang Ji Sheng disperses Bi Syndrome to alleviate pain, especially in the legs and lower back. It is used clinically for elderly patients, and those with Yin deficiency.

2. Strengthen Bone and Sinew

Sang Ji Sheng tonifies both the Kidney and Liver to strengthen bone and sinew in cases of chronic Wind-Damp. Academically, Wind-Damp may accumulate as a result of weakness in the Kidney, creating pain and weak joints. Sang Ji Sheng is a useful herb to counteract this situation, especially in the lower parts of the body.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Sang Ji Sheng is one of several herbs that originate from the same plant.

Sang Ji Sheng contains hyperoside, which is a chemical compound that may also be present in St Johns Wort. St Johns Wort is also neutral in energetic temperature and also has utility in dispelling Wind-Damp conditions, and also to stop bleeding. Coincidentally, Sang Ji Sheng also has some capacity to reduce platelet aggregation at the site of injury, thereby potentially reducing the significance of bruising.

Sang Ji Sheng is not commonly used in dit da formulas; Sang Zhi is equally as uncommon. It does appear in an old Bak Mei dit da wan and perhaps more importantly, in the classical formula, Du Huo Ji Sheng Tang, where it is used to clear Wind-Damp and treat deficiency. Even in this context, other herbs are sometimes substituted for Sang Ji Sheng. Du Huo Ji Sheng Tang is an interesting classical formula because with some modification, it might make a decent training wine.

Pinyin Name: Wu Jia Pi

English Name: Acanthopanax

Pharmaceutical name: Cortex Acanthopanax

Properties: spicy, bitter and warm

Meridians: Kidney, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp

Wu Jia Pi is a relatively important herb for the dispersing Bi Syndrome causing pain, muscle aches, and tightness. Wu Jia Pi is often used on the lower back and legs but works well on all parts of the body.

Through the dispersing and drying nature of this herb, it tends to also provide some degree of ability in dispelling water retention in the body.

2. Strengthen Bone and Sinew

Wu Jia Pi enters the Kidney and Liver, tonifying these organs to strengthen bone and sinew. Wu Jia Pi is commonly used for Bi Syndrome that presents with tightness, achy joints, spasms and cramps, and weak bones and joints. It is also used for injuries and conditioning purposes, to heal injured bone and strengthen healthy bone.

Wu Jia Pi is listed in several *Materia Medicas* as an herb useful for “motor impairment” of the joints and limbs.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Wu Jia Pi is considered an important herb for its longevity properties, for which it is used commonly in the Eastern parts of the world. To that end, it exhibits adaptogenic properties and helps to build the immune system, has some utility as an anti-inflammatory despite its warm temperature, and has some analgesic function as well.

Wu Jia Pi has found its way into a large number of training and injury formulas and training wines. It appears in some classical formulas that are of interest to the martial artist, such as Gu Zhe Tang (Bone Break Decoction) and Shuang Xin Xue Gu Dan (Strengthen the Sinew and Connect the Bone Elixir). It is also used in the published “Winter Wine” and 1 group of martial artists like to add it in small amounts to Spring Wine as well.

Wu Jia Pi also appears in several training formulas, including the Ku Yu Cheong iron palm jow and the 4 or 5 similar formulas out there; it is used in PlumDragon’s White Dragon iron palm jow, in Leen Goang Jau, in multiple Southern Praying Mantis formulas, a Xing Yi iron palm soak/wash, Hua Tuo Eight Immortals bruise liniment, and a handful of Bak Mei/Bak Fu Pai

formulas to include the Fung Doe Duk and Golden Lotus iron palm formulas. As can be seen when looking at Bak Mei and Bak Fu Pai based formulas, we notice that the iron palm mixes are often high in Wind-Damp herbs. As a result, the Fung Doe Duk and Golden Lotus use Wu Jia Pi in copious quantities; in the case of the Fung Doe Duk, it is one of the chief herbs in the formula.

There is no question that Wu Jia Pi is considered one of the more important Wind-Damp herbs found in iron palm and training formulas.

Wu Jia Pi is a readily available herb and is of minimal cost.

Pinyin Name: Hu Gu

English Name: Tiger Bone

Pharmaceutical Name: Os Tigris

Properties: spicy and warm

Meridians: Liver, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp

Dispersing in nature, Hu Gu was used for Bi Syndrome which manifests with weakness in the joints, pain in the knees and lower back, stiffness and cramping in the muscles and sinew. Academically, Hu Gu was said to open the channels.

2. Strengthen Bone and Sinew

Often times, Chinese herbalism uses the theory of “like treats like”. Hu Gu, being the bone of a strong animal, was used to tonify the Liver and Kidney meridians to strengthen bone and sinew.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Hu Gu is listed in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) under Appendix I. As such, the barter of Hu Gu is strictly prohibited. Not only is the trade of Hu Gu illegal, but it is also unethical. The inclusion of Hu Gu in this text is solely for academic purposes. Its inclusion here allows the reader to understand how substitutions can be made, and to understand the historical significance.

Bones from pigs, dogs, and other animals are used sometimes as substitutes. Bones from a variety of legal and ethically hunted animals are of ten available from taxidermists and hunters. Lung Gu (Dragon Bone, i.e. fossilized bone) is also sometimes used as a substitute. Internally, Long Gu has a significantly different action than Hu Gu. Externally, Long Gu can be a reasonable substitute as it is used for injury and provides calcium content in a similar manner to Hu Gu. However, Qian Nian Jian is a better match because of its Wind-Damp and bone strengthening attributes. Some people have used Lu Rong or Lu Jiao, although these herbs are more tonifying and have little capacity for Wind-Damp like Qian Nian Jian.

Hu Gu used to appear in a variety of formulas, such as Hu Gu Jiu and Hu Gu Ren Shen Jiu, both popular tonics available commercially and privately in the East. It appeared in the Heroes Pill and the published Winter Wine. It also used to be included in many iron palm formulas but most of these now use Long Gu, Qian Nian Jian, or some other type of bone.

Pinyin Name: Lu Han Cao

English Name: Pyrola

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba Pyrolae

Properties: sweet, bitter and warm

Meridians: Liver, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp

Lu Han Cao addresses Bi Syndrome with weak or painful joints that are also cold or lack good circulation. Lu Han Cao is also included in formulas used to reduce bone spurs.

2. Strengthen Bone and Sinew

Lu Han Cao enters and tonifies the Liver and Kidney to strengthen bone and sinew and treat pain in the legs and lower back. Degeneration of bone and sinew can occur from overtraining; Lu Han Cao can counteract this degeneration.

3. Stop Bleeding

Lu Han Cao has a mild haemostatic effect to stop bleeding. It must be combined with other stop bleeding herbs to take advantage of this action. Lu Han Cao is useful topically for the treatment of injuries accompanying bleeding.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Lu Han Cao is not a very commonly seen herb used in training formulas, being absent in injury, iron palm, and bleeding formulas. It does appear in some classical formulas for removal of bone spurs, but little more. It does show up more commonly in clinical settings and associated formulas.

Lu Han Cao is an inexpensive and relatively common plant material. Because of its tonifying effect to strengthen bone and sinew, reduce bone spurs, and dispel Wind-Damp, it may

become a more commonly used herb as time moves on.

Pinyin Name: Kuan Jin Teng

English Name: Tinospora Stem

Pharmaceutical Name: Caulis Tonospora Sinensis

Properties: Bitter and cold

Meridians: Liver, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp

Kuan Jin Teng unblocks the channels to dispel Wind-Damp resulting in pain, stiffness, and swelling due to traumatic injury. Kuan Jin Teng also enters the Liver to relax sinew.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Kuan Jin Teng is a fantastic herb that garners very little attention, primarily due to the fact that even though it is listed in multiple dit da formulas, albeit still quite rare, it has been absent in many of the Materia Medicas that are available on the market. As such, many people either do not use it in favor of other herbs which have more freely available information, or because they simply are not well aware of its existence.

Kuan Jin Teng is an herb that is used and enjoyed very much at PlumDragon Herbs. It is a great Wind-Damp herb with a very nice cold energy. It has a fantastic aroma, subtly hinting of licorice, and despite its absence in many academic texts, it is inexpensive and readily available on the market. It is not toxic nor has the quality been stanchied in recent years. And perhaps it is also an intriguing herb because it is used so rarely in recipes.

The cooling energy of Kuan Jin Teng and its ability to address joint pain and stiffness make this a very useful herb for formulas involving iron palm or any place Wind-Damp pain is an issue. Kuan Jin Teng translates as “Vine to loosen the sinew”, hinting at its ability to relax the tendons through its influence on the Liver.

Kuan Jin Teng is certainly most notable for its appearance in the Ku Yu Cheong and PlumDragon’s Hung Gar iron palm formulas; it also holds the spot as one of the chief herbs in the Shi Yong Tie Da Jiu injury formula that appears in Hung Gar circles as well.

Pinyin Name: Zou Ma Tai

English Name: Ardisia Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Ardisiae

Properties: spicy and neutral

Meridians: Lung, Stomach, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp

Zou Ma Tai dispels general conditions of Wind. While it is used clinically alongside exterior releasing herbs for Wind-Cold and Wind-Heat patterns, it can also be used externally for Wind-Damp conditions, pain and soreness affecting the joints.

2. Strengthen Bone and Sinew

While Zou Ma Tai does not explicitly enter the Liver or Kidney meridians (based on credible sources), this herb can be used to heal and strengthen bone and sinew. Additionally, its affiliation with the Spleen and Lung allows it to work on the superficial layers of the body to generate flesh and tissue. Zou Ma Tai is

therefore useful for conditioning of the bones, sinews, and muscles.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Zou Ma Tai is a rarely seen herb in dit da jow formulas, although it does make an appearance in a Chow Gar dit da jow formula. It is an interesting candidate for inclusion in both external and internal martial arts based formulas for its ability to both clear Wind-Damp and support the joints while also having the torrifying capacity to strengthen bone and sinew.

Zou Ma Tai has decent capability to heal and strengthen bone and sinew and can be used both internally and externally for this purpose.

Chapter 6

Aromatic Herbs that Dissolve Dampness

Concept

Aromatic herbs that dissolve dampness are strongly aromatic or fragrant. While these herbs tend to have a strong physical aroma or fragrance, the term “aromatic” in this context generally refers to the large concentration of volatile essential oils within these herbs that make them strongly dispersing and drying in nature.

Aromatic herbs penetrate and disperse dampness and stagnation by strengthening the function of the Spleen to “transform” and “transport” substances of a dampening nature. Clinically, this often refers to aiding in the digestion of heavy, greasy types of foods, relieving abdominal distension and poor appetite. These actions are performed by activating the circulation of Qi and

dissolving dampness, where Qi here often times refers to the digestive process.

From a martial arts perspective, herbs of this nature are quite useful internally and externally. Internally, martial artists are often known for supplementing their training with very strong tonic wines, such as Spring Wine. These types of formulas are composed of large amounts of very heavy and dampening tonic herbs which are cloying to the body. These types of herbs can be difficult to digest due to their heavy, damp nature and often produce bloating and a feeling of heaviness and fatigue, when the desired result is an increase in energy! Often, damp-dissolving herbs are added to formulas like this to keep the digestive process moving and counteract the stagnating nature of heavy tonic herbs. It can be important that internal tonics are properly balanced with these types of herbs.

Externally, damp-dissolving herbs can be useful for drying and dispersing the static coagulations that appear at the site of an injury. Congealed Blood and fluids from injury can cause pain and inflammation that decrease circulation and hinder the rate of healing. Damp-dissolving herbs show up in many formulas in smaller quantities to act as aid in drying these coagulations so that other herbs can more efficiently perform their tasks.

Aromatic damp-dissolving herbs tend to be warm and very drying, usually with spicy and/or bitter flavors. These herbs enter several meridians but *always* enter the Spleen. Damp-dissolving herbs should always be used in a balanced formula—over use of these drying herbs can cause clinical Yin-deficiency.

Preparation

Aromatic herbs contain high concentrations of essential oils which are either easily destroyed by heat or easily evaporate. These herbs should not be cooked and only added last after the heat source is removed. The oils in these herbs (such as palmitic acid, multiple pinenes, limonenes, and terpinols to name just a

few) have very dispersing functions and are seen in herbs from other categories that have similar drying and dispersing natures.

Pinyin Name: Cang Zhu

English Name: Black Atractylodes

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Atractylodis

Properties: spicy, bitter and warm

Meridians: Spleen, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dry Dampness, Strengthen Spleen

Cang Zhu strongly dries dampness and strengthens the Spleen's ability to govern the balance of fluids. Clinically, this is often in the form of reduced digestive function causing fullness and distention. Externally, Cang Zhu can aid in dispersing coagulations of fluids from injury.

2. Dispel Wind-Damp

Cang Zhu addresses Bi Syndrome obstructions. It is useful for musculoskeletal problems and pain and swelling in the joints and muscles. When Blood leaks out of the vessels, its presence exerts pressure on surrounding tissue and nerves, causing pain. The pain from this type of blockage can be reduced with Cang Zhu. That is, it has no purely analgesic action. Internally, Cang Zhu is often used on the lower part of the body.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Cang Zhu is one of the strongest aromatic damp-dispelling herbs on the planet; it is very drying and very dispersing. This herb is often dry-fried for a few minutes to reduce its overly drying nature while facilitating its ability to dispel dampness.

Cang Zhu appears in a moderate number of formulas, including the Golden Lotus, Bak Fu Pai #2, Gua's Imperial Fire training liniment, and the Lotus Palms formula. It also shows up in small quantity in the PlumDragon Bruise JIUce to aid in the action of herbs with other functions.

Cang Zhu and Bai Zhu are 2 herbs of similar species. Cang Zhu is strongly drying and dispersing while Bai Zhu strengthens the Spleen to dry dampness. These herbs have some similar functions but are not interchangeable.

Pinyin Name: Hou Po

English Name: Magnolia Bark

Pharmaceutical Name: Cortex Magnoliae Officinalis

Properties: bitter, spicy and warm

Meridians: Large Intestine, Lung, Spleen, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Regulate Qi, Reduce Stagnation

Hou Po is most commonly used in clinical settings for its ability to regulate Qi and reduce stagnation of the Spleen and Stomach. What this really means is that it aids in digestion, bloating, and distention.

2. Dry Dampness

As an aromatic herb, Hou Po can dry dampness. Because of its ability to regulate Qi and dry dampness, it can be useful externally for injuries presenting with accumulations of fluid such as Blood, where there is pain and stagnation.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Hou Po is used less commonly in external formulas and more commonly in classical internal formulas for its interaction with the digestive system and its ability to deal with stagnation that can develop from the use of tonics, such as Ping Wei San and Wei Ling Tang. Nevertheless, Hou Po does show up in a few

external liniments including the Lau Family training dit da jow, the Sinew-Bone Poultice, and some dit da jow recipes seen in schools of acupuncture. Some modified versions of the Chan Ning Tong call for this herb as well.

Hou Po has also been observed to have a mild anticoagulant effect.

Pinyin Name: Pei Lan

English Name: Eupatorium

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba Eupatorii

Properties: spicy and neutral

Meridians: Spleen, Stomach, Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dissolve Dampness

Pei Lan has a spicy and aromatic nature that makes it very effective for dissolving and drying dampness. Its versatile neutral energy allows it to be useful for conditions where there is Heat or Cold present.

Pei Lan is also used for a classical condition called “Summer Damp”, a form of Damp-Heat.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Pei Lan exhibits some mild exterior-releasing action. Because it is neutral, it is quite useful for these situations, as well as external use for injury. Pei Lan has a wonderful aroma that hints at the aromatic capability of this herb.

While Pei Lan is a lesser known herb seen in dit da formulas, it actually appears in a number of important dit da jow formulas, most notably hidden away in the Ho Family jow as well as a large Ku Yu Cheong variant. It also appears in the Iron Goddess training formula, Arms of Steel liniment, and at least one Wong Fei Hung lineage training formula.

Some commercial dit da companies in the past have also made use of this herb in some of their proprietary formulas.

Pei Lan works similarly to an herb called Huo Xiang (Agastache) which is not covered in this book. They are often used in combination.



Pei Lan

Pinyin Name: Sha Ren

English Name: Amomum

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Amomi

Properties: spicy and warm

Meridians: Spleen, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Regulate Qi, Strengthen Spleen to Dissolve Dampness

Sha Ren tonifies and strengthens the Spleen to regulate Qi and dissolve dampness. As with other herbs in this category, this generally refers to the act of strengthening the digestive process. It is often used with heavy cloying tonic herbs to facilitate their digestion.

Some sources also list this herb as “Warming the Middle”. Sha Ren is warming and warms the Spleen.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Sha Ren is the Cardamom seed and is similar to Bai Dou Kou, which is the entire seed pod that holds all the seeds when they are smaller in size. It is not surprising that these 2 herbs have similar functions.

Sha Ren is listed here solely for its use in an internal formulas for the benefit of its regulating and moving property. It is seen in formulas such as Golden Phoenix Elixir, the Tiger Fighting Elixir, and other similar formulas for its ability to help digestive movement during the consumption of strong dampening tonics. It also appears in the Zhi Ti Fa Bagua Zhang Tieh Ta Wan and the Shaolin modified Thirteen Flavors Ruling formula.

Sha Ren is sometimes pounded into the steamed Rehmannia root (Shu Di Huang) before use. This allows Sha Ren to combat the very heavy and cloying effects of this herb.

Pinyin Name: Bai Dou Kou

English Name: White Cardamom

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Amomi Rotundus

Properties: spicy and warm

Meridians: Lung, Spleen, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Regulate Qi, Strengthen the Spleen to Dry Dampness

Bai Dou Kou has a relatively strong aromatic and spicy nature that makes it quite useful for dissolving dampness and regulating/moving Qi. Like other herbs in this category, it is often used clinically for a number of digestive issues and has a great deal of utility in this respect for heavy tonic training wines.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Through its warm nature, Bai Dou Kou is also said to have a classical function to “Warm the Stomach”.

Bai Dou Kou is an incredibly interesting little herb. The seed pods have a very strong aroma and flavor; sucking on one of these little pods for a few minutes makes it clear how the herb can have a moving property to it. Not surprisingly, it contains a number of essential oils found in other moving and dispersing herbs, such as pinenes, limonene, terpinols, and mycene.

Bai Dou Kou is not often used in external formulas, appearing namely in the Sai Sou Fong hand soak. It does show up more often in a number of internal formulas, both for its ability to move as well as its ability to reduce cloying effects of tonic herbs. It appears in the popular Seven Seeds formula, in Golden Flowers patent Tieh Ta Wan, as well as an added ingredient to the PlumDragon Chai Training Tea. Lastly, Golden Phoenix Elixir often uses Sha Ren; however, the fantastic strength and

fragrance or Bai Dou Kou make it a very nice substitution in that formula.

A student came into town for 4 days of martial arts training in the spring of 2010. I often offer students the use of tonics while they are in town. As such, I offered him Spring Wine while he was visiting. Unfortunately, after a couple days of Spring Wine he was feeling quite bogged down by the heavy nature of Spring Wine and was having difficulty training. A quick batch of our Chai Training Tea with the addition of Bai Dou Kou cleared up this heaviness almost instantly and he was able to perform the rest of the training with no trouble. Bai Dou Kou is a very strong, aromatic herb that is easy to take. Even though it is rare in formulas, it should be in the herbal collection of martial artists for other reasons.

Bai Dou Kou is also used to make ice cream in some parts of the world. While it provides for nice flavor, it is also useful in removing the bloated feel that some people get when eating heavy cream.

Chapter 7

Herbs that Regulate Water and Dissolve Dampness

Concept

Herbs which regulate water and dissolve dampness are substances which function to reduce and drain dampness from the body. Accumulations of Dampness can manifest as a number of physical ailments which include edema, various types of dermal sores, leukorrhea, dysuria, illness such as jaundice, and other accumulations of phlegm. Often in Chinese medical theory, this includes Lin Zheng. For the martial artist and athlete, signs of Dampness as well as phlegm can appear both from training as well as injury and may appear as swelling and inflammation, Blood stasis and congealed Blood, Bi Syndrome which hinders the joints, and similar types of issues.

Many of the herbs in this category will enter meridians of the Kidney, Spleen, and Lung. Clinically, a disease dealing with patterns of Dampness and regulating flow of fluids throughout the body are due to some disharmony with these 3 meridian systems.

The Kidney functions to eliminate water from the body, often referred to as the turbid. Malfunction in this meridian can cause Dampness to build, primarily in the lower regions of the body. The Spleen and Stomach receive fluids from the exterior and begin the processing of those fluids, transforming and transporting them. It is often said that the Spleen acts as the water pump for our body. Because of this, a breakdown in the Spleen can cause excess accumulations of Dampness because they are not properly received and processed. Lastly, the Lungs are responsible for aiding in the distribution of fluids. Lack of proper function in the Lung meridian may produce congestion of Dampness, often in the exterior layers of the body.

Herbs that enter these meridians tend to function in 2 distinct ways. Some of these herbs tend to act as diuretics, activating the flow of fluids to purge them from the body. Diuretic herbs are often bland types of substances and relatively neutral in nature. These herbs can be depleting and should be used with caution for those with hindered constitution. However, they also may serve relatively useful purposes for training formulas.

The second distinct type of herb in this category is those which dissolve Damp-Heat. Naturally, these herbs are energetically cool or cold and more bitter than neutral. These herbs are more useful for infectious conditions such as urinary tract infections, but may also possess utility as anti-inflammatory and as a general damp dissolving herb.

Preparation

Herbs that regulate water and dissolve Dampness do not possess the aromatic nature of herbs that contain aromatic substances

which dissolve Dampness. These are much more bland herbs and seek to move rather than penetrate. As such, they are not subject to the same level of concern with respect to preparation methods. Most herbs in this category can simply be decocted or aged in alcohol without worrying about destroying the compounds within.

However, there are some specific preparation methods for each given substance that should be taken into consideration to maximize benefit and strength. Please reference each individual template for further information on specific preparation for these herbs.

Pinyin Name: Fu Ling

English Name: Poria

Pharmaceutical Name: Poria

Properties: sweet and neutral

Meridians: Heart, Spleen, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Resolve Dampness, Strengthen Spleen

Fu Ling is a very common herb used to resolve dampness through diuresis. It is useful for various types of edema and states of phlegm accumulation, including at the site of injury. Fu Ling enters the Spleen and aids the Spleen's function to maintain proper levels of dampness/dryness in the body.

2. Calm the Shen

Fu Ling is a Shen-calming herb that enters the Heart meridian to mildly calm and sedate. Clinical cases usually involve some degree of insomnia.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Fu Ling, also known as "Tuckahoe" to Native Americans, is a porous fungus that grows wild, attached to the roots and bark of pine trees. It is a fairly common herb both internally and externally for its ability to dry dampness through its diuretic action, which may be due to the presence of high levels of potassium-based salt.

Fu Ling is available in several varieties. Fu Ling Pi is most suitable for dispelling dampness while Fu Shen has the strongest Shen calming attribute for which it appears in the Shaolin Calm the Spirit and Tranquilize the Brain formula. All types of Fu Ling must be thoroughly crushed or ground to expose the inside of the fungus. Lack of proper powdering can drastically reduce

the ability of this herb to dissolve into solution, even with prolonged cooking or aging.

Fu Ling appears most importantly in the classical Qi tonic Four Gentleman's for its ability to strengthen the function of the Spleen. As a drying agent that allows it to clear up coagulation at the site of injury, it also appears in Dit Da Kuan Jin Yao Jao, in Fung Doe Duk and Golden Lotus iron palm formulas, Bisio/Butlers trauma liniment, the Ten Brocade qigong pill, in small quantities in PlumDragon's Bruise Juice, Bak Fu Pai #2, and Die Da Hao Fang.

It also appears in internal formulas such as Shaolin Temple Tiger Fighting Elixir, the classical Gu Zhe Tang, Strength and Balance Wine, Many Years Persistent Injury Wine, and Shaolin Heroes Pill.

Zhu Ling (not listed in this text) is stronger than Fu Ling in regulating water but serves no tonic action. Both Zhu Ling and Fu Ling Pi can be used in place of Fu Ling when a stronger damp-dispelling property is desired.



Fu Ling

Pinyin Name: Ze Xie

English Name: Alisma, Water Plantain

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Alismatis

Properties: sweet and cold

Meridians: Kidney, Urinary Bladder

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Regulate Water Circulation, Resolve Dampness

Ze Xie strongly regulates water circulation and resolves dampness. It is often used in this regard for edema and other types of Damp-Heat. This includes accumulation of fluids at the site of injury.

2. Clear Deficiency Fire

Ze Xie has a cold energy that enters the Kidney to clear internal Heat (often referred to as Fire) as a result of Kidney Yin deficiency. Ze Xie is often combined with very warm Qi and Yang tonics to prevent too much heat from building up in the body.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ze Xie exhibits a strong diuretic effect. Chen & Chen also claim that it is taken by some as a daily tea to reduce weight and cholesterol.

Ze Xie is a useful and important herb and as such appears in the classical Rehmanna Six and Rehmanna Eight (Liu Wei Di Huang Wan and Ba Wei Di Huang Wan) formulas. Because of its association with these formulas, it can be found in a number of modifications and follow-on formulas. While less common in dit da, it can be seen in the Clouds in Heaven dit da jow and internally in Many Years Persistent Injury Wine and in some less popular Shaolin formulas. Some also use this herb in various Hung Gar conditioning jows.

Pinyin Name: Yi Yi Ren

English Name: Coix, Jobs Tears

Pharmaceutical Name: Semen Coicis

Properties: sweet and cool

Meridians: Spleen, Stomach Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Strengthen Spleen to Resolve Dampness

Yi Yi Ren works to strengthen the functions of the Spleen to clear excess dampness and water accumulation, improve appetite and aid in digestion. Yi Yi Ren does not have diuretic properties like some of the other herbs in this category.

2. Dispel Wind-Dampness

Yi Yi Ren has a mild ability to reduce Wind-Damp from the joints and muscles, particularly in cases of excess Dampness. Yi Yi Ren can reduce tightness and spasm intensity in the musculoskeletal and may be useful for flexibility.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

In addition to the classical functions, Yi Yi Ren also exhibits very minor ability to reduce pain and inflammation, and is therefore of some minor use to the martial artist.

Yi Yi Ren is a rare addition in dit da but does find its way into a Bak Mei Southern dit da jow which utilizes a high concentration of various herbs for Wind-Damp conditions. It also is hidden away in Abundant Justice Wine for its ability to strengthen the Spleen during administration of a very large formula with many tonic and other herbs.

Pinyin Name: Che Qian Zi

English Name: Plantain Seed

Pharmaceutical Name: Semen Plantaginis

Properties: sweet and cold

Meridians: Kidney, Urinary Bladder, Liver, Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Resolve Dampness and Clear Heat

Che Qian Zi resolves dampness in the form of edema and clears heat, especially from the Liver causing redness in the eyes and headache.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Che Qian Zi is not used topically as its functions are focused primarily on its ability to provide diuretic action and eliminate excess Heat from the Liver. It is included here solely for its use in some popular internal formulas: While Che Qian Zi is used in several obscure internal recipes (Thirteen Flavors Formula, for example), it is notably used in the Seven Seeds formula, and the Five Seeds Two Emperors Supplement the Essence Tea. It does not serve a major role in either case but these 2 internal tonics (especially the Seven Seeds) are used by a great large number of people and are gaining awareness recently.

Good quality Che Qian Zi should have a subtle and fairly neutral aroma, a somewhat flat appearance and nice dark brown color. It can easily be mistaken for Sha Yuan Zi which has a much nicer, rich aroma and slightly lighter color.

Pinyin Name: Mu Tong

English Name: Armands Clematis Stem

Pharmaceutical Name: Caulis Clematidis Armandii

Properties: bitter and cold

Meridians: Urinary Bladder, Heart, Small Intestine

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Resolve Dampness

Mu Tong resolves dampness primarily by promoting urination for which it has a significant diuretic effect.

2. Dispel Wind-Damp

Mu Tong can reduce stagnation due to Wind-Damp characterized by Bi Syndrome blockage. It is helpful in opening the channels and relieving pain from Bi Syndrome.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Traditionally, Mu Tong is also said to sedate Heart Fire through its cold energetic property.

Mu Tong is known under 2 different names. Guan Mu Tong is better known as Aristolochia stem and is **TOXIC**. This herb has undergone some issues in the USA and is no longer distributed. The herb being used and sold as Mu Tong is the Clematis stem and is from the species of Clematis Armandii or Akebia Trifoliata.

Mu Tong appears in a couple of formulas used in dit da for its ability to dispel Wind-Damp and open the channels. However, it is not exemplary for this task and therefore only appears in small quantity to support other herbs that more strongly perform this task. Among the list of formulas it is included in the General Purpose Stop-Bleeding formula, the Golden Lotus, as well as in very small measurements in the Ku Yu Cheong and

Ark Wong iron palm jows, and other variants following the Ku Yu Cheong in design. It also appears in the Great Mender dit da wan pill and is often added when customizing an internal formula to suit the patterns of the individual.

Pinyin Name: Jin Qian Cao

English Name: Lysimachia

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba Lysimachiae

Properties: sweet, salty and cool

Meridians: Urinary Bladder, Gallbladder, Kidney, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Resolve Dampness and Clear Heat

Jin Qian Cao resolves Damp-Heat in the Kidney and Liver. This herb is generally used for clinical expulsion of urinary and gall stones and can also aid in the healing of injury and reduction of swelling.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Jin Qian Cao is an herb that is accompanied by some degree of confusion. There are several species of plants that are interchangeably used in China for the function they serve. Many of them are all called Jin Qian Cao, meaning “gold coin herb”. However, there are also at least 7 or 8 alternate names for this herb, some of which contain “Jin Qian Cao” within the alternate while others do not. This confusion extends into dit da as well...

Jin Qian Cao hides quite inconspicuously in Fung Doe Duk’s Original Coconut Break formula. Among the list of herbs is “Murraya Exotica”. While all the other ingredients are

accompanied by the corresponding Pinyin, this particular herb is simply repeated in Latin with no Pinyin equivalent. For those resourceful enough, they are able to match this herb to Jiu Li Xiang, which is an alternate name for Jin Qian Cao. This is confusing because *Murraya* is not among the 3 or 4 standard accepted species of Jin Qian Cao. Nevertheless, this is the herb in question and this mystery is no longer a mystery: *Murraya Exotica* is indeed Jin Qian Cao!

Jin Qian Cao also appears in Shaolin Return the Spirit Jow and a modified version of the Chan Ning Tong iron palm jow.

Pinyin Name: Hai Jin Sha

English Name: Lygodium Spore

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba Lygodii

Properties: sweet and cool

Meridians: Urinary Bladder, Small Intestine

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Resolve Damp-Heat

Hai Jin Sha is used for its diuretic effect to dispel Damp-Heat in the form of urinary and Kidney stones or when there is a Kidney deficiency.

2. Eliminate Water Accumulation and Reduce Swelling

Hai Jin Sha has a useful ability to eliminate the accumulation of Dampness and reduce swelling. Clinically, this is often in the form of Dampness that causes abdominal distention and fullness that hinder the Spleen's ability to transform and transport water. Topically, Hai Jin Sha is useful to reduce swelling and accumulation from injury or buildup of Heat from injury.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Hai Jin Sha is not a commonly used herb in dit da, as it is only scattered in a formula here and there. It is notable for its inclusion in substantial dosage in the Shaolin Die Da Shen Yan Lian Fan injury liniment.

Otherwise, Hai Jin Sha really has very little use in the scope of this book, being more commonly used in clinical settings.

Pinyin Name: Yin Chen Hao/Mian Yin Chen

English Name: Artemisia Scoparia, Capillary Wormwood

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba Artemisia Scopariae

Properties: bitter and cool

Meridians: Liver, Spleen, Stomach, Gallbladder

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Damp-Heat

Yin Chen Hao is used in clinical settings to treat various cases of jaundice and other types of circumstances involving Dampness and Heat. It can also dispel Damp-Heat from the exterior where the skin presents with rashes, eczema, and various types of sores.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Yin Chen Hao is among the list of herbs that are very uncommonly seen in formulas used by martial artists. It does make an appearance in 2 Northern Praying Mantis formulas, one injury and one iron palm. It is also mistakenly used as an herb in some formulas and hand soaks because of a similarity in name.

Otherwise, Yin Chen Hao has limited benefit or necessity to the martial artist. It is noted here primarily for its inclusion in liniments used in Northern Mantis circles.

Pinyin Name: Bi Xie

English Name: Tokoro

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Dioscoreae Hypoglaucae

Properties: bitter and neutral

Meridians: Urinary Bladder, Liver, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp

Among the other classical functions of this herb, Bi Xie also has a minor ability to address Bi Syndrome due to heat or cold, excess or deficient; its neutral energy makes it versatile and it is often combined with herbs to augment its nature.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Bi Xie is used clinically for urinary tract infections and is rarely, if ever, used in dit da. It is included here strictly for its secondary action to dispel Wind-Damp and address Bi Syndrome in an effort to make the reader aware that there are herbs that satisfy these functions, be it mildly or strongly, which are not currently being used for martial arts purposes.

It may become more prominent as time moves on, but the efficacy of this herb must be tested with external use if that is to be the case. As times change and herb availability fluctuates, this will become more necessary.

Chapter 8

Herbs that Warm the Interior

Concept

Herbs that Warm the Interior dispel cold within the body to produce warmth. These herbs are usually very warm or hot in nature and often address, strengthen or restore depleted Yang, which corresponds to various bodily functions such as regulating the body's basal metabolic rate.

Clinically, Interior Warming herbs relieve sensations of cold in the body and the extremities; they may enter the Spleen or Stomach to address nausea, dysentery, and other similar ailments. Many of the herbs in this category have exhibited effects to increase cardiovascular activity and to reduce pain through purely anesthetic properties. Additionally, a number of the herbs in this category are toxic and should be used with great care under the supervision of your local healthcare professional.

From a martial artists and athlete's perspective these herbs have a number of very useful functions. Especially when focused on external liniments, herbs that warm the interior can have substantial benefit for several reasons:

- Interior warming herbs may increase cardiovascular activity, meaning they may increase local circulation when applied topically.
- Interior warming herbs often have good pain killing properties and are useful for both injury and conditioning liniments where pain is a concern.
- Interior warming herbs often strengthen Yang; they warm the joints and are commonly used for painful joints, Bi Syndrome, to open and warm the channels, and for other musculoskeletal problems. This subcategory is potentially the most useful for training regimens.

Herbs that warm the interior usually enter the Spleen and Heart as opposed to herbs classified as Yang tonics, which generally enter the Kidney. Interior warming herbs are warm or hot, and usually are spicy and moderately drying.

Preparation

While some of the herbs in this category have volatile oils that can be lost if exposed to excessive heat, most of the herbs are toxic and are often cooked for long periods of time or processed with other herbs to mitigate their toxicity. Some of these herbs are processed before they are sold because they are fatally toxic if used incorrectly when raw.

Herbs in this category which should not be subjected to significant heat will be noted in their individual templates.

Pinyin Name: Fu Zi

English Name: Aconite, Monkshood

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Aconiti Lateralis

Properties: spicy and hot

Meridians: Heart, Kidney, Spleen

TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Restore and Tonify Yang

Fu Zi strongly tonifies Kidney, Spleen and Heart Yang and strongly warms the body. Clinically, it is used for severe conditions of all types arising from an overall Yang deficiency. Fu Zi has a very strong Yang nature which makes it quite hot and potent.

2. Warm Channels, Dispel Cold and Damp

Fu Zi has the capability to warm and open the channels and dispel Dampness and Cold causing pain throughout the body. It is useful for serious cases of Bi Syndrome where there is joint and muscle pain, weakness, and lack of warmth or good circulation.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Despite being quite toxic, Fu Zi is one of the most important herbs in the *Materia Medica* for it defines the "most Yang" herb in use. While there are other herbs that are hotter, Fu Zi has the strongest Yang effect on the CNS. Large overdoses of Fu Zi can be a life-threatening issue, so the use of Fu Zi should be restricted to healthcare professionals who know how to properly use this herb. It is unwise to use this herb internally without consulting a licensed herbalist.

Externally, Fu Zi appears in quite a few *dit da jow* formulas, particularly iron palm formulas for its ability to treat Bi

Syndrome and warm and open the channels. An abbreviated list of formulas includes the PlumDragon White Dragon iron palm jow and the public Ancient Way formula (also called Rapid River and Monks Fist by different sources), the Traditional Wing Chun anti-contusion jow, the Burning Palm conditioning jow, the Li Family iron palm jow, and in a Shaolin iron palm hot soak. It also is hidden away in a small number of internal formulas such as the Nine Dragon Decoction and Abundant Justice Wine.

Fu Zi is only sold in an already processed state but it is still toxic and must be used with great caution. Adding Gan Cao to a formula significantly reduces the toxicity of Fu Zi and regulates its action. Gan Jiang is said to have the same effect. Additionally, Gan Cao, Gan Jiang, and Sheng Jiang are often used to treat overdose of Fu Zi.

Fu Zi also displays actions to reduce inflammation (despite its very hot energetic temperature), increase heart rate, and has strong analgesic capabilities.

Pinyin Name: Chuan Wu

English Name: Sichuan Aconite

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Aconiti Perparata

Properties: spicy, bitter and hot

Meridians: Heart, Liver, Spleen

TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Cold and Wind

Chuan Wu strongly dispels Cold in the body and strongly disperses Wind in the form of Bi Syndrome in the joints and muscles accompanied by weakness and difficulty of movement,

spasms and cramps, feeling coldness in the extremities, aches and pain.

2. Reduce Swelling and Pain

Through its very dispersing nature, Chuan Wu can aid in the reduction of swelling when applied topically in certain types of circumstances where there is not an excess of Heat. Chuan Wu is also strongly analgesic in nature.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Chuan Wu is the Aconite root that is cultivated in the Sichuan Province of China. Despite a difference in Pinyin name, this is generally the same species as Fu Zi, Aconite Carmichaelli. Not surprisingly, they also share similar chemical composition. Where Fu Zi is stronger for restoring Yang, Chuan Wu is stronger in terms of its ability to Dispel Wind and Bi Syndrome. Chuan Wu is slightly more toxic than Fu Zi and slightly less toxic than Cao Wu. Therefore, even greater caution should be taken when using Chuan Wu.

Chuan Wu appears in a number of formulas as well. It is coupled with Cao Wu often. Because it is stronger than Fu Zi for Bi Syndrome, it is the chosen herb in many formulas. An abbreviated list of formulas where this herb appears with Cao Wu includes the same hot soak that Fu Zi appears in as well as the Shaolin Iron Sand Palm soak and Leen Goang Jau. All 3 of these formulas share a very similar design format and ingredients list. It also is seen in a Northern Praying Mantis dit da jow, the Wing Chun dit da jow mentioned with Fu Zi, Yang Jin Hua Yao Jiu, Five Raw Anesthetics Powder, Fukien Shaolin iron palm jow, multiple Chow Gar dit da jows, Hung Gar Golden Bridge training jow, a Bak Mei injury dit da jow, and the Bisio/Butler tendon liniment, Sinew-Bone Poultice, and Warming Soak. It also appears in several plasters such as the Ten Thousand Respondings Plaster.

As can be seen, the Aconites show up in a large cross-section of both injury and iron palm formulas for their potency in regard to supporting the Yang and benefiting the joints and muscles of the body.

Pinyin Name: Cao Wu

English Name: Wild Aconite

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Aconitii Kusnezoffii

Properties: spicy, bitter and hot

Meridians: Heart, Liver, Spleen

TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Cold and Wind

Cao Wu strongly dispels Cold in the body and strongly disperses Wind in the form of Bi Syndrome in the joints and muscles accompanied by weakness and difficulty of movement, spasms and cramps, feeling coldness in the extremities, aches and pain.

2. Reduce Swelling and Pain

Through its very dispersing nature, Cao Wu can aid in the reduction of swelling when applied topically in certain types of circumstances where there is not an excess of Heat. Cao Wu is also strongly analgesic in nature.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Cao Wu (Aconite Kusnezoff) is the strongest and most toxic of the 3 Aconite roots discussed and should be used with the greatest caution. Cao Wu, the Wild Aconite, similar to other wild crafted herbs, tends to have a stronger and more potent

effect. As such, Cao Wu has very similar functions to that of Chuan Wu but slightly stronger; in clinical practice, its maximum dosage is about 25% less than that of Chuan Wu.

For an abbreviated listing of formulas this herb appears in, please refer to the listing on Chuan Wu.

Pinyin Name: Rou Gui

English Name: Cinnamon Cassia Bark

Pharmaceutical Name: Cortex Cinnamomi

Properties: spicy, sweet and hot

Meridians: Heart, Kidney, Liver, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Kidney Yang

Rou Gui tonifies the Yang of the Kidney to reduce feelings of Cold in the body, reduces pain and weakness in the lower back and knees, and rejuvenates a deficient libido. Its use externally helps to generate warmth in the skin and joints.

2. Dispel Cold from the Channels, Relieve Pain

Rou Gui can dispel Cold from the body, especially the lower body. Through this action it can warm and open the channels and it is mildly useful for Bi Syndrome and other musculoskeletal pain. Rou Gui has some pure analgesic properties.

3. Aid in Producing Qi/Blood

When used with other tonic herbs, Rou Gui can be added in small quantities to propagate the function of producing Blood and Qi.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Rou Gui (*Cinnamomum Cassia*) is the herb-grade substance. *Cinnamomum Burmannii* is what is generally used for culinary flavor purposes. Cassia has a larger concentration of essential oils and has a much more useful therapeutic effect.

Rou Gui is found in several dit da formulas primarily as an assistant or envoy herb and therefore does not appear in large quantities as might be seen in classical formulas. Here, its use is often of a more secondary nature.

Rou Gui is an important assisting herb in many formulas. An abbreviated list includes: The Ku Yu Cheong iron palm jow, Ark Wong iron palm jow, PlumDragon White Dragon iron palm jow, Jun Fan/JKD training jow, and Flexibility Pack, Internal Strength and Balance Wine, Clouds in Heaven All Purpose dit da jow, Gua's Imperial Fire liniment, Mew Hing Level 2, and Shaolin Fukien Iron Palm jow. It also appears in the Iron Lotus jow, Broad Application Tendon Trauma Liniment, Bak Mei Tieh Sao Jow internal counterpart, Bak Fu Pai Qi Conditioner, and some formulas used in schools of acupuncture.

An Nan Rou Gui is a special form of Cinnamon that is sourced out of Vietnam. It is much more expensive and can be difficult to procure in current day. However, it does encapsulate an interesting energy that makes it profoundly effective when used in place of Rou Gui.



Rou Gui

Pinyin Name: Gan Jiang

English Name: Dry Ginger

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Zingiberis

Properties: spicy and hot

Meridians: Heart, Lung, Spleen, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Restore Depleted Yang, Warm the Middle

Gan Jiang tonifies Yang, especially of the Spleen and Stomach. This warms the middle and disperses Cold. Gan Jiang is often paired with Fu Zi for this purpose. These 2 herbs act in a synergistic manner and Gan Jiang tends to reduce the toxicity of Fu Zi.

2. Dispel Cold and Damp, Warm the Channels

Gan Jiang is spicy and very hot and has good function to dispel Cold and Damp. It produces a stimulating effect on the CNS and cardiovascular system, thereby warming the channels.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Gan Jiang is sometimes roasted. It is then called Pao Jiang. This form of the herb is often used to stop bleeding. It also has a stronger effect to warm the channels.

It is said that “Fu Zi is not hot without Gan Jiang”. According to this adage, Gan Jiang can be added to formulas that use Fu Zi if the goal is to make the formula even hotter than it already is. We see this principle take place in formulas such as Prepared Aconite Pill to Regulate the Middle and in formulas that rescue devastated Yang such as Frigid Extremities Decoction and Unblock the Pulse Decoction.

Otherwise, this herb does not appear in formulas that are used in dit da. Usually, the raw herb (Sheng Jiang) is used instead. However, being aware of its interaction with Aconite is worth knowing for those who are interested in producing very hot external liniments.

Pinyin Name: Xi Xin

English Name: Wild Ginger, Asarum

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba Asari

Properties: spicy and warm

Meridians: Lung, Heart, Kidney

SLIGHTLY TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind and Cold, Relieve Pain

Xi Xin has a very spicy nature that works to dispel Wind and Cold. Some sources cite this herb as an exterior releasing herb due to its ability to dispel Wind and Cold from the exterior of the body while also warming the interior through its warmth.

Xi Xin is useful for various types of headaches (it is even found in Shaolin formulas for this purpose), pain in the lower parts of the body, abdomen and lower back, as well as Bi Syndrome where it can help disperse Wind-Damp, unblock and warm the channels.

Xi Xin helps lift the Yang and is a very good pain-killing herb, both internal and externally.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Xi Xin is slightly toxic and should be used with great care as it can be quite dangerous when used above the standard dosage internally. Cooking can minimize toxicity.

Xi Xin is not as common as some other interior warming herbs like the Aconite roots. However, it is a very important herb in many martial arts formulas. It is a very strong herb with very warming, penetrating, and circulating properties. It is highly effective in killing pain and is beneficial to the joints. As such it appears in several strong external formulas. An abbreviated list includes: Lau Family training jow, Bak Fu Pai general training dit da jow, Five Raw Anesthetics Powder, Fukien temple iron palm jow, Grand Master Tao's 12-herb soak, multiple Choy Lay Fut injury and training liniments, and in very small quantity in a modified version of the Chan Ning Tong sold by one vendor, Hung Gar Golden Bridge dit da jow, and Hua Tuo Eight Immortal dit da jow. Some people also include this herb in the Shaolin Die Da Shen Lian Fan, although it is not part of the original makeup.

Additionally, it is also found in some internal formulas such as Shaolin Level Wind Elixir and the internal part of a Bak Mei dit da jow/dit da wan pair where it appears in significant quantity. Recall, care must be taken when using this herb internally and it is best left up to the judgment of your local healthcare practitioner.

While Xi Xin can be more difficult to obtain than some other more commonplace herbs, it is still readily available and not inordinately expensive.

Pinyin Name: Hua Jiao

English Name: Prickly Ash Peel

Pharmaceutical Name: Pericarpium Zanthoxyli

Properties: spicy and hot

Meridians: Kidney, Spleen, Stomach

SLIGHTLY TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Warm the Middle, Stop Pain

Hua Jiao is principally used for its ability to dispel Cold and warm the middle and relieve pain. Clinical uses often include the treatment of diarrhea, coldness and pain in the chest, and toothache.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Hua Jiao has a fantastic aroma that is both sweet and spicy. While this herb is classified in most sources as “slightly toxic”, various parts of this type of plant have been used in Asia as a culinary spice very commonly.

Hua Jiao has very good anesthetic properties and is a warming herb that comes in handy primarily for iron palm formulas. Chen & Chen notes that the pain killing properties of this herb are associated with a tolerance when used for a prolonged period of time. When you think you are ready for "the next level" since your liniment does not feel the same, perhaps you have just built a resistance to some of the compounds...

Hua Jiao is used in several well-known formulas, including Northern Praying Mantis and Wing Chun based dit da jows, the Golden Lotus and Fung Doe Duk formulas, the original Chan Ning Tong iron palm jow, Black Hand iron palm jow, Immortal Monk hand soak, Grand Master Taos 12-herb soak, both the Ho Chun and Shaolin Iron Sand palm hot soak variations, and the Tendon-Relaxing Soak.

We can see by its inclusion in the formulas above that Hua Jiao is used as part of a battery of very warming and moving herbs. It is also used in some cooler formulas to provide a bit of warmth and balance to the mixture.

Hua Jiao has several types of essential oils. Limonene appears in many other penetrating or dispersing types of herbs that have been discussed and Hua Jiao also has this chemical.

Hua Jiao was previously restricted by the FDA but has since become available again in the USA. As such, not as many suppliers carry it but it is available and relatively inexpensive.

Pinyin Name: Gao Liang Jiang

English Name: Galangal Rhizome

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Alpiniae Officinarum

Properties: spicy and hot

Meridians: Spleen, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Warm the Middle, Expel Cold

Gao Liang Jiang has a very warming effect on the body. It expels Cold and warms the Spleen and Stomach to aid in digestion. It is often used in Thai cuisine for this purpose.

Gao Liang Jiang also reduces pain as a result of lack of warmth and circulation.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Gao Liang Jiang is a very interesting smelling herb. Good quality galangal has a very pungent aroma not unlike ammonia. No doubt this is in part due to the essential oils, including but not limited to eugenol (found in large concentrations in Clove oil), pinene, and cineol. Galangal root is a common herb in Thai cuisine for its strong aroma and flavor. The strong flavor that comes from the popular Thai coconut soup is a result of galangal, lemon grass, and lime leaves.

Gao Liang Jiang is one of the more uncommon additions from this category. It is found in a small number of formulas where it serves an important role to heat up the formula and contribute its pain killing aspects. It is found in Wing Chun anti-contusion jow, Golden Lotus, and Gua's Imperial Fire.

Pinyin Name: Ding Xiang

English Name: Clove Bud

Pharmaceutical Name: Flos Caryophylli

Properties: spicy and warm

Meridians: Kidney, Spleen, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Warm the Middle, Relieve Pain

Ding Xiang has a nice warming property that warms the middle and has a downward directing energy. It is commonly used clinically for hiccups and nausea.

Ding Xiang has very strong analgesic properties when applied topically and is one of the best pain killing herbs available, being used even in dentistry to numb the gums before dental work.

2. Tonify Kidney Yang

Ding Xiang enters the Kidney to address cold in the extremities, weakness in the back and knees, impotence and other problems associated with Kidney Yang deficiency.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ding Xiang has an amazing aroma and an even better ability to reduce pain. It is debatably the strongest non-toxic pain killing herb that is readily available on the market. It has been used in the past as a local anesthetic and in the field of dentistry.

Ding Xiang has a remarkably large concentration of essential oils. It contains large amounts of eugenol which is becoming more widely accepted as a fantastic anesthetic, and is used around the world both for its medicinal uses as well as for culinary interest.

Ding Xiang appears in a decent list of formulas, primarily for external use. Notable formulas include the Ancient Way dit da jow, also known as Rapid River and Monks Fist, some variations on the classical Qi Li San, including Brian Grays and Robert Chu follow-on formulas, Shaolin Wu Xiang Jiu, Li Family iron palm jow, the Southern Fist iron body jow, Du Fang Sou Er, as well as multiple Bak Mei and Bak Fu jow recipes and several plasters both of Shaolin origin (such as Bai Yi Pu Sa

Gao) and patent formulas. It is also used extensively in formulas from Indian Ayurveda, the Philippines, and other countries.

Ding Xiang also appears in the occasional internal formula such as Eight Battle Formations Elixir and modified Thirteen Flavors Formula.

Pinyin Name: Hu Jiao

English Name: Black Pepper

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Piper

Properties: spicy and hot

Meridians: Stomach, Large Intestine

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Warm the Middle, Relieve Pain

Hu Jiao is quite spicy and warming and is useful for dispelling Cold and relieving pain. Clinically, it is most commonly used for gastrointestinal complaints, vomiting and nausea.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Hu Jiao is the same as common peppercorns, one of the worlds most traded spices. Pepper is available in both black and white varieties, with white pepper simply being the seed stripped of the peel that becomes black after drying and processing. The black variety is slightly hotter and can be used interchangeable where Hu Jiao is seen in dit da or other herb recipes.

Aside from being such a common culinary spice around the world, Hu Jiao also appears in a couple of dit da formulas. It appears in a Wing Chun anti-contusion dit da jow, a Wong Fei

Hung training liniment, and the peel-stripped white version of the herb is used in Five Raw Anesthetics powder. In winter months, it is also occasionally used in the PlumDragon Chai Training tea for its warming nature.

Pinyin Name: Bi Ba

English Name: Long Pepper Fruit

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Piperis Longi

Properties: spicy and hot

Meridians: Stomach, Large Intestine

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Warm the Middle, Relieve Pain

Bi Ba is quite heating and is useful for expelling coldness from the core of the body and relieving pain in the abdomen. It dilates blood vessels to increase blood flow and is able to produce the sensation of warmth in the body.

Externally, Bi Ba can be used to reduce pain.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Bi Ba is an interesting variety of “pepper” with an enjoyable aroma that provides a hint of sweetness in addition to its spicy flavor. It is quite similar to Hu Jiao energetically and only varies by species.

Bi Ba is seldom used in dit da, showing up namely in the same Wing Chun anti-contusion dit da jow as Hu Jiao. However, because it can reduce pain and may mildly increase local circulation, it has some utility in these areas. Some sources also claim that Bi Ba can heighten the ability of the stomach and

intestines to extract compounds from other herbs more thoroughly. This would make Bi Ba an important herb for any internal formula, regardless of the action.

Bi Ba also seems to exhibit an ability to prevent seizures and convulsions in strength relative to some anticonvulsant/antiepileptic drugs.

Pinyin Name: Xiao Hui Xiang

English Name: Fennel Seed

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Foeniculi

Properties: spicy and warm

Meridians: Liver, Kidney, Spleen, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Warm the Liver and Kidney, Relieve Pain

Xiao Hui Xiang dispels cold from the Liver and Kidney meridians and relieves pain that is a result of hardness, and swelling due to cold conditions. Xiao Hui Xiang can also reduce lower back pain by its warming influence on the Kidney.

2. Regulate Qi

Xiao Hui Xiang is useful for regulating Qi that is stagnant, primarily in terms of digestion and abdominal pain. Xiao Hui Xiang can reduce abdominal pain and increase appetite.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Xiao Hui Xiang contains some familiar compounds that are found in some other penetrating and dispersing herbs. Compounds found in Xiao Hui Xiang include pinene, terpinene, and terpineol compounds, as well as camphene, camphor, and

limonene in smaller concentrations.

Xiao Hui Xiang is not commonly seen in dit da formulas, although the seeds and bulbs are often used in the culinary world as flavoring spices. This herb does appear in the Shaolin Wu Xiang Jiu (Five Fragrance Wine), Warming and Quickening Wine, Soothing the Sinews Elixir, and Harmonize and Regulate the Qi Mechanism formula for its warming effects on the Kidney. It is also used in small dosage in the Sinew-Bone Poultice.

While Xiao Hui Xiang regulates Qi best when raw, it can be fried with salt to facilitate its entrance into the Kidney meridian to address lower back pain.

Pinyin Name: Da Hui Xiang

English Name: Star Anise Seed

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Anisi Stellati

Properties: spicy, sweet and warm

Meridians: Liver, Kidney, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Warm the Liver and Kidney, Relieve Pain

Da Hui Xiang disperses cold to warm the Liver and Kidney meridians and reduce pain. Da Hui Xiang is often used with Xiao Hui Xiang to address lower back pain due to coldness in the Kidney channel.

2. Regulate Qi

Da Hui Xiang is used clinically to reduce Qi stagnation in the form of digestive problems, including vomiting and nausea.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Da Hui Xiang is also used as a common culinary spice, although it is not as popular or mainstream as Hu Jiao or even Xiao Hui Xiang. Da Hui Xiang has an amazing and strong aroma reminiscent of licorice. Like other herbs in this and other categories, this herb has compounds that add to its penetrating and dispersing nature, such as pinene and cymene compounds.

Da Hui Xiang is very rare in dit da formulas. Some opt to add it to formulas such as the Ho Family or Wu Xiang Jiu in small quantities and it is sometimes used in the PlumDragon Chai Training tea and in small formulas for spotting on specific acupuncture points. Otherwise, it appears in no other well-known formulas.



Da Hui Xiang

Chapter 9

Herbs that Regulate Qi

Concept

Herbs that are classified as Qi regulating herbs are those which have action to promote the regular flow of movement in the body and remove stagnation through smoothing its flow through the organs. Chinese refer to this as proper flow or circulation of “Qi”. According to TCM theory, when there is a lack of proper circulation, the flow of blood is affected, reducing the transporting of nutrients throughout the body and stagnation results. This often manifests as pain in various regions of the body and is often called Qi stagnation.

Qi regulating herbs tend to be warm energetically and often exhibit acrid or bitter tendencies, which makes these herbs penetrating and moving.

Qi regulating herbs are often broken down into a number of operational categories. These, as with many other categories, are defined by the meridians that these herbs enter.

Qi regulating herbs which enter the Liver meridian correct Liver Qi related problems and generally produce physical symptoms such as irritability, anger, and other emotional responses which may result from stress, mental trauma, overwork or overtraining, as well as various types of dull pain and lack of menstrual continuity.

Secondly, Qi regulating herbs which enter the Spleen and Stomach address the smooth flow of Qi which relates particularly to digestion of food. Therefore, a disharmony in the flow of Spleen Qi will result in bloating and abdominal pain, nausea, poor appetite and even acid reflux or vomiting.

Lastly, Qi regulating herbs which enter the Lung help maintain the proper flow of breathing. The common manifestations of this would include pain and tension in the chest, difficulty breathing, wheezing, dyspnea, and potentially even coughing, although coughing can also be a byproduct of many other things.

Qi stagnation is generally a clinical Chinese medical diagnosis that implies certain disorders within the body, all of which are firmly rooted in physical symptoms as noted above. In the Western world, there is somewhat of a stigma associated with words like Qi and its potential “stagnation”. Please note that referring to the stagnation of Qi here is simply for technical diagnosis and does not imply any type of supernatural issues with the body. As an example, rebellious Qi flow or reversal of Qi flow quite simply means the individual is experiencing signs of hiccups, coughing, nausea, or vomiting. It is that simple.

For those interested in this category of herbs for martial arts, many of the potential uses come from the ability of these herbs to circulate and smooth flow or push flow. Externally, many of them can aid in moving Blood, while internally, many of them may be helpful for poor digestion that results in a lack of energy. These herbs tend to be drying by nature and can promote or increase circulation when there is some type of dampness that causes stagnation. For best results, these are often combined

with other stronger Damp dissolving herbs to create a synergy in function against dampness and phlegm.

Qi regulating herbs have exhibited a number of various pharmacological effects on the body, ranging from digestion to antibiotic to effects on the central nervous system and gastrointestinal tract. Please refer to each template for more details about the actions of each herb.

Preparation

Many of the herbs in this category can be cooked or aged as usual with many of the other herbs in a formula. However, some of these herbs contain sensitive oils which can be destroyed or evaporated with overheating. Mu Xiang, for example, is not commonly noted as an herb that has any restriction for cooking. However, this herb contains essential oil and it is recommended that it not be cooked for prolonged periods.

Pinyin Name: Chen Pi

English Name: Citrus Peel

Pharmaceutical Name: Pericarpium Citri Reticulata

Properties: spicy, bitter and warm

Meridians: Spleen, Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Regulate Qi in the Middle

Chen Pi has a great moving property to it, especially in the middle regions of the body. Clinically, Chen Pi is used to aid the Spleen and Stomach in digestion and reduce belching, nausea, and vomiting. The Chinese see these types of conditions as “Qi moving the wrong direction”.

2. Dry Dampness, Dissolve Phlegm

Chen Pi is drying in action and dries dampness and coagulations of phlegm. Internally, it is often added to tonics (similarly to aromatic herbs) to help move them through the digestive process without creating stagnation. Externally, Chen Pi can help break up stasis by moving and clearing out fluids at the site of injury.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Chen Pi is a very important herb in classical Chinese medicine and is used in a number of classical formulas. Aside from its traditional actions, it also increases cardiac output at moderate doses, is anti-inflammatory to certain tissues in the body, and helps aid with gastrointestinal movement. Like many other herbs discussed that have dispersing and moving properties, Chen Pi has pinene and limonene among its list of chemical compounds.

Chen Pi is used alongside Ban Xia in Er Chen Tang for its drying capacity. These 2 herbs are then added to Four Gentleman’s herbs to create Six Gentleman’s. Classically, these

are very important base formulas to tonify and regulate digestion.

In terms of dit da usage, some of the formulas Chen Pi appears in include a Xing Yi iron palm wash, in small quantity in Leung Jan's Wing Chun dit da jow, a Chow Gar training formula, the Bisio/Butler trauma liniment, Grand Master Tao's 12-herb soak, and a handful of Bak Mei/Bak Fu Pai liniments, internal and external. It also appears in a general purpose stop-bleeding formula and is used by some group as an addition to the Spring Wine to combat the strongly stagnating nature of the tonic herbs in the ingredient list. It also finds utility in Extend the Sinews Elixir and the published "rib-fracture formula" for its affinity on the middle portions of the body, as well as multiple Shaolin training powders and injury recipes such as the Great Supplement Wine.

As can be seen, Chen Pi covers a fairly wide cross-section of formulas and is relatively important. Fortunately, Chen Pi is also very inexpensive to obtain and is always available in good quality. Usually this herb can be purchased in 2 different grades and neither are cost-restrictive.

Chen Pi is one of the few herbs that will realize an increase in potency with age. Chen Pi that has been aged for a very long time has a wonderfully developed aroma and is stronger in its actions than Chen Pi that has not been aged as long. Over time, Chen Pi probably becomes less effective at breaking up stagnation in the way that immature citrus peel can do (Qing Pi) but it becomes stronger at regulating, drying and dispersing dampness.

There are several species of orange that have been used. In Chinese herbalism, the most common species for the peel is tangerine, or *Citrus reticulata*. However, in Western herbalism, the peel from *Citrus Aurantium* is also used, which is where the Chinese derive the fruit-based portion of the herb from (Zhi Shi and Zhi Ke). Ultimately, either of these species are useful for this purpose; however, even the base grade of Chen Pi from an

herb shop will have aged a decent time longer than the fresh peel of a fresh orange.

Some herbalists also differentiate between the inner part and the outer part of the citrus peel. Ju Hong is the outermost portion of Chen Pi and is strongest in its aromatic function to dry dampness. Ju Luo is the white inner part of the peel and is sweeter and more neutral in energy. It is stronger to regulate Qi and open the channels.

Pinyin Name: Qing Pi

English Name: Immature Citrus Peel

Pharmaceutical Name: Pericarpium Citrus Reticulata Viride

Properties: bitter, spicy and warm

Meridians: Liver, Gallbladder, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Break Liver Qi Stagnation, Spread Liver Qi

Qing Pi is excellent at breaking Liver Qi stagnation. Clinically, this commonly has to do with irritability as well as tension that produce pain. Injuries can also create stasis that forms into hard nodules. Qing Pi can strongly break up stagnation of this type as well as food stagnation that affects digestion.

2. Disperse Stagnation and Nodules

Qing Pi strongly breaks stagnation in the form of nodules and other masses from Blood or Qi stasis. It is often combined with Blood invigorating herbs to fulfill this purpose.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Like other moving and dispersing herbs, Qing Pi has concentrations of pinene compounds as well as limonene in its chemical makeup. It shares Hesperidin with Chen Pi as both of these herbs most abundant compound.

Because Qing Pi strongly breaks stagnation in the Liver, it is useful in dit da formulas. As such, it appears in the Clouds in Heaven dit da jow, the Lotus Palms iron palm jow, the classical Gu Zhe Tang, the Shaolin Buddha-freeing Elixir, the Thirteen Flavors-Ruling formula and other similar Shaolin training formulas.

Qing Pi is actually stronger than Chen Pi at breaking stagnation. Beyond that, many source texts are fairly unclear about exactly what the ultimate advantage of well-aged Chen Pi is when compared to Qing Pi. Both of these herbs are relatively important in the dit da and training formulas in which they are used. However, they each serve somewhat different purposes, with Qing Pi being less drying, more strongly able to break stagnation in the Liver, and in dissolving nodules.



Qing Pi

Pinyin Name: Zhi Shi

English Name: Immature Bitter Orange Fruit

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Aurantii Immaturus

Properties: bitter, spicy and cool

Meridians: Large Intestine, Spleen, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTION

1. Break Stagnation, Resolve Phlegm and Accumulation

Zhi Shi has a strong function to break up stagnation and reduce accumulations such as masses. This herb is primarily used for this function in relation to digestive complaints due to its ability to move stagnation and disperse dampness. It can be used with tonics to keep them moving.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Zhi Shi has a strong aromatic nature that provides it a good deal of push in its ability to break up stagnation, especially due to digestion. Administration of Zhi Shi has been shown to increase circulation and cardiac output. It also appears to have a diuretic effect.

Zhi Shi has a number of interesting compounds including the hesperidin that is found in the peels Chen Pi and Qing Pi. Additionally, this herb contains synephrine which has been abused in certain weight loss products that boast being “Ephedra free”. Zhi Shi also has some compounds that are useful for killing pain.

Zhi Shi is seen only rarely in formulas, two being Lau Family training jow and an old Shuai Chiao formula. While Zhi Shi is not as commonly seen in formulas as Zhi Ke (the mature fruit), it is notably stronger than Zhi Ke. Zhi Ke is found in several common formulas. In cases where a formula using Zhi Ke feels as if it needs more “thrust”, Zhi Shi can be used in its place to

provide a stronger moving and regulating element which more effectively breaks up accumulations and nodules.

The species *Citrus Aurantium* is often employed for both Zhi Shi and Zhi Ke in contrast to the *Citrus Reticulata* that is often used for the peel. However, these fruits all work in a fairly similar fashion and either can be used in a pinch.

Pinyin Name: Zhi Ke

English Name: Bitter Orange Fruit

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Aurantii

Properties: bitter, spicy and cool

Meridians: Spleen, Stomach, Large Intestine

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Break Stagnation, Resolve Phlegm and Accumulation

Zhi Ke has a mild action to break up stagnation and resolve accumulations of dampness and nodules. Zhi Ke is often used to spur the digestive process in those individuals who have a weaker constitution and cannot handle the strength of herbs like Zhi Shi.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Zhi Ke has a mild action to disperse and circulate and is often used when individuals lack the constitution for a stronger herb like Zhi Shi. Additionally, this herb may be the better choice when used in simpler tonic recipes. There is little need for Zhi Shi in something simple and small like the classical Four Gentleman's Herbs. Zhi Ke here may serve better.

In addition to gentle actions of this herb, it also exhibits some anticoagulant and antiplatelet formation capacity. For this reason, Zhi Ke is useful in dit da formulas even if it is mild in action. Zhi Ke is seen in formulas such as the Lau Family training jow, Wong Kiew Kit's Wanham Shaolin training jow, General Purpose Stop-Bleeding formula alongside of Chen Pi, and the Clouds in Heaven iron palm jow.

Zhi Ke is also sometimes used in a classical sense for various chest and respiratory complaints.

Pinyin Name: Mu Xiang

English Name: Aucklandia Root, Costus

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Aucklandiae

Properties: spicy, bitter and warm

Meridians: Gallbladder, Large Intestine, Spleen, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Unblock and Prevent Stagnation, Regulation Circulation

Mu Xiang has a very good action to unblock stagnation in the Spleen/Stomach and Liver. This herb can aid with poor digestion, painful abdominal fullness, distention, and bloating. It also resolves Liver Qi stagnation to dispel the development of Damp-Heat, returning the normal flow of circulation.

Mu Xiang is often combined with Qi tonics to prevent stagnation from occurring during the digestion of these herbs.

2. Relieve Pain

Mu Xiang has an excellent action to relieve pain. While it is used clinically for pain in the abdomen it serves a good purpose as a warm pain-killing herb when used externally as well.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Mu Xiang is a very important herb in the arsenal of a Chinese doctor for clinical complaints. However it is also among the list of very important herbs used in dit da as well. Through its quite warm dispersing and pain-relieving persona Mu Xiang finds its way into a number of formulas. In injury formulas it helps to reduce pain and return regular local circulation. In iron palm formulas it enters the Liver to maintain and regulate circulation and relax tendons.

An abbreviated list of external liniments that use Mu Xiang include: Ku Yu Cheong and Ark Wong iron palm liniments, Lau Family training jow, PlumDragon's White Dragon iron palm jow and Jun Fan/JKD dit da jow, the Iron Goddess hand training liniment, Chow Gar dit da jow, Wong Kiew Kit's Wanham Shaolin dit da jow, Ho Family dit da jow, Wu Xiang Jiu, Lotus Palms iron palm jow, and in Qi Li San follow-on formulas such as those published by Brian Gray and Robert Chu.

It also shows up in several internal mixes such as the Tiger Fighting Elixir, Extend the Sinews Elixir, the old Dragons Breath herbal pill, and in very small dosage in An Shen Jing Nao Fang and He Tiao Qi Ji Fang, and countless Shaolin herbal "lore" formulas.

Mu Xiang contains essential oils that may be sensitive to extreme heat. Exercise caution when cooking formulas that use this herb, adding only towards the end phase.

Pinyin Name: Xiang Fu

English Name: Cyperus Nutgrass

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Cyperi

Properties: spicy, bitter, sweet and neutral

Meridians: Liver, Triple Burner

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Regulate Qi of the Liver and Spleen

Xiang Fu is useful for stagnation in the Liver and Spleen that results in pain and distention in the abdomen. Xiang Fu is neutral and versatile in combination with other herbs for this purpose. Xiang Fu can address the stagnation of all types, internally and externally.

2. Relieve Pain

Xiang Fu has some purely analgesic function that makes it useful both for internal and topical use.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Xiang Fu is one of several moving and dispersing herbs that has been discussed that contains pinene and limonene compounds. Xiang Fu also contains camphene and several derivative compounds of cyperene and cyperol.

In addition to the above classical actions, Xiang Fu also exhibits sedative and strong antipyretic properties, being significantly stronger in the latter than sodium salicylate.

While Xiang Fu has perhaps a slightly less potent regulating action than Mu Xiang, it appears in several dit da formulas for its interesting list of uses. Lau Family training jow, Fukien Shaolin iron palm jow, Bisio/Butler trauma liniment and Sinew-Bone Poultice, and Xing Yi iron hand soak use this herb, as does the Golden Lotus, Bak Fu Pai #2, and the Fung Doe Duk

Coconut break formula; these last 3 tend to be high in Wind-Damp type herbs that contain many of the compounds also found in Xiang Fu.

Xiang Fu also appears in Ying Gong internal dit da wan, Many Years Persistent injury wine, Rib Fracture Formula, and the Golden Flower Tieh Ta Wan.

Pinyin Name: Wu Yao

Pharmaceutical Name: Lindera Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Linderae

Properties: spicy and warm

Meridians: Urinary Bladder, Kidney, Lung, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Regulate Qi and Relieve Pain

Wu Yao relieves pain associated with the stagnation of Qi that causes dull pain that cannot be isolated. Wu Yao increases circulation and disperses stagnation in the channels.

2. Warm the Kidney

Through its warm and spicy energy, Wu Yao disperses cold and warms the Kidney to aid in deficiencies of the Kidney meridian.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Among the list of compounds in Wu Yao is borneol in small concentration, explaining in part this herbs ability to disperse, open up, and relieve pain. Wu Yao as a regulating and pain killing herb is much less potent than the isolated form of borneol, known as Bing Pian. Additionally, Wu Yao is milder in potency than both Mu Xiang and Xiang Fu. However, it is

sometimes combined with these 2 herbs to aid in their more powerful actions to regulate, disperse and relieve pain.

Some sources also claim that Wu Yao has some hemostatic ability to reduce coagulation time.

Wu Yao appears in a small list of formulas, generally in addition to stronger regulating and moving herbs. It is in the Lau Family training jow and a modified Chan Ning Tong version filled by one online supplier. It is also in internal dit da wan such as Many Years Persistent injury wine, Thirteen Flavors decoction, He Tiao Qi Ji Fang, and the Flying Dragon Life-Robbing Elixir.

Pinyin Name: Tan Xiang

English Name: Sandal Wood

Pharmaceutical Name: Lignum Santali Albi

Properties: spicy and warm

Meridians: Spleen, Stomach, Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Regulate Qi, Relieve Pain

Tan Xiang has a very good dispersing and regulating property and is used clinically to jumpstart the Spleen, regulate Qi and dispel Cold causing poor appetite, abdominal pain, distention in the abdomen, and vomiting.

Tan Xiang is warm and aromatic and dispels cold and Qi stagnation. Externally, it is useful for dull aching pain due to injury and to regulate circulation during training.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Tan Xiang is one of 3 or 4 strongly aromatic Qi regulating herbs. It has a very nice but subdued aroma that holds up very well to storage. This herb contains concentrations of compounds such as santalol, santene, and santalene.

Tan Xiang is found in a number of dit da formulas, including variations of the Ku Yu Cheong iron palm jow, Five Fragrance Wine (Wu Xiang Jiu) and an old Shuai Chiao iron palm formula.

Tan Xiang is not prohibitively expensive but is significantly more expensive than herbs such as Mu Xiang or Xiang Fu. Many suppliers also sell this as a thick bark, which makes extraction very poor and grinding very difficult. While it serves a good purpose in the formula it is found in, it is not a surprise that it is not used more commonly.

Pinyin Name: Chen Xiang

English Name: Eagle Wood

Pharmaceutical Name: Lignum Aquilariae Resinatum

Properties: spicy, bitter, and warm

Meridians: Kidney, Spleen, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Move Qi and Relieve Pain

Chen Xiang aromatically disperses stagnation and moves Qi to relieve pain in the body and the extremities. Chen Xiang is a warm spicy herb that disperses cold and stagnation as a result of cold.

Externally, Chen Xiang provides a moving component in the case of injuries with stagnation that causes dull aching pain.

2. Warm the Kidney

Chen Xiang enters the Kidney meridian to warm the Kidney and aid with Kidney Yang deficiency. This herb is used for clinical issues with respiration, coldness, weakness, and pain in the knees and lower back, and premature ejaculation.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Chen Xiang is a somewhat uncommon but very important Qi regulating herb. It has a strong ability to aromatically move Qi. However, it is not depleting or drying and is therefore an incredibly useful herb for clinical settings where patients may have a weak constitution.

Chen Xiang appears in several dit da formulas. An abbreviated list includes: Shaolin Die Da Shen Liang Fan, Wong Kiew Kit's Wanham Shaolin dit da jow, Bak Fu Pai All Purpose dit da jow, Lotus Palms iron palm jow, and the Ark Wong iron palm jow.

It also appears in several internal formulas including the Extend the Sinews Elixir, Harvest the Training Powder, and in very small quantity in both Unimpeded and Free-Flowing Qi and Blood Training Powder and Ginseng Deer Antler Pills.

Chen Xiang is a moderately expensive herb. While not incredibly expensive, it is substantially more expensive currently than *Tan Xiang*. While it is a more important herb in many ways than *Tan Xiang* and is seen in more formulas than *Tan Xiang*, it is reasonable to guess why its cost inhibits its inclusion in a larger cross-section of formulas.



Tan Xiang

Pinyin Name: Chuan Lian Zi

English Name: China Berry Fruit

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Toosendan

Properties: bitter and cold

Meridians: Liver, Small Intestine, Stomach

SLIGHTLY TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Move Qi and Relieve Pain

Cold and bitter, Chuan Lian Zi moves Qi and relieves pain due to stagnation in the Liver. Clinical manifestations often include abdominal and hernia pain, insomnia, irritability, and redness in the skin of the upper body.

Topically, Chuan Lian Zi has a moving property to it and is also useful for killing fungus and parasites.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Chuan Lian Zi is mildly toxic when taken internally and should be used very cautiously and under the direction of a healthcare professional.

Chuan Lian Zi appears in a relatively decent list of formulas for its unique moving property combined with its cold energy. Some of the formulas it is used in include: Southern Fist Iron Body jow, both currently available versions of the Chan Ning Tong, Black Hand iron palm jow, Iron Goddess hand training liniment, Shaolin Return the Spirit jow, Tendon-Relaxing Soak and Rib Fracture Formula.

Chuan Lian Zi is fairly inexpensive and has a very good moving ability. However, it is a thick and hard substance and it must be crushed or ground to expose the inside parts of the fruit for good extraction to occur. Processing this herb by frying it warms up its harshly cold nature and aids in extraction as well.

Pinyin Name: Gan Song

English Name: Nardostachys

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix seu Rhizoma Nardostachys

Properties: spicy, sweet and warm

Meridians: Spleen, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Regulate Qi and Relieve Pain

Gan Song regulates Qi and reduces stagnation that causes pain, especially with digestion in clinical settings. Gan Song is mild; it is not overly warming to the body nor overly drying due to its sweet nature. Topically, while it is mild, it will not dry the skin

or produce too much heat while still providing a decent moving quality.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Gan Song is found very rarely in formulas for martial arts use. Its notation here is only for its inclusion as a chief herb in a very rare Hung Gar iron palm formula. While it may have appeared in 1 or 2 modified dit da recipes, its use is very rare perhaps due to its relatively mild action.

Pinyin Name: Jiu Ceng Ta

English Name: Basil

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba Ocimi Basilici

Properties: spicy and warm

Meridians: Stomach, Liver, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Regulate Qi, Invigorate Blood Circulation

Jiu Ceng Ta may be used clinically for its ability to treat stagnation in the digestive system, increase poor appetite, and reduce pain in the stomach. Jiu Ceng Ta also has a somewhat unique ability among Qi regulating herbs to enter the Blood level and mildly invigorate Blood circulation for which it can be combined with stronger Blood invigorating herbs.

2. Open Channels

Jiu Ceng Ta also has ancillary function to open the channels in situations where stagnation is also accompanied by pain and weakness in the tendons and joints.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Jiu Ceng Ta is the commonly used herb in cuisine, Basil. The entire plant is used, not just the leaves. This herb has a wonderful and pungent aroma and is used for many culinary dishes for its taste. While this herb is not noted in any formulas here, it is worth mentioning simply because of its easily accessible nature. It is not a strong herb but is readily available, easy to grow, and relatively inexpensive.

Chen & Chen (p 51 1) notes that Jiu Ceng Ta is similar to Ze Lan, which is a very good description. Both herbs are mild in their effects of invigorating Blood and regulating Qi and water.

Chapter 10

Herbs that Stop Bleeding

Concept

Herbs that stop bleeding are used, simply, for their ability to stop bleeding both on the internal and external aspects of the body. Bleeding may be a result of several circumstances, occur in an organ, or some physical part of the body, or be an indirect result of various other issues that are taking place in the body—bleeding may be the cause or the effect and should be treated accordingly.

While bleeding may occur from traumatic injury or damage (and this is certainly our biggest concern in this text) to muscles, bones, skin, and other tissues, there are a number of other reasons that bleeding may occur. Clinical reasons may arise for a number of internal problems and must be differentiated by a knowledgeable and competent healthcare professional. From a traditional Chinese perspective, bleeding in the body may occur due to heat in the blood, coldness in some region of the body,

deficiency in the Spleen or Liver, or present Blood stasis, such as is the result from traumatic injury where the skin may or may not be cut. Therefore, the herbs in this category stop bleeding as a primary goal but tend to do so by their respective abilities to cool the blood, tonify and warm the body and organs, invigorate Blood to remove stagnation, or restrain leakage from the vessels by astringing.

From a martial arts and sports perspective, herbs that will be most useful for bleeding are those substances which tend to invigorate circulation of Blood to dispel stagnation and those that astringe to reduce leakage from blood vessels. These 2 circumstances occur most often due to injury from intense training such as sparring, conditioning, or impact drills performed with speed and power. Herbs that serve the purpose of tonifying, warming, and blood cooling are of importance as well, both for conditioning liniments and injury liniments, as well as internal tonics and dit da wan, but may not be seen as frequently for these purposes. Not surprisingly, several herbs from both heat-clearing and Blood invigorating categories also have some abilities to stop bleeding.

Some stop-bleeding herbs have cardiovascular and hemostatic pharmacological effects and should be used cautiously and under the direction of a doctor for those who are on antiplatelet or anticoagulant medication.

Preparation

Stop bleeding herbs are of course, already geared towards stopping bleeding. Often times, other herbs are charred to enhance the stop-bleeding actions.

Because the process of charring herbs tends to increase the potency of the herb to stop bleeding or return to homeostasis, it only makes sense to look towards stop-bleeding herbs for that form of preparation. Stop bleeding herbs are often charred for

this purpose, sometimes to the point of ash. While a small few stop bleeding herbs have volatile oils that can be destroyed by charring, none of the herbs discussed in this chapter have any oils that are sensitive to heat. Many forms of these herbs can be purchased in an already charred state due to their common usage in this form.

Pinyin Name: Da Xiao Ji

English Name: Japanese Cirsium

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba sue Radix Cirsii Japonica

Properties: sweet, bitter and cool

Meridians: Liver, Heart

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Cool Blood to Stop Bleeding

Da Xiao Ji has a cooling nature that stops bleeding by removing heat from the Blood, which may often appear bright red through hemorrhaging such as nosebleeds. Da Xiao Ji also provides some minor ability to reduce inflammation through this cooling action.

2. Disperse Blood Stasis

While Da Xiao Ji does not have a Blood invigorating aspect, it is said to disperse stasis, often in the clinical form of abscesses and toxic swellings, internally and externally. Da Xiao Ji has also been used to reduce blood pressure and related hypertension.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Da Xiao Ji refers to the full herb from the Cirsium plant. It can sometimes be seen or sold as Da Ji and Xiao Ji, the separated root and foliage. Da Xiao Ji is the entire herb and is often sold in this way for the full plants strong ability to synergistically stop bleeding. It can also be found commonly as just Da Ji.

To further complicate the matter, Da Ji also refers to Euphorbia Knoxiae, which is a very toxic harsh expellant. While this herb is generally no longer sold in the US, one should carefully specify that Japanese Cirsium (also called Japanese Thistle) is the desired herb.

Da Xiao Ji is often used raw to facilitate the strongest Blood cooling action whereas it is often charred to increase its hemostatic effect and astringent function to stop bleeding.

Da Xiao Ji appears in relatively few dit da formulas, mostly those specific to injury management. It appears in Grand Master Tao's 12-herb soak, Eight Battle Formations Elixir, many versions of the classical Qi Li San in small quantity (often just 1 gram), and the occasional small or lesser known cut powder and bruise liniment.

Due to this herb's availability and low price, it is mildly surprising that this herb is not seen more often in formulas. However, while it does have a very good stop-bleeding ability, the potential confusion between this herb and Da Ji (Euphorbia) is a serious drawback that may warrant its lack of use.



Da Xiao Ji

Pinyin Name: Di Yu

English Name: Sanguisorba

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Sanguisorba

Properties: bitter, sour and cool

Meridians: Liver, Large Intestine, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat, Cool Blood, Stop Bleeding

Di Yu, being cooling and sour in nature, stops bleeding as a result of heat in the blood and leakage from the vessels. Di Yu has a cooling and consolidating property that makes it useful for a range of bleeding problems and issues that arise in inflammation, from gynecological disorders to inflammation, bleeding, and burns on the skin.

2. Generate Flesh

Di Yu has a consolidating action that makes it useful for promoting the healing of injury and generating flesh. It can be used to help promote the generation of flesh from injuries due to burns, bleeding, as well as for conditioning purposes.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Di Yu is a great herb that has a wide range of uses. It clears heat to reduce inflammation and pain, stops a variety of types of bleeding, generates flesh, and aids in the general healing process. It has been shown to possess hemostatic and anti-inflammatory pharmacological effects, relief for burns, and even has some antibiotic capability.

Despite this useful list of actions accomplished by using Di Yu, it is not a common herb in martial arts-based formulas. This may be due to the fact that it is most useful on the lower parts of the body. An acupuncture college dit da includes it as well as a small handful of people add it to the Chan Ning Tong (although

it is not an original inclusion) and a few use it in small closed-circle family recipes.

Di Yu is not toxic but excessive use should be cautioned as the absorption of tannins from this herb can result in overdose. Di Yu is best for burns when raw and best for bleeding when charred.

Pinyin Name: Xian He Cao

English Name: Agrimony

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba Agrimoniae

Properties: bitter and neutral

Meridians: Lung, Liver, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Stop Bleeding

Xian He Cao is astringent in action and provides very good functionality to stop bleeding. Clinically, it is used for menstrual disorders, hematemesis, hematuria, hemoptysis and other types of bleeding. It is also useful topically for bleeding and inflammation.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Xian He Cao is useful for a wide range of conditions in which bleeding occurs, including many clinical conditions as well as injury. It has hemostatic function through its astringent property and is neutral, making it versatile and helpful for swelling when combined with the correct herbs.

Chen & Chen (p. 579) claims that this herb also has Qi and Blood tonifying properties. While Xian He Cao will not deplete

Qi or Blood, it does not have any purely tonic properties but rather allows other tonics to perform a better job due to its non-depleting nature.

Xian He Cao is rarely seen in dit da formulas, and appears most commonly in conditioning formulas being used in China.

Pinyin Name: Bai Ji

English Name: Bletilla

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Bletillae

Properties: bitter, sweet and cool

Meridians: Lung, Stomach, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Stop Bleeding, Restrain Leakage

Bai Ji is astringent and seeks to restrain the leakage of Blood and body fluids, internally and externally in the form of cuts, burns, and other wounds. Bai Ji is also cooling and helps to reduce inflammation and aid in the healing of red, chapped skin.

2. Promote Generation of Flesh

Bai Ji promotes the healing and generation of flesh, especially for non-healing wounds and sores on the skin. Herbs like Bai Ji are also used occasionally to help thicken the skin in conditioning liniments.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Bai Ji is a relatively strong astringent herb and is very useful for bleeding due to cuts, lacerations, chapped skin, burns, and various types of internal bleeding.

Bai Ji appears in a few dit da formulas, primarily for its bleeding action; although it is not unheard of for herbs in this category to be used in conditioning liniments to aid in increasing skin thickness.

Bai Ji appears in Shaolin Stop Bleeding Powder, 10,000 Abilities to Stop Bleeding Powder, Treatment for Unstoppable Bleeding Formula, and several other first aid formulas for the treatment of hematemesis. It is also seen in conditioning liniments such as Burning Palm jow and Mew Hing Level 2 iron palm jow, as well as rarely in internal tonics such as the Iron Warrior.

Pinyin Name: Ou Jie

English Name: Lotus Node

Pharmaceutical Name: Nodus Nelumbinis Rhizomatis

Properties: sweet and neutral

Meridians: Lung, Stomach, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Stop Bleeding

Ou Jie is astringent and has very good hemostatic effects to stop bleeding especially in the case of Blood stagnation, making it useful for dit da formulas. Ou Jie can mildly move Blood and stop bleeding.

Ou Jie is neutral but is sometimes used with heat-clearing herbs to clear heat and stop bleeding in the presence of stagnation.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ou Jie is one of nearly 10 different parts of the Lotus plant that are used for medicinal purposes. Many of these herbs have astringent types of properties.

Ou Jie appears in the Lotus Palms iron palm jow, several Shaolin formulas used for general bleeding and bleeding of the eyes and nose, as well as some formulas used in Fukien Kung Fu and Okinawan Karate-based martial arts.

Ou Jie used in its charred form is best for stopping bleeding while the raw herb is best for use with herbs that cool Blood.

Pinyin Name: Xue Yu Tan

English Name: Charred Human Hair

Pharmaceutical Name: Crinis Carbonisatus

Properties: bitter and neutral

Meridians: Liver, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Stop Bleeding, Dispel Stagnation

Xue Yu Tan has a dispersing quality that allows it to stop bleeding while concurrently dispersing stagnation and is often used internally and externally to treat a variety of types of bleeding including traumatic injuries, hematemesis, hematuria and urinary bleeding.

For its internal use in the case of urinary functions, Xue Yu Tan stops bleeding and promotes urination.

SUPPELEMNTAL INFORMATION

Xue Yu Tan is quite literally human hair that has been charred into clumps. Non-charred human hair does not appear to stop bleeding or have a hemostatic effect.

Xue Yu Tan appears rarely in dit da formulas, but does find its way into the 10,000 Abilities to Stop Bleeding powder, Shaolin Prescriptions for treatment of nosebleed or injury to the abdomen, and Prescription for bleeding from the “Seven Portals”. It also appears in a Xing Yi iron palm soak.

Pinyin Name: San Qi

English Name: Pseudoginseng

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Notoginseng

Properties: sweet, slightly bitter, warm

Meridians: Liver, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Stop Bleeding

San Qi has a strong function to stop bleeding both internally and externally. It is useful for a multitude of clinical issues resulting in internal bleeding and is also very important for external bleeding due to cuts, lacerations, and traumatic injury. San Qi is also used in many conditioning formulas for its ability to deter bleeding.

2. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Relieve Pain, Reduce Swelling

San Qi also has a very good function to invigorate the Blood to dispel Blood and Qi stagnation from external injury and bleeding, muscle and tendon injuries, and severe bruising. San Qi can help relieve pain and inflammation associated with these injuries. It is also used in many conditioning formulas for its

strong dual-actions of stopping bleeding and increasing Blood circulation.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

San Qi (sometimes called Tian Qi and rarely Shen Qi) has no purely anesthetic or anti-inflammatory functions. Rather, it allows these phenomena to take place through its ability to clear out stasis and return the body to a normal state of function.

San Qi is debatably one of the most quintessential herbs in the first aid kit of the martial artist and athlete. It has demonstrated hemostatic and antiplatelet effects and exhibits the ability to increase cardiac output and blood perfusion while decreasing blood pressure. It has a strong function to stop bleeding while concurrently increasing circulation. As such it is used in a vast number of injury and conditioning formulas and is an essential herb in many patent products as well.

Unfortunately, San Qi has experienced rising costs due to demand and is not as cost-effective as it once was. If the price raises any more it is likely that people will begin searching for substitutions for this herb.

San Qi is found in far too many formulas to list. An abbreviated list of external formulas includes: All of the Ku Yu Cheong variations (Ark Wong, Wong Fei Hung, big hand, etc), all 6 of the premade dit da jows by PlumDragon Herbs, both available versions of the Chan Ning Tong iron palm jow, Black Hand iron palm jow, Lotus Palms, Bob Flaws Dragons Blood liniment, Clouds in Heaven dit da jow, Lau Family training jow, Gua's Imperial Fire, Fukien Province iron palm jow, Cao Chong dit da jow, Die Da Hao Fang injury liniment, Leung Jan's dit da jow, Fang Sou Yi (of the Ministerial conditioning system), Ancient Way/Monks Fist dit da jow, multiple Hakka-based injury and conditioning formulas, Bak Mei Tieh Sao Jow, Mew Hing Level 2 and several other Bak Mei/Bak Fu Pai formulas, Pangai Noon dit da jow, multiple Balur Oil formulas, and Hua Tuo's Eight

Immortal bruise liniment. It is found in Shaolin Stop Bleeding Powder, Metal Injury Powder, Original Brightness Powder, and several other powder based formulas for the management of bleeding due to injury as well as commercial liniments such as Five Photos tieh ta yao jin and Wan Hua oil.

San Qi also appears in many internal formulas. An abbreviated list of internal formulas includes: Iron Bone Training Powder, PlumDragon dit da wan, Golden Flowers tieh ta wan, Zhi Ti Fa Bagua Zhang tieh ta wan, Ying Gong dit da wan, Bone-Knitting Powder, Shaolin Quicken the Blood Elixir, Extend the Sinews Elixir, and Strengthen the Sinew, Connect Bone Elixir, and several other patent formulas, such as Yang Cheng tieh ta wan, Five Photos tieh ta wan, PlumDragon tieh ta wan and others.

Lastly, San Qi is an important ingredient in Yunnan Baiyao which has been a popular patent pill for many decades. It is very useful internally and externally for bleeding and Blood stasis of all kinds.

San Qi is a hard root and absolutely must be crushed or powdered to be effective in a formula. Adding this herb whole will drastically reduce its effectiveness and waste money.

Some San Qi appears clay colored while other roots are black and shiny. These black shiny areas often seen as “polished” extrusions due to friction during movements. However, San Qi is also sometimes smoked with black wax prior to shipment. While historically, these black waxed roots were seen as a higher quality root, there is actually no difference between the black roots and the more earth-tone roots. Both roots should be of equal quality and still must be ground or crushed.

Pinyin Name: Qian Cao Gen

English Name: Madder Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Rubiae

Properties: bitter and cold

Meridians: Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Cool Blood to Stop Bleeding

Qian Cao has a rather cold energy that clears heat from the Blood and stops bleeding. It is sometimes used in clinical settings for its ability to clear heat from the interior and treat profuse hematemesis.

2. Invigorate Blood Circulation to Dispel Stagnation

Qian Cao has a moderate ability to invigorate Blood and dispels Blood stagnation that causes bleeding. Because it is also cool, it can handle multiple types of bleeding. It is often used to remedy external injury which causes stasis, pain, swelling, and bleeding.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Qian Cao Gen is also commonly referred to as Qian Cao and Qian Gen. Qian Cao is the preferred usage for this text.

Qian Cao is an extremely uncommon ingredient in dit da formulas, being used more commonly in clinical settings where it is better known. While it only shows up very rarely in obscure formulas such as Fa San Zhong Bu Fan, it has undergone some moderate testing at PlumDragon, being added to both simple and complex injury liniments with good success.

Other herbs in this category have stronger actions than Qian Cao; however, because of this herb's combined ability to stop bleeding, invigorate Blood circulation, and reduce swelling and cool the Blood, it is fairly unique; no other stop-bleeding herb

used in dit da has as cooling an energy as this herb, making it useful for acute injuries that present with swelling, bleeding, and pain. In addition, Qian Cao is inexpensive and readily available from suppliers.

Qian Cao is also used outside of herbalism for its alizarin content which is used as a dye.

Pinyin Name: Pu Huang

English Name: Cattail Pollen

Pharmaceutical Name: Pollen Typhae

Properties: sweet and neutral

Meridians: Liver, Spleen, Pericardium

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Stop Bleeding

Pu Huang stops bleeding effectively and does not cause stagnation. It is very useful for clinical use such as hematuria, hematemesis, hemoptysis, and uterine bleeding and is very effective for a variety of types of injuries. It may be applied topically to cuts or bleeding below the skin.

2. Invigorate Blood Circulation

Pu Huang has the function to both stop bleeding and invigorate the Blood to dispel stagnation, making it very useful for dit da, in injury and conditioning formulas. It is beneficial for pain and bleeding that results from stagnation.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Some sources state that Pu Huang also stops bleeding by cooling pathogenic heat. However, it should be combined with cooling herbs for this function.

Pu Huang is seen in a variety of formulas. An abbreviated list of formulas includes various versions of both the classical Qi Li San and San Huang San (for example, Five Yellows), Southern Fist Iron Body jow, Li Family iron palm jow, Fukien Province iron palm jow, Thirteen Flavors formula, and several formulas used as powders for bleeding at various parts of the body such as the eye. It is also used internally in the Zhi Ti Fa Bagua Zhang tieh ta wan.

Pu Huang Tan is the charred form or Pu Huang. It is most beneficial for stopping bleeding while the raw herb is best for invigorating the Blood.

Pu Huang combines well with San Qi. This pair creates a relatively strong action to both stop bleeding and invigorate Blood circulation.

Because Pu Huang is such a common wild growing plant along lakes and ponds, it is a worthwhile herb to be aware of as it can be procured quickly and easily in a pinch.

Pinyin Name: Xiao Jin Ying

English Name: Rosa Cymosa

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Romsa Cymosae

Properties: bitter and neutral

Meridians: Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Stop Bleeding, Disperse Stagnation

Xiao Jin Ying stops bleeding with stagnation topically and is used for injuries among a short list of clinical applications.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Xiao Jin Ying is carried through only a couple of herb distributors and is much less readily available than other herbs. Additionally, it is rarely seen in dit da formulas. Its inclusion here is primarily to notate its use in the Iron Goddess hand liniment.

Xiao Jin Ying can be substituted with most other stop bleeding herbs of neutral energetic temperature, Xue Yu Tan perhaps being the closest match. Pu Huang and Qian Cao would also be acceptable substitutes.

Pinyin Name: Lian Fang

English Name: Lotus Receptacle

Pharmaceutical Name: Receptaculum Nelumbinis

Properties: bitter and warm

Meridians: Liver, Spleen, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Stop Bleeding, Disperse Stagnation

Lian Fang is astringent in nature and stops bleeding by restraining leakage and has the ability to disperse stagnation that is already present. It is often used clinically for various types of severe menstrual bleeding.

2. Dispel Dampness

Lian Fang is bitter and drying in nature, and may be used for various types of skin conditions such as eczema.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Lian Fang is one of several parts of the Lotus plant, many of which have similar astringent properties. Like other herbs in this category, it stops bleeding most effectively in its charred form.

Lian Fang gains mention only because of its use in one modified version of the Chan Ning Tong iron palm jow and maybe 1 or 2 obscure formulas used by small groups in various locations. Otherwise, it is quite rare to find in dit da formulas.

Pinyin Name: Ai Ye

English Name: Mugwort, Wormwood leaf

Pharmaceutical Name: Folium Artemisia Argil

Properties: bitter, spicy and warm

Meridians: Spleen, Liver, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Stop Bleeding, Warm the Channels

Ai Ye is a very effective herb to stop bleeding, especially when caused by cold or deficiency and reduces pain from coldness in the channels. Ai Ye also has a capacity to warm the channels and dispel cold through its warming energy and spicy flavor.

2. Dispel Dampness and Phlegm

Ai Ye is a warm and drying herb and can dispel dampness and phlegm. It is often used externally and internally for this action.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ai Ye is a very important herb in Chinese medicine as it is the herb used for moxabustion due to its ability to warm and circulate. The heat released during moxabustion can penetrate into the skin, triggering the circulation of Qi and Blood while warming the channels and relieving pain.

Ai Ye has various essential oils that when applied topically, act as an irritant and induce warmth and local circulation. Among the compounds are borneol acetate and isoborneol, terpineol, phellandrene, and camphene.

Ai Ye only shows up in a couple of dit da formulas. However, its use goes beyond that of liniments for the martial artist. The use of Ai Ye for moxabustion is most important. However, it does appear in a Xing Yi iron palm wash, which has other stop-bleeding herbs in it as well. Additionally, Ai Ye is used as the principal herb in Liquid Moxa, a liniment similar to dit da but with various very warming herbs to aid in opening and warming the channels when applied topically.

Both the fresh and charred forms of Ai Ye have very strong abilities to stop bleeding. The charred form is stronger, however. Vinegar-fried Ai Ye more strongly dispels cold.

Chapter 11

Herbs that Invigorate Blood and Remove Stasis

Concept

The herbs that invigorate Blood and remove stasis are those herbs which tend to have an effect on the body by dilating the blood vessels which increases blood circulation and breaks up and dispels blood stagnation and stasis. This group of herbs is potentially the most important category of herbs from the perspective of the martial artist or athlete and extremely important to the Chinese medical doctors as well. Many of the important and strong herbs which heal injuries to the body are within this category. The lists of relevant formulas for each of these herbs will tend to be much longer than those from other categories.

Clinically, these herbs are often used for a very large range of reasons, from swellings, ulcers, amenorrhea, and postpartum pain, to Bi Syndrome, sprains and strains, and traumatic injuries

resulting in bruising, pain, stagnation and dampness.

In the case of injuries, there can be damage to skin, muscle, sinew, bone, and other tissues. The injured region may become swollen and painful; blood and other fluids may leak out of vessels and cells, producing stagnation, bruising, and reduced range of motion. Platelets may further exacerbate this problem. This perpetuates swelling and hinders the healing process as Blood can no longer flow properly.

Blood invigorating herbs help to break up this stasis at the site of injury by increasing circulation and breaking up stagnation. This will allow swelling to be reduced thereby reducing pain and increasing range of motion. Increased circulation also means that cells will heal more quickly and regenerate in less time.

Additionally, Blood invigorating herbs are often used prior to training in an effort to deter injury from taking place. By increasing circulation prior to training, the tissues are “charged” and tend to withstand a bit more abuse before damage occurs. Or in some cases, these herbs can reduce the overall damage that may take place if used prior to training. This is part of the concept behind conditioning liniment being applied before and after training.

Blood invigorating herbs are of a wide range of temperatures and flavors. However, they are often spicy and bitter, correlating with their ability to dispel stagnation and move Blood. While many of these herbs are warm in nature, there are several that are neutral or cooling. Blood invigorating herbs tend to have primarily cardiovascular effect on the body, able to dilate blood vessels and increase circulation locally or generally, delay and reduce platelet aggregation and buildup of coagulation. Additionally, many of these herbs have functions to reduce inflammation and have some purely analgesic functions. Some Blood invigorators even have antibiotic and immunological pharmacological effects.

While most Blood invigorators are not toxic, very specific care should be taken with these types of herbs for women who are pregnant or nursing, as well as those who are on any type of antiplatelet or anticoagulant medication such as heparin or warfarin (Coumadin). Additionally, many of these herbs may potentiate the effects of analgesic or antihypertensive medications and should not be used (or only used under very specific medical supervision) when using these medications.

Preparation

Many Blood invigorators are barks and woods which can be exposed to heat without a great degree of worry about destroying any volatile essential oils. However, some of these herbs are sensitive to heat. Always consult the individual template for any of these herbs before processing with heat as there are several that should not be exposed to prolonged heat.

Pinyin Name: Chuan Xiong

English Name: Cnidium Root, Ligusticum Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Ligustici Chuanxiong

Properties: spicy and warm

Meridians: Liver, Gallbladder, Pericardium

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood and Qi Circulation

Chuan Xiong is a very effective and common herb to invigorate Blood circulation to disperse stagnation throughout the body. Aside from stagnation due to injury, it is also used for a range of gynecological problems in women.

2. Dispel Wind, Relieve Pain

Chuan Xiong has a very dispersing, aromatic characteristic that is useful for dispelling Bi Syndrome that causes musculoskeletal pain and tightness. Chuan Xiong works best on the upper body for this purpose and is an important herb used for the treatment of headaches.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Chuan Xiong (also referred to as Sichuan/Sichuan Lovage Root) is an extremely common and important herb for invigorating Blood and likely sits on the shelf of most acupuncturists and those who keep herbs around for injury. It is effective and readily available and belongs on the list of most important herbs for dit da.

Not surprisingly, Chuan Xiong appears in a large cross-section of formulas used for injury and conditioning in martial arts, including several that use it as one of the chief herbs. It is used in classical formulas such as Dang Gui Four, Five Accumulation Powder, Eight Treasure Decoction, classical Qi Li San variations, and the trauma pill from “Collection of Chinese

Herbal Prepared Medicines”. An abbreviated list of martial arts-based formulas includes: Ho Family dit da jow (which also uses other species of *Ligusticum*), a small Shuai Chiao iron palm formula, Black Hand and Lotus Palms iron palm jow, Five Fragrance Wine, Wanham Shaolin hit wine, Ancient Way/Monks Fist dit da jow, multiple Chow Gar and other Hakka dit da formulas, Burning Palm, Hung Gar Golden Bridge dit da jow, Fung Doe Duk and other Bak Mei-related formulas, Hua Tuo Eight Immortal bruise liniment, Bak Fu Pai #2, Mew Hing iron palm Level 2, and the Ark Wong iron palm jow. It is also used in General Purpose Stop Bleeding formula and several other small formulas for pain due to injury in various parts of the body.

Additionally, it also appears in the following abbreviated list of internal formulas: Ten Brocade pill, Shaolin Bone Healing decoction, Miraculous Recovery elixir, Shang Jin Dong Gu Wan, Strengthen the Sinew Connect the Bone elixir, and Extend the Sinews elixir, Nine Tigers elixir, Troop Deployment Powder, Bone Knitting Powder, Protect the General wine, Return Spring Plaster, Shaolin Da Bu Jiu, Thirteen Flavors formula, Prescription for Effusing and Scattering the Upper and Lower part, in small quantity in the Comprehensive iron palm tonic, and more. The list of internal and external formulas that Chuan Xiong appears in is longer and includes a number of formulas not listed here.

The point should stand that this herb is seen as a valuable substance due to its frequent inclusion in formulas both from a classical and dit da perspective.

Chuan Xiong has a number of chemical substances, including a variety of alkaloids and organic acids, and ethyl-based essential oils. It is likely that many of these compounds are responsible for its cardiovascular and antiplatelet activity that has been observed in lab settings. Chuan Xiong can effectively dilate blood vessels, increase blood perfusion to the coronary arteries, reduce coagulation of platelets and blood cells, and has even been used successfully for cerebral embolisms.



Chuan Xiong

Pinyin Name: Yan Hu Suo

English Name: Corydalis

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Corydalis

Properties: spicy, bitter and warm

Meridians: Heart, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood and Qi Circulation

Yan Hu Suo has a very effective ability to break the stasis of Blood and Qi and invigorate Blood circulation. It is used for injuries as well as a number of clinical reasons dealing with pain, especially in the abdomen and when there are palpable masses.

2. Relieve Pain

Yan Hu Suo has a strong function to relieve pain in all parts of the body. It is commonly used for pain in the abdomen as well as the extremities of the body and may be coupled with acupuncture to increase pain reduction.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Yan Hu Suo is very important for its strong purely analgesic properties, so much that it has been used successfully in minor surgeries. It is approximately 1/100 of the strength of morphine but has a longer duration and appears to show no dependence and much slower development of tolerance. Yan Hu Suo also exhibits some anti-inflammatory and pro-adrenal cortical effects. There are several compounds in Yan Hu Suo responsible for these effects, including tetrahydropalmatine, corydaline, and coptisine. It is important to keep in mind that because Yan Hu Suo does have strong analgesic effects that may be subject to tolerance, that it should only be used when necessary.

Yan Hu Suo appears with Bai Zhi in the patent formula Yan Hu Suo Zhi Tang, often marketed as Great Corydalis tea pills. This is often referred to by those who use it as “Herbal Aspirin”. It is also used as a modification by many groups in the classical Qi Li San formula. Additionally, Yan Hu Suo appears in a moderate number of dit da related formulas, including PlumDragon Jun Fan/JKD dit da jow and Bruise JIUce, Wing Chun anti-contusion jow, Pangai-Noon dit da jow, Lau Family training jow, as one of the major herbs in Clouds in Heaven dit da jow, and several smaller Shaolin recipes for the treatment of pain due to injury in various parts of the body. It also appears in a few plasters and powder such as the Shaolin Temple Music plaster and Ten Thousand Respondings plaster.

It also is used in several internal formulas, to include the PlumDragon base dit da wan, Fei Long Duo Ming Dan, and Rib Fracture formula.

Despite the somewhat common use of Yan Hu Suo, it is one herb which is underutilized for injury liniments that are reserved for very painful injuries. It is inexpensive and of very good strength; it mixes well with other Blood invigorators and is a very good substitute for older formulas that used unavailable herbs like opium seeds. We have tested its use in several injury formulas which already have significant moving and pain-killing properties; the inclusion of Yan Hu Suo does indeed increase the effectiveness of these formulas to kill pain and in some instances, also helps to reduce bruising and heal tendon and muscle injuries more quickly.

The herb Xia Tian Wu (*Corydalis Decumbens*) has been used in the past as a substitute to Yan Hu Suo. Both of these herbs are in the same genus and have similar analgesic effects, although Xia Tian Wu is stronger to dispel Wind-Damp. Xia Tian Wu is not commonly available in the US whereas Yan Hu Suo is, and is reasonably priced.

Pinyin Name: Yu Jin

English Name: Curcuma, Turmeric Tuber

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Curcumae

Properties: spicy, bitter and cold

Meridians: Heart, Liver, Gallbladder

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood and Qi Circulation

Yu Jin has a very aromatic and spicy nature that provides it significant capacity to invigorate Blood circulation to dispel Blood and Qi stagnation. It has an affinity for removing stasis and reducing swelling from injuries.

2. Clear Heat and Cool Blood

Yu Jin is quite cold, making it useful for reducing swelling and reducing bleeding due to heat conditions such as hematemesis and hematuria.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Yu Jin is somewhat unique in that it has very cooling and very moving properties. Many Blood invigorating herbs are warming and may be less suitable for very red and swollen injuries, or where bleeding is present due to heat. Very warming herbs may exacerbate these problems.

Yu Jin contains several important essential oils that help it perform its functions, including but not limited to camphene, camphor, curcumene.

Yu Jin is used in a variety of martial arts formulas for its Blood moving and heat-reducing actions. Some of the formulas it is used in include: PlumDragon basic bruise dit da jow and Jun Fan/JKD dit da jow, oftentimes as an addition to the Ho Family jow, Lotus Palms iron palm jow, Lau Family training jow, multiple Bak Mei/Bak Fu Pai formulas, Clouds in Heaven dit da jow, and several prescriptions for pain due to injury to various parts of the body.

PlumDragon basic dit da wan and Ying Gong dit da wan, Golden Flowers tieh ta wan, and basic Trauma pills based off of the classical die da wan.

Yu Jin is also said to open the orifices of the Heart and promote consciousness. In Western terms, this often translates to disorders such as anxiety, convulsions, seizures, and even epilepsy, schizophrenia, and unconsciousness in extreme situations.

Yu Jin has been shown to possess antiplatelet and anticoagulant effects, and has also been useful in studies relating to coronary artery disease and internal bleeding.

Care should be taken to differentiate between Yu Jin and Jiang Huang when filling a recipe. Many sources of formulas list the Latin as "turmeric" or "curcuma", but do not distinguish between *Curcuma Longa* rhizome (Jiang Huang) and *Curcuma Aromatica* tuber (Yu Jin). These 2 herbs are similar as Blood movers and even come from the same genus of plant. But otherwise, they have significantly different actions and energetic temperatures and are clearly different on visual inspection.

Pinyin Name: Jiang Huang

English Name: Turmeric Rhizome

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Curcumae Longae

Properties: spicy, bitter and warm

Meridians: Spleen, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Dispel Stasis

Jiang Huang has significant capacity to break Blood stasis through its ability to invigorate Blood circulation. It is used for pain due to Blood stasis and injuries that cause bruising and stasis of Blood and Qi.

2. Open Channels

Jiang Huang is among only a few Blood invigorators that also unblocks and opens the channels, treating Bi Syndrome and pain in the joints and muscles. This makes it a very important herb in conditioning liniments and arthritic rubs.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Jiang Huang is a very safe herb and is also prized in Ayurvedic medicine and in culinary arts. It is one of 3 main ingredients in curry powder and used in a pinch as a substitute to Saffron for culinary use, although chefs frown upon this substitution.

Jiang Huang has exhibited antiplatelet activity in lab tests; one of the main compounds in Jiang Huang (curcumin) has a strong anti-inflammatory benefit as well, apparently equivalent to that of phenylbutazone in one study. Additionally, Jiang Huang may significantly increase bile flow and aids strongly in dissolving gallstones.

Jiang Huang also shows up in its fair share of dit da formulas. An abbreviated list includes: Ho Family dit da jow, Shaolin Return the Spirit jow, Bak Mei Tieh Sao Jow, Bak Mei "Dim Mak" dit da jow, Fung Doe Duk, Golden Lotus and several other Bak Mei/Bak Fu Pai recipes, Ancestors Advanced iron palm jow, Chan Ning Tong iron palm jow, Lotus Palms iron palm jow, Wing Chun anti-contusion jow, and Tendon Relaxing soak.

It also is used in a few internal formulas such as Extend the Sinews elixir, Comprehensive iron palm tonic, Flexibility Pack, Zhi Ti Fa Bagua Zhang tieh ta wan, and in patent pills such as Yang Cheng tieh ta wan.

Care should be taken to differentiate between Yu Jin and Jiang Huang when filling a recipe. Many sources of formulas list the Latin as "turmeric" or "curcuma", but do not distinguish between *Curcuma Longa* rhizome (Jiang Huang) and *Curcuma Aromatica* tuber (Yu Jin). These 2 herbs are similar as Blood movers and even come from the same genus of plant. But otherwise, they have significantly different actions and energetic temperatures and are clearly different on visual inspection.

Pinyin Name: Lu Lu Tong

English Name: Liquidambar Fruit

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Liquidambaris

Properties: bitter and neutral

Meridians: Liver, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood and Qi Circulation

Lu Lu Tong is useful for invigorating Blood to reduce stagnation of Blood and Qi. It is used primarily for external injuries and pain.

2. Open Channels

Lu Lu Tong has a dual function to open channels and invigorate Blood circulation. It can be used for pain in the joints and minor Bi Syndrome. While this herb does not enter the Kidney meridian, it is said to be especially useful on the knees and lower back.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Lu Lu Tong is not markedly strong by itself. However, because it is a neutral herb it has good versatility. Combined with other Blood invigorators, it helps support the function of dispelling stagnation; combined with cooling herbs, it helps reduce swelling; and combined with Wind-Damp herbs it helps to open the channels and alleviate Bi Syndrome.

Lu Lu Tong has a number of compounds that aid in its moving and anti-inflammatory functions, including bornyl cinnamate, styracin, and several organic acids.

Lu Lu Tong does not appear in a great number of martial arts based formulas but does appear in a few. These include the Carthamus and Perilla plaster used in some Hung Gar circles,

various herbal compresses from Anhui College in China, and Tom Bisio's Trauma Liniment and Tendon Lotion (which are derived from Anhui College formulas in China), and 2 separate Ku Yu Cheong variants in small quantity-although, Lu Lu Tong does not actually appear in the Ku Yu Cheong itself, only the variations.

Lu Lu Tong has a similar action to that of Hong Hua and Tao Ren, but the Hong Hua/Tao Ren pair is decidedly stronger. In cases where Lu Lu Tong is not available or more strength is wanted in the liniment, Hong Hua and Tao Ren make a very good substitute.

Pinyin Name: Ru Xiang

English Name: Frankincense Resin

Pharmaceutical Name: Gummi Olibanum

Properties: spicy, bitter and warm

Meridians: Heart, Liver, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Relieve Pain

Ru Xiang has a good action to invigorate Blood circulation and relieve pain that is associated with stagnation due to injury, Bi Syndrome, and other clinical ailments. This ability allows Ru Xiang to be useful in reducing inflammation despite having no purely anti-inflammatory action.

2. Relax Sinews

Ru Xiang enters the Liver meridian to relax sinews and reduce blockage. It is most useful for this when combined with other sinew-relaxing herbs.

3. Promote Generation of Flesh

Entering the Spleen meridian, Ru Xiang aids in the general healing process by providing extra nutrient supply to cells thereby increasing the healing rate and promoting the generation of new tissue.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ru Xiang (also sometimes called Mastic) is by far one of the most common herbs seen both in dit da and routine herb stocks at any acupuncture clinic. It is very useful and versatile, inexpensive, and has been used for many hundreds of years for its healing and therapeutic benefits. It is often combined with Mo Yao for the synergistic effect they create.

Ru Xiang has undergone some clinical trials; it has shown significant analgesic effects and has been successfully used for the treatment of injury and pain. It contains a number of compounds that appear in a number of other moving, dispersing herbs, such as pinene, phellandrene, and its own organic acid, boswellic acid.

Ru Xiang is used in perhaps enough formulas to qualify it for one of the top 10 most commonly used herbs in dit da, appearing easily in over 90% of the hundreds of formulas investigated. An abbreviated list of formulas it appears in includes: All variations of the Ku Yu Cheong/Ark Wong/Wong Fei Hung iron palm jows, all 6 premade jows at PlumDragon, all Chan Ning Tong formulas, several formulas from Southern Praying Mantis and Lung Ying systems.

It is used in base formulas such as Qi Li San, Five Fragrance Wine, Leung Jan and other Wing Chun jows, Wanham Shaolin dit da jow, Lau Family training jow, Ancient Way/Monks Fist jow, Worm Wine, Iron Goddess, several Xing Yi and Bagua formulas for both injury and iron palm, a large number of Bak Mei/Bak Fu Pai formulas including Fung Doe Duk and Golden Lotus, Lotus Palms iron palm jow, Anhui College formulas and

Tendon Lotion, Ba Xian liniment, multiple Balur oil formulas, Hua Tuo Eight Immortal injury jow, Bob Flaws Dragons Blood liniment, Return the Spirit jow, Fukien Province iron palm jow, "Qi Conditioning" dit da jow, Sai Sou Fong hand soak, and dozens of others. Ru Xiang is also used in a variety of powders for cuts and other injuries, most notably General Stop Bleeding powder, 10,000 Abilities to Stop Bleeding Powder, and Extract Toxins and Engender Flesh powder, Red Origin Powder, Return Spring plaster, Ten Thousand Respondings plaster, and White-Coated Bodhisattva plaster.

Ru Xiang is also used commonly in internal formulas for its very safe but useful actions. An abbreviated list includes:

Compressive iron palm tonic, PlumDragon dit da wan, several Bagua Zhang hit pills, Ying Gong tieh ta wan, Recover the Pulse Powder, Metal Injury powder, Miraculous Recovery elixir, Quicken the Blood elixir, Extend the Sinews elixir, Nine Tigers elixir, Eight Battle Formations elixir, Protect the General wine,

Ru Xiang is also used in a variety of commercial products such as Golden Flowers tieh ta wan, Great Mender tea pills, and Hua Tuo medicated plasters.

Ru Xiang can be cooked without risking destruction of most of its oils; however, it is ideally ground and dissolved in solution before use.

Pinyin Name: Mo Yao
English Name: Myrrh
Pharmaceutical Name: Myrrha
Properties: bitter and neutral
Meridians: Heart, Liver, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Relieve Pain

Mo Yao invigorates Blood and reduces pain to deal with a large cross-section of complaints of pains, aches, and soreness due to bruising from injury, sprains and strains, and other musculoskeletal disorders.

2. Reduce Swelling, Promote Generation of Flesh

Mo Yao is neutral and is used externally to reduce swelling, redness and pain associated with injury and stagnation. Mo Yao promotes the healing process and the generation of flesh.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Mo Yao sits alongside Ru Xiang as one of the most common herbs seen in dit da and clinical acupuncture clinic inventories. It is an abundant resin of very reasonable cost and versatile nature, and is often combined with Ru Xiang for synergistic potentiating effect.

Mo Yao has received some attention for its analgesic success in clinical tests and its ability to aid in the healing of various injuries, when combined with Ru Xiang. Ru Xiang focuses more on relaxing sinew and resolving Bi Syndrome, while Mo Yao is cooler and aids more in reducing inflammation and resolving Blood stasis.

Mo Yao appears with Ru Xiang in a staggering number of formulas. An abbreviated list of external formulas which Mo

Yao appears in includes: Standard Qi Li San and most variations, all 6 premade jows at PlumDragon, most (but not all) Ku Yu Cheong iron palm variations, Chan Ning Tong iron palm jow, Leung Jan and multiple other Wing Chun formulas, Wanham Shaolin dit da jow, Ancient Way/Monks Fist dit da jow, Worm wine, Iron Goddess, Dit Da Kuan Jin Yao Jao Ho, several Xing Yi and Bagua formulas, Die Da Nail Turned Black formula, Fung Doe Duk, Golden Lotus, and several other Bak Mei/Bak Fu Pai jows, Lotus Palms, Anhui College formulas (including Bisio's Trauma Liniment and Tendon Lotion), multiple Balur oil formulas, Hua Tuo Eight Immortal bruise liniment, Die Da Hao Fang, Lau Family training jow, Bob Flaws Dragons Blood liniment, Return the Spirit jow, Clouds in Heaven dit da jow, Black Hand iron palm jow, Burning Palm, and countless other small formulas for use with specific injuries to specific regions of the body.

Additionally, Mo Yao also appears in a number of internal formulas. An abbreviated list of those include: Classical Trauma pill, Rib Fracture formula, Comprehensive Iron Palm tonic, PlumDragon dit da wan, Golden Flower tieh ta wan, several Bagua Zhang hit pills, Ying Gong tieh ta wan, Injured Sinew Remove the Bone pill, Quicken the Blood elixir, Extend the Sinews elixir, Nine Tigers elixir, Eight Battle Formations elixir, Protect the General wine, Shaolin Great Supplement wine, and many more.

Mo Yao is also seen in several powders used for cuts and other purposes. Many of the Shaolin and classical formulas this herb appears in includes: General Purpose Stop Bleeding formula, Metal Injury powder, 10,000 Abilities to Stop Bleeding powder, Recover the Pulse powder, Seizing Life powder, Red Origin powder, Miraculous Recovery powder, Pull out Toxins plaster, and Eight Immortals powder, Return Spring plaster, White-Coated Bodhisattva plaster, Ten Thousand Respondings plaster, and others.

There are many other formulas that use Mo Yao since it is part of so many small bases and. The reader is encouraged to note

that it appears, or can be used in, just about every dit da formula out there.

Like Ru Xiang, it is very obvious that Mo Yao is seen as a very important base ingredient in dit da, both internally and externally. It is especially popular given its synergistic effect with Ru Xiang. Both herbs are easily available, inexpensive, and form the base of most of the recipes out there.

Pinyin Name: Hu Zhang

English Name: Polygonum Rhizome, Knotweed

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Polygoni Cuspidati

Properties: bitter and cold

Meridians: Liver, Gallbladder, Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Relieve Pain

Hu Zhang increases the circulation of Blood and relieves pain associated primarily with inflammation and menstrual problems, but also due to injury and Bi Syndrome. Hu Zhang has a very cooling energy that is most useful for pain and stagnation that is present with heat.

2. Clear Heat and Dampness

Being bitter and cold in nature, Hu Zhang reduces heat and dries dampness. It is often used clinically for burns and toxic bites and other painful swellings.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Hu Zhang is useful primarily for its ability to relieve pain and swelling. While it is a Blood invigorator, its most notable use is

for its pharmacological activity as an anti-inflammatory and analgesic. Due to its ability to drain heat, it has also been used to some degree as a stop-bleeding herb. Many people who use this herb feel that it is ineffective because it is not a strong Blood invigorator and works primarily as a pain-reliever in the presence of heat; therefore, its use is a bit limited.

Hu Zhang has a couple of interesting chemical compounds in its composition, most notably Emodin and Resveratrol. Emodin is one of the same compounds that is present in Da Huang and produces the purgative effect. Internally, this is used for intestinal disorders but produces a Blood invigorating effect when used topically. Resveratrol is big business right now and is being studied for everything from the effect on longevity and aging, to the treatment of cancer. Many studies use Hu Zhang as a source for this compound.

Hu Zhang almost never appears in dit da formulas. However, it deserves mention as it does appear in various commercial products; as a main component of Zheng Gu Shui is perhaps the most well-known. Hu Zhang is also used in 701 die da plasters.

Pinyin Name: Dang Gui Wei

English Name: Angelica Root Trail

Pharmaceutical Name: Extremitas Radicis Angelicae Sinensis

Properties: spicy, sweet and warm

Meridians: Liver, Heart, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Relieve Pain

Dang Gui Wei has a moderate ability to invigorate Blood and reduce pain associated with stagnation. It is used clinically for a variety of menstrual and related female disorders, and also for

bruising and pain due to injury.

Dang Gui Wei is used to break stagnation, reduce inadvertent pain and swelling, and increase circulation in the channels and in the extremities of the body.

2. Tonify Blood

Dang Gui Wei has a very minor ability to tonify Blood as it is a different part of the same root as Dang Gui.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Dang Gui Wei (commonly abbreviated in formulas and books as Gui Wei) is a very common herb, both in clinics and in dit da formulas. It exhibits various pharmacological effects as an anti-inflammatory, analgesic, and antiplatelet enhancer and is the tail portion of the Dang Gui root, one of the most important herbs in Chinese medicine. For additional details, please refer to the herb template on Dang Gui.

Often times, Dang Gui as a whole herb is used in formulas, both clinically and for dit da. Dang Gui Wei is used instead when less tonification is desired and more Blood invigorating is necessary. Alternately, formulas that use Dang Gui Wei can use the entire Dang Gui root instead when invigorating is less important and tonification is more important.

Dang Gui Wei appears in a very large array of formulas. Many of these formulas can (and do) use the whole root alternately, depending on the individual and herbalist filling them. Often the difference between these 2 in a large dit da formula is unperceivable. An abbreviated list includes: Most Qi Li San variations, Chan Ning Tong iron palm jow, all of the Ku Yu Cheong/Ark Wong/Wong Fei Hung-related iron palm jows to include Frank Yee Hung Gar iron palm jow, 5 of the 6 premade formulas at PlumDragon, Black Hand, Leung Jan and other Wing Chun jows, Wanham Shaolin dit da jow, Warming and Quickening wine, Fung Doe Duk, Golden Lotus, and several

other Bak Mei/Bak Fu Pai formulas, Lotus Palms, Bisio/Butler trauma liniment, Lau Family training jow, Return the Spirit jow, Gua's Imperial Fire and many others.

Dang Gui Wei also appears in many internal formulas. A much abbreviated list includes: Prescription for Diffusing and Scattering the Upper Part and Lower Part, small amounts in Comprehensive iron palm tonic, Iron Bone Training powder, and in fairly sizeable quantity in Abundant Justice wine.

Because of the very similar uses of Dang Gui and Dang Gui Wei, a slightly more thorough list of formulas appears in the template for Dang Gui. Please refer to Dang Gui for additional formulas for which this herb has application.

Dang Gui Wei is significantly less expensive than the full root, although neither are terribly expensive to procure in good quality. In instances where maximum Blood moving capability is necessary, Dang Gui Wei should be the herb of choice. Use of more expensive high-quality Dang Gui should be focused more towards tonification purposes.

Dang Gui Wei can be alcohol-fried to aid in compound extraction, increase its Blood moving capacity and its warmth.

Pinyin Name: Wu Ling Zhi

English Name: Flying Squirrel Dung

Pharmaceutical Name: Excrementum Troglodyteri Seu Pteromi

Properties: bitter, sweet and warm

Meridians: Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Relieve Pain

Wu Ling Zhi invigorates Blood to disperse Blood stagnation and reduce pain. Wu Ling Zhi has a good pain killing action when used with other herbs which are also moving and have a pain-killing aspect as well.

2. Stop Bleeding

When charred, Wu Ling Zhi aids in stopping bleeding, especially in clinical settings for uterine disorders.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Wu Ling Zhi is currently not being shipped into the US in any significant quantity as it is being phased out of the US markets. It is composed mostly of uric acid and vitamin A; historically, it was claimed that Wu Ling Zhi had compounds within that appeared due to the squirrel's diet of mosquitoes. It is believed that these mosquitoes had some type of anticoagulant in their system that ends up in the feces of these squirrels.

Regardless of history, very few scientific studies have been done to back-up the efficacy of this herb for anything other than hepatitis. By itself, it is not a strong herb and requires the presence of other Blood invigorating or pain-killing herbs to create a worthwhile effect. While it is a rare herb in present time that now carries some mystique, it is ultimately best for modern martial artists to move on and not worry about using this substance—there are a myriad of stronger analgesic and moving

herbs out there, which are less rare, less expensive, and perhaps a little less...disgusting?

Historically, this herb was used in a few formulas to include the Ku Yu Cheong iron palm jow and a couple of the similar variants, the Fung Doe Duk coconut break, Flying Dragon Life-Robbing elixir, and a few other Shaolin-based formulas. In the current day, it is easy to substitute this herb in those formulas and use other herbs that reduce the cost of the formula and increase its potency.

Pinyin Name: Jiang Xiang

English Name: Rosewood

Pharmaceutical Name: Lignum Dalbergiae Odoriferae

Properties: spicy and warm

Meridians: Liver, Spleen, Heart

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Relieve Pain

Jiang Xiang is commonly used where there is bleeding and stagnation. Jiang Xiang invigorates the Blood to dispel Blood stasis, reduce pain and swelling, and relieve pain. It is useful for a variety of traumatic injuries.

2. Stop Bleeding

Jiang Xiang also has the ability to stop bleeding while concurrently increasing local circulation. Some sources may place this herb in the Stop-Bleeding category, but this stop bleeding function is less significant than its ability to dispel stasis.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Jiang Xiang has a nice subdued fragrance reminiscent of the smell of roses. Good quality wood will have a dark reddish color and subtle but obvious aroma. Large blocks of this wood should be smashed so that surface area can be maximized. Jiang Xiang is a slightly more expensive herb than many common herbs due to its slightly lower continual supply.

Jiang Xiang has shown anti-inflammatory effects as well as action to reduce pain and inflammation due to injury in clinical trials.

Jiang Xiang is a somewhat rare ingredient in dit da, with its generally smaller available supply and larger price tag. However, it does still make several appearances, including: Ho Family dit da jow, Bak Mei Tieh Sao Jow, Fung Doe Duk, Golden Lotus and other Bak Fu Pai conditioning jows, Shuai Chiao iron palm jow, and Prescription of Treatment for Failure to generate new tissue.

Pinyin Name: Zi Ran Tong

English Name: Iron Pyrite

Pharmaceutical Name: Pyritum

Properties: spicy and neutral

Meridians: Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood, Dispel Stasis

Zi Ran Tong is very useful for invigorating the Blood to dispel stasis and inflammation from injury, ranging from basic bruising and sprains/strains, to serious contusions and fracture.

2. Promote Healing of Bone

Zi Ran Tong is commonly used for its ability to heal and strengthen bones as a result of damage (including fracture) from injury. It is also commonly used in martial arts for conditioning of the hands, arms, and legs.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Zi Ran Tong is the naturally occurring mineral iron pyrite. In its pure form, it is composed of the molecule Ferrous Disulfide, but may have traces of copper, nickel, antimony, and limestone deposits. Chen & Chen (p. 635) claims that arsenic has also been detected in this herb, although Zi Ran Tong is not seen as a toxic herb. This herb is abundant in the earth and readily available at a minimal price.

Zi Ran Tong is a very heavy and dense mineral that absolutely must be ground, crushed, or otherwise pulverized prior to use. Traditional dit da directions often state that the herb is dipped in vinegar, sometimes either 7 or 9 times. This is primarily a cleaning process as softer minerals such as limestone will deteriorate from the acidity of vinegar, leaving behind a clean pyrite crystal. Some sources also claim that vinegar also allows the herb to be broken up easier. In any case, large chunks of raw Zi Ran Tong are useless. This herb must be crushed and then calcined to facilitate extraction into a solution. The herb can be bought in this way and further vinegar processing is unnecessary. Additionally, Zi Ran Tong should be added prior to other herbs if being used in a decoction, and cooked for some time before the other herbs are added in order to make good use of this substance.

Zi Ran Tong is used in clinics and hospitals in China for its ability to heal injuries and bones. It also appears in a wide variety of both conditioning and injury formulas for its ability to both heal injury and strengthen bone. An abbreviated list of formulas includes: Jun Fan/JKD dit da jow, Ho Family dit da jow, Chan Ning Tong iron palm jow, all of the Ku Yu Cheong

variants, Ancestors Advanced iron palm jow, Black Hand, Leung Jan Wing Chun dit da jow, multiple Southern Praying Mantis dit da jow formulas, Xing Yi iron palm wash, Lotus Palms iron palm jow, Bisio/Butler Trauma Liniment, Lau Family training jow, and Fukien Province iron palm jow.

It is also found in several different powder/poultice-based formulas such as 10,000 Abilities to Stop Bleeding Powder, Recover the Pulse powder, Sinew Bone poultice, Extract Toxins and Engender Flesh powder, Toad Skin plaster, and Ten Thousand Respondings plaster.

Zi Ran Tong is also used in quite a sizeable list of internal formulas as well. This list includes: Classical Trauma pill, Bak Mei Tieh Sao Jow internal portion, Seizing Life powder, Miraculous Recovery elixir, Injured Sinew Remove the Bone pill, Flying Dragon Life-Robbing elixir, Shaolin Heroes pill, Connect the Bones elixir, Prescription for Effusing and Scattering the Middle Part, and several other formulas.

Pinyin Name: Xue Jie

English Name: Dragon's Blood

Pharmaceutical Name: Sanguis Draconis

Properties: sweet, salty and neutral

Meridians: Heart, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Stop Bleeding, Promote Healing

Xue Jie applied topically has a very good function to stop bleeding and spur the healing of external injuries by promoting the generation of flesh.

2. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Dispel Stasis

Xue Jie has the ability to invigorate Blood and break up stasis due to injury (and other ailments) that produces pain, swelling, and pronounced bruising. Xue Jie is often combined with Wind-Damp herbs to break stasis in the joints and muscles, and treat pain.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Xue Jie is the resinous secretion from the daemnorops plant. It is a very messy dark red resin that is used in other systems of medicine and also as a dye. It has undergone punctual increases in cost over the last couple years and is now an herb that is significantly more expensive than it used to be.

Xue Jie is easily one of the most ubiquitous herbs in dit da. It is quite common, easy to procure, and generally of good quality. But the price of this herb is a hindrance to consumers because it is used in such a wide cross-section of formulas.

To illustrate its far-reaching use, reference this abbreviated list of formulas it appears in: Qi Li San and variations, All 6 premade formulas at PlumDragon Herbs, Southern Fist Iron Body jow, Ku Yu Cheong/Ark Wong/Wong Fei Hung, and all other similar iron palm variations, Ancient Way/Monks Fist dit da jow, Iron Goddess hand liniment, Fung Doe Duk, Golden Lotus, and several other Bak Mei/Bak Fu Pai formulas, Lotus Palms, Classical Trauma liniment, Balur oil, Hua Tuo Eight Immortal bruise liniment, Pangai Noon dit da jow, Ten Thousand Abilities to Stop Bleeding powder, Return the Spirit jow, Clouds in Heaven dit da jow, Lau Family training jow, Fukien Province iron palm jow, Shuai Chiao iron palm jow, Metal Injury powder, Shaolin Medicinal thread, Toad Skin plaster, Return Spring plaster, Ten Thousand Respondings plaster, Sinew Bone poultice, and dozens of smaller or regional formulas used for pain and injury in various parts of the body.

Xue Jie is also used in quite a few internal formulas. An abbreviated list includes: Comprehensive iron palm tonic, Zhi

Ti Fa Bagua Zhang tieh ta wan and other internal Bagua Zhang formulas, Bob Flaws Dragon Blood liniment, Recover the Pulse powder, Seizing Life powder, Yang Family Spear Wound powder, Nine Dragon decoction, Flying Dragon Life-Robbing elixir, Quicken the Blood elixir, Extend the Sinews elixir, Eight Battle Formations elixir, Shaolin Spirit Connecting powder, and various regional formulas for dealing with various types of injuries.

Pinyin Name: Dan Shen

English Name: Salvia Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Salviae Miltiorrhizae

Properties: bitter and cool

Meridians: Heart, Pericardium, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Dispel Stasis

Dan Shen has a good action to invigorate and regulate circulation while breaking up Blood stasis and relieving pain associated with injury and stagnation. Dan Shen helps break up visible masses and is useful for both injuries and Bi Syndrome.

2. Cool Blood, Reduce Swelling

Dan Shen is quite versatile due to its mildly cooling energy and can be used to cool the Blood to stop bleeding under the skin, reduce inflammation and pain from injury and other clinical causes.

3. Calm the Shen

Dan Shen enters the Heart and has some capacity to calm the Shen; it has been used for insomnia and irritability.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Dan Shen is seen as a very versatile herb and is used commonly to treat injuries and other types of stagnation in clinical settings, although less commonly in purely dit da-related areas. It significantly reduces coagulation and clotting at the site of injury; hence it possesses a high utility in removing stagnation through its Blood activating property. Additionally, it has a cooling ability not found in many other herbs in this category.

Good quality Dan Shen root has a red hue to the bark and the roots are large and well-dried. This is commonly seen from distributors and the price is always reasonable.

Dan Shen is used much more clinically, such as formulas like Huo Luo Xiao Ling Dan. It appears in very few dit da formulas—it is arguably under-utilized in this regard. It does appear in the Black Hand iron palm jow, Bruise JIUce for its cooling property, the occasional Shaolin formulas for treatment of pain, and is added to some iterations of the Chan Ning Tong iron palm jow. It also appears in internal formulas such as Three Treasures Soup and in small quantity in the Comprehensive iron palm tonic.

Pinyin Name: Hong Hua

English Name: Safflower, *Carthamus*

Pharmaceutical Name: Flos *Carthami*

Properties: spicy and warm

Meridians: Heart, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Dispel Stasis

Hong Hua is a very useful herb for invigorating Blood and breaking Blood stasis. It is commonly used for injuries including moderate to serious bruising, palpable masses and hematoma as well as clinically for many gynecological disorders.

2. Open Channels

Hong Hua also opens the channels, treating Bi Syndrome resulting in joint and musculoskeletal pain, weakness, and dermatological disorders when used topically. Hong Hua frees blockage from within and outside of the channels, making it useful both for conditioning and injury formulas.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Hong Hua is among the most useful and common herbs in dit da. The essential oil Carthamin and its derivatives are quite strong in their ability to penetrate and disperse stasis. The herb is also capable of preventing platelet formation thereby reducing bruising in injury while also having effects to increase local circulation when used topically. Some acupuncturists use this herb internally in small doses to spur the production of Blood and aid in a variety of gynecological complaints.

Hong Hua appears in many dit da formulas. An abbreviated list includes: Classical Qi Li San and many variations, all 6 pre-made formulas at PlumDragon, Southern Fist Iron Body jow, all Ku Yu Cheong/Ark Wong variations, Black Hand, Wu Xiang Jiu, Leung Jan and other Wing Chun formulas, Wanham Shaolin dit da jow, Warming and Quickening wine, Ancient Way/Monks Fist dit da jow, Iron Goddess hand liniment, several Chow Gar and other Hakka-based liniments, Xing Yi iron palm wash, Bak Mei Dim Mak dit da jow, Lotus Palms, Bisio/Butler Trauma liniment, Hua Tuo bruise medication, Worm wine, Pangai Noon dit da jow, Ba Xian dit da jow, Lau Family training jow, Return the Spirit jow, Clouds in Heaven dit da jow, Fukien Province iron palm jow, Burning Palm, Grand Master Taos 12-herb soak, and a variety of other formulas for injury, pain, and

conditioning. It is also used in several powders and plasters for cuts and other types of ailments, such as Hong Zi Su Ye plaster, General Purpose Stop Blood formula, formula for Unstoppable Bleeding, Prescription for Herbal Fomentation, Red Origin powder, Shaolin Medicinal thread, Temple Music plaster, White-coated Bodhisattva plaster, Ten Thousand Respondings plaster, Tendon-Relaxing soak, Warming soak, and modified versions of San Huang San.

Hong Hua is also used in nearly as many internal training formulas as it is external dit da and conditioning liniments. An abbreviated list includes: Die Da Nail Turned Black formula, PlumDragon base dit da wan, Golden Flower tieh ta wan, and multiple Bagua Zhang hit pills, Ying Gong tieh ta wan, Many Years Persistent Injury wine, Nine Dragon Decoction, Injured Sinew Remove the Bone pill, Penetrating Bone pill, Dang Gui drink, Quicken the Blood elixir, Extend the Sinews elixir, Nine Tigers elixir, Connect the Bones decoction, Spirit Connecting powder, Protect the General wine, Live Dragon wine, Long Winded-Emperor Assist Training wine (Zhang Hong Hua), Great Supplement wine, Soothing the Sinew elixir, and Harvest the Training powder.

Hong Hua is often cooked or fried with wine to increase its ability to break Blood stasis while it is often decocted with water to enhance its ability to nourish the Blood. Many sources do not cite restrictions for cooking this herb. However, I believe it should not be cooked for prolonged periods of time or boiled due to its essential oil content.

Hong Hua is often used in combination with Tao Ren for synergy. Together, these 2 herbs form a very strong stasis-breaking property. Their strength is not so much due to a drastic increase in blood circulation, but rather their dual ability to strongly penetrate and disperse stasis through their **anticoagulant** properties while also more moderately addressing an increase in circulation. This is partially why these herbs are seen as important injury herbs and less important as conditioning herbs.

Zhang Hong Hua (Crocus Sativa) is the expensive Spanish Saffron but is also found in Tibet mountain ranges, Greece, Japan, and other regions. As one of the world's most expensive spices, Saffron is wildly more expensive than Safflower and is one of the most prized herbs/spices in both culinary and herbal medicine. Zhang Hong Hua differs from Hong Hua in that it is cool and has a sweet flavor and can cool the Blood. Saffron is composed of a number of strong volatile oils, most importantly safranal; additionally, it has a fairly high concentration of carotenoids, primarily crocin.

Zhang Hong Hua is approximately 2-3 times stronger than Hong Hua but is many magnitudes more expensive.

Pinyin Name: Tao Ren

English Name: Peach Kernel

Pharmaceutical Name: Semen Persicae

Properties: bitter and neutral

Meridians: Heart, Large Intestine, Liver, Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Dispel Stasis

Tao Ren activates circulation of Blood and has a very good function to dispel Blood stasis. It is principally used for injuries and menstrual disorders.

2. Reduce Swelling

Tao Ren has a neutral energy and is useful for reducing swelling and clearing heat, both internally and externally.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Tao Ren is the inner kernel within the peach pit. These little waxy kernels have a very nice sweet aroma reminiscent of peaches. They should be differentiated from Xing Ren (Apricot kernel) which have a nearly identical look but a different aroma.

Tao Ren has exhibited a strong ability to dissolve and reduce the formation of blood clots, and reduce platelet aggregation. These functions all make Tao Ren very useful for reducing bruising, pain, and swelling at the site of injury, and therefore reducing necessary healing time. This herb's moist nature is also utilized by clinics to moisten the intestines to relieve constipation.

Tao Ren is a very good herb for injury and appears in a number of injury and conditioning formulas. An abbreviated list includes: Most Qi Li San variations, most of the premade formulas at PlumDragon, Southern Fist Iron Body jow, Hung Gar, Ku Yu Cheong, and all Ku Yu Cheong variations, Black Hand iron palm, Leung Jan and other Wing Chun-based formulas, Wanham Shaolin dit da jaw, Iron Goddess hand liniment, many Hakka-based dit da jaws, Xing Yi iron palm wash, Lotus Palms, Tendon Lotion, Bisio/Butler Trauma liniment, Pangai Noon dit da jaw, Lau Family training jaw, Return the Spirit jaw, Frank Yee iron palm jow, Fukien Province iron palm jow, Shuai Chiao iron palm jaw, Brian Grays dit da jow, Grand Master Tao's 12-herb soak, several generic formulas due to weapon injury, and many others.

It also appears in a number of powders and plasters. It is an important ingredient in the Shaolin Temple Music plaster, and appears as well in General Purpose Stop Bleeding formula, Yang Family Spear Wound powder, and Harvest the Training Powder.

Ying Gong tieh ta wan, Many Years Persistent Injury wine, Warming and Quickening wine, Injured Sinews Remove the Bone pill, Flying Dragon Life Robbing elixir, Quicken the Blood elixir, Extend the Sinews elixir, Connect the Bones decoction, Thirteen Flavors formula, Prescription for Effusing

and Scattering the Middle Part, and Lian Gong Training wine.

Hong Hua is often used in combination with Tao Ren for synergy. Together, these 2 herbs form a very strong Blood moving and stasis-breaking property. Their strength is not so much due to a drastic increase in blood circulation, but rather their dual ability to strongly penetrate and disperse stasis through their **anticoagulant** properties while also more moderately addressing an increase in circulation. This is partially why these herbs are seen as important injury herbs and less important as conditioning herbs.



Tao Ren

Pinyin Name: Ze Lan

English Name: Bugleweed

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba Lycopi

Properties: bitter, spicy and warm

Meridians: Liver, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Dispel Stasis

Ze Lan mildly invigorates the Blood to dispel stasis and warms the channels. It is used clinically for both bruising and other injuries as well as gynecological disorders.

2. Regulate Water Circulation

Ze Lan also mildly regulates water circulation and acts as a diuretic, being useful for various types of edema.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ze Lan has mild functions to increase circulation and dissipate coagulations of Blood such as bruising. It is often combined with stronger herbs when used for more serious injuries or for conditioning.

Ze Lan is utilized in a smaller list of formulas than some of the stronger and more popular herbs in this category. Although, many among the list are popular: It finds its way into the Ku Yu Cheong, Ark Wong, Wong Fei Hung, Frank Yee, and other similar iron palm variants, Bak Mei Tieh Sao jow, Bak Fu Pai conditioning jow, Bisio/Butler Trauma liniment, Hua Tuo Eight Immortal Bruise liniment, Lau Family training jow, Fukien Province iron palm jow, Shuai Chiao iron palm jow, and others.

It also appears in a few rare internal formulas, such as Shaolin Dang Gui drink, Thirteen Flavors formula, and a Shaolin Herbal Lore formula.

Pinyin Name: Chuan Niu Xi

English Name: Cyathula Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Cyathulae

Properties: bitter, sour and neutral

Meridians: Liver, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Dispel Stasis

Chuan Niu Xi has a strong ability to invigorate circulation of Blood and break up Blood stasis. It is useful for injuries to muscle, tendon, and bone and helps reduce pain associated with injury. Clinically, it is also used for gynecological problems.

2. Strengthen Tendon and Bone

Chuan Niu Xi has a mild function to enter and tonify the Liver and Kidney meridians and is useful for healing and strengthening bone and sinew to remedy weak joints, knees and lower back.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Chuan Niu Xi is a very good herb for dispelling stasis and moving Blood. It is sometimes used as a substitute for the now outrageously priced Chuan Shan Jia, as it is fairly strong in its action to move and disperse.

While Chuan Niu Xi is readily available inexpensively, it figures into dit da formulas only rarely; this is perhaps due to its relative obscurity and lack of awareness among martial artists. It is listed less commonly in other Materia Medicas and seems to be less common in acupuncture clinics.

Chuan Niu Xi appears in a few formulas, notably: Black Hand iron palm jow, Warming and Quickening wine, Ten Thousand Respondings plaster, Ying Gong internal formula, and the

occasional formula for treatment of pain due to injury.

Chuan Niu Xi and Huai Niu Xi have similar actions but are different herbs. While they are sometimes used interchangeably, they do have varying strengths of each function. Chuan Niu Xi more strongly moves Blood and dispels stasis but is weaker in its Kidney and Liver tonifying properties. Alternately, Huai Niu Xi more strongly addresses the Kidneys and aids in pain and weakness of the lower back, knees, and bones but is less powerful in its ability to invigorate Blood and dispel stasis. Both herbs can be wine-fried to increase their ability to move Blood, dispel stasis, and clear the channels, while salt-frying either herb will focus its actions on tonifying Kidney and Liver to strengthen bone and sinew.

Pinyin Name: Huai Niu Xi

English Name: Achyranthes Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Achyranthis Bidentatae

Properties: bitter, sour and neutral

Meridians: Liver, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Dispel Stasis

Huai Niu Xi has a fairly potent effect to activate the circulation of Blood and dispel stasis. It is commonly used for gynecological problems as well as injuries resulting in moderate or serious stasis.

2. Tonify Kidney and Liver to Strengthen Tendon and Bone

Huai Niu Xi is effective in tonifying the Kidney and Liver meridians to heal and strengthen bone and sinew, being especially effective on the knees and lower back with weakness and soreness.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Huai Niu Xi is a fantastic herb. Good quality roots are thick and firm, but soft enough to tear as opposed to snap or break. It is composed of a variety of chemical compounds, among them natural steroidal compounds which likely give it its tonic effect, and amino acids.

Huai Niu Xi shows up in its fair share of formulas, from patent pills to dit da recipes. Two exemplary classical formulas include *Achyranthes Plantago* Kidney Powder, and Greatly Supplementing Pills. Additionally, an abbreviated list of dit da formulas includes: PlumDragon Jun Fan/JKD dit da jow, Five Fragrance wine, Xing Yi iron palm wash, Bak Mei conditioning dit da jow, Fung Doe Duk, Golden Lotus, Bak Fu Pai #2, and a handful of other formulas of Bak Mei/Bak Fu Pai origins, Hua Tuo Eight Immortal bruise liniment, Die da Hao Fang injury jow, Li Family training jow, Fukien Province iron palm jow, Shaolin Temple Music plaster, Prescription for Effusing and Scattering the Lower Part, and several other formulas for treatment of pain due to injury, especially the lower body.

It also appears in several internal formulas such as Gu Zhe Tang, Bak Mei “Dim Mak” dit da wan, Golden Flower tieh ta wan, Strength and Balance tonic, Shaolin Temple Tiger Fighting elixir, Many Years Persistent Injury wine, Shaolin Dang Gui drink, Long-Winded Emperor Assist Training wine, Shaolin Great Supplement wine, Eight Immortals training tonic, and some Recovery training formulas.

Huai Niu Xi and Chuan Niu Xi have similar actions but are different herbs. While they are sometimes used interchangeably, they do have varying strengths of each function. Chuan Niu Xi more strongly moves Blood and dispels stasis but is weaker in its Kidney and Liver tonifying properties. Alternately, Huai Niu Xi more strongly addresses the Kidneys and aids in pain and weakness of the lower back, knees, and bones but is less

powerful in its ability to invigorate Blood and dispel stasis. Both herbs can be wine-fried to increase their ability to move Blood, dispel stasis, and clear the channels, while salt-frying either herb will focus its actions on tonifying Kidney and Liver to strengthen bone and sinew.

In many texts, these herbs are both listed as Blood invigorators but Huai Niu Xi often has its primary function as a tonic. This creates problems as an herb with primarily tonifying functions belongs in a different category. It was decided to list this herb as a Blood invigorator with its primary function being to dispel stasis. Should any confusion arise, it should be clear that while Huai Niu Xi is a stronger tonic and a weaker Blood invigorator than Chuan Niu Xi, these 2 herbs are still principally Blood invigorators.

Lastly, Tu Niu Xi is a different species of *Achyranthes* root and is sometimes used in formulas instead of Huai Niu Xi. Tu Niu Xi has the same energetic properties as Huai Niu Xi and is of a similar strength. It is weaker in its Blood invigorating effect than Chuan Niu Xi.

Pinyin Name: Ma Bian Cao

English Name: Verbena

Pharmaceutical Name: Herba Verbenae

Properties: bitter and cool

Meridians: Liver, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Dispel Stagnation

Ma Bian Cao dispels stagnation and addresses stagnation resulting in pain in the joints and muscles. It is sometimes used

for injuries resulting in bruising, palpable masses, and sprains/strains.

2. Clear Heat

Ma Bian Cao is cooling in energy and has the dual action of invigorating Blood flow while also reducing swelling and inflammation causing pain, edema, and accumulation of bodily fluids.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ma Bian Cao is one of the more rarely used Blood invigorators. While it does not have a very strong action, it has the benefit of also providing a cooling property to reduce inflammation.

Like many stop bleeding herbs, Ma Bian Cao enters the Liver meridian and is sometimes combined with stop-bleeding herbs such as Qian Cao to promote both circulation and reduction of bleeding. While Ma Bian Cao has no inherent ability to reduce bleeding, it does combine well with many stop-bleeding herbs.

Ma Bian Cao is seen only rarely in dit da formulas. The only closely well-known formulas it is used in are Shaolin Stop Bleeding powder and Eight Immortals powder; otherwise, it only appears in the occasional basic injury formulas, usually region-specific, such as Prescription for Hematemesis due to Injury to Pericardium.

Pinyin Name: Chuan Shan Jia

English Name: Pangolin Anteater Scales

Pharmaceutical Name: Squama Manitis

Properties: salty and cool

Meridians: Liver, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Open Channels

Chuan Shan Jia has a strong action to increase Blood circulation and unblock the channels. Its combined moving and dispersing properties make it useful for injuries, Bi Syndrome, and arthritic pains in the joints.

2. Reduce Swelling

Because Chuan Shan Jia has a cooling nature and good movement properties, it can be useful for inflammation, hardened swellings and hematoma.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Chuan Shan Jia has exhibited substantial ability to reduce inflammation in various parts of the body and it increases bleeding time in lab studies, indicating its dispersing, Blood moving properties. For this reason, it should not be used in formulas where cuts and lacerations have taken place.

Chuan Shan Jia is not common among a large cross-section of dit da formulas, but it does appear in moderate frequency in formulas that are meant to bring about fairly strong therapeutic action or are used for more advanced iron palm liniments. It is sometimes added to advanced versions of the Ku Yu Cheong as well as 1 or 2 of the variants, and the original Shaolin Die Da Shen Yan Liang Fan, Worm wine, as well as internally in Eight Battle Formations elixir, and Toxin Expelling decoction. Finally, it is used with some frequency in various plasters such

as White-Coated Bodhisattva plaster, Five Twigs plaster, and as one of the chief herbs in Return Spring plaster.

While Chuan Shan Jia is a relatively strong herb used in many strong formulas, it suffers from extremely high cost. In 2010, the wholesale cost of this herb had surpassed \$1,000 per single pound. To compound the problem, this herb is rarely available in the US, if only in some China Towns. Even in markets in the States and abroad in China, many of the available stock are of suspect quality and origin. Fake stock is less dense than the actual scales, and appears to break apart in a similar way to some types of Styrofoam.

Chuan Shan Jia has a very poor extraction when raw, due to its hard solid nature. For any efficacy of this substance, it must be properly processed; usually, this includes Pao Zhi methods such as vinegar-frying. Pao Zhi techniques also help reduce the odor of this substance. Additionally, many sources say the herb must be presoaked in warm water for multiple hours and then simmered for 2 hours to properly extract its worth.

Ultimately, these factors make the use of Chuan Shan Jia antiquated and impractical. Fortunately, there are several herbs that can create a similar (and often better or stronger) action, while costing less and being easy to procure. Some acupuncturists substitute Chuan Niu Xi, which works well for most circumstances. Other more complicated substitutions can be devised to fit each situation that will provide favorable results over the use of Chuan Shan Jia.

Pinyin Name: Wang Bu Liu Xing

English Name: Vaccaria Seed

Pharmaceutical Name: Semen Vaccariae

Properties: bitter and neutral

Meridians: Liver Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Open Channels

Wang Bu Liu Xing seeks to unblock the channels by invigorating Blood circulation and dispersing stasis within and outside of the channels. It addresses swelling from injury and Bi Syndrome that cause pain and stiffness in the joints and muscles.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Wang Bu Liu Xing is also used clinically for painful swellings to include kidney stones, and to promote lactation and menstruation through its moving functions. It has also shown some stimulating effect on the uterus and is contraindicated for women during pregnancy.

Wang Bu Liu Xing is used primarily for ailments aside from injury and conditioning and is therefore far below average in terms of its frequency in dit da formulas; however, it does appear in a couple formulas of interest. These include: Xing Yi iron palm wash and Bisio/Butler Trauma liniment. These 2 formulas have a very similar design and likely came from, or were modifications of, the same source formula.

Wang Bu Liu Xing (and other similar seeds and kernels) should always be crushed or ground prior to use. This will expose the inside of the seed and allow for much better extraction.

Pinyin Name: Liu Ji Nu

English Name: *Artemisia Anomala*

Pharmaceutical Name: *Herba Artemisiae Anomolae*

Properties: bitter and warm

Meridians: Heart, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Dispel Stasis

Liu Ji Nu has a strong function to dispel stasis due to external injury and is used both externally and internally to address moderate to serious bruising with pain and swelling.

2. Open Channels, Relieve Pain

Liu Ji Nu opens the channels and relieves pain due to injury as well as clinical ailments such as abdominal pain and hepatomegaly.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Liu Ji Nu is a strong herb for the treatment of injury. It does not have any purely analgesic function but does tend to also reduce sensations of pain through its ability to quickly return the natural flow of blood and break up stagnation which reduces inflammation and pain. Liu Ji Nu also shares similarities with Ai Ye, another form of *Artemisia*: Ashes of Liu Ji Nu can be used to stop bleeding when applied externally. Lastly, Liu Ji Nu is sometimes used in clinical settings for indigestion and other types of digestive pain.

An abbreviated list of formulas Liu Ji Nu appears in includes: PlumDragon Herbs White Dragon dit da jow and Bruise JIUce, some versions of Qi Li San, multiple Chow Gar and other Hakka injury and training liniments, Hung Gar's Golden Bridge dit da jow, Bak Mei Tieh Sao jow dit da song, Fung Doe Duk, Golden Lotus, Bak Fu Pai Conditioning jow, Bak Fu Pai #2, and a

handful of other Bak Me/Bak Fu Pai related formulas, Lotus Palms iron palm jow, Shaolin Temple Music plaster, Ten Thousand Respondings plaster, Prescription for Effusing and Scattering the Middle, Warming soak, and several obscure formulas for treatment of various injury-based ailments.

Liu Ji Nu is also used in a few well-known internal formulas, including Strengthen Sinew and Connect Bone powder, Bone Knitting powder, PlumDragon Herbs Iron Bone Training powder, and PlumDragon intermediate-strength dit da wan.

Some sources cite that Liu Ji Nu is interchangeable with Ai Ye. While they are similar species, they do act in fairly different ways. Ai Ye tends to perform similar functions with more warmth; additionally, Liu Ji Nu is stronger in dispelling stasis while Ai Ye is stronger to stop bleeding and warm the channels.

Pinyin Name: Su Mu

English Name: Sappan Wood

Pharmaceutical Name: Lignum Sappan

Properties: sweet, spicy and neutral

Meridians: Heart, Liver, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Dispel Stasis

Through its dispersing nature, Su Mu is quite useful in addressing moderate stasis due to injury and is often used clinically for abdominal pain.

2. Open Channels, Relieve Pain

Su Mu enters and unblocks stasis from the channels to treat pain and weakness in the joints. Its dual-function to dispel stasis while opening the channels makes it a very useful herb for

conditioning formulas. This herb has been used clinically for paralysis.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

In addition to the actions listed above, Su Mu has been shown to reduce inflammation and increase circulation in lab studies. It also has an inhibiting effect on the production of cancer cells and displays some antibiotic properties.

Su Mu is a moderately common conditioning herb; it is a very useful herb because it can serve the purpose of both a conditioning herb and injury herb very well. An abbreviated list of formulas that use this herb includes: Ho Family dit da jow, PlumDragon Hung Gar iron palm jow, Ku Yu Cheong, Ark Wong, Frank Yee, Wong Fei Hung, and all other Ku Yu-based iron palm variations, Five Fragrance wine, Leung Jan Wing Chun dit da jow, Xing Yi iron palm wash, Bak Fu Pai All-purpose jow, Bak Mei “Dim Mak” dit da jow, Bisio/Butler Trauma liniment, Die Da Hao Fang dit da jow, Lau Family training jow, Bob Flaws Dragon Blood liniment, Shuai Chiao iron palm jow, Metal Injury powder, Shaolin Temple Music plaster, Ten Thousand Respondings plaster, and several other obscure formulas for various types of injuries.

Su Mu is also found in a small number of internal formulas, including Metal Injury Miraculous Recovery elixir, Flying Dragon Life-Robbing elixir, Dang Gui drink, Protect the General wine, Live Dragon wine, and Long-Winded Emperor Assist Training wine.

Su Mu may be sold in fairly large bulky blocks, often too large to fit in a gallon jar or carboy. These blocks should be broken down to facilitate extraction. Long thin sticks are best as they can be easily used as is or ground into much smaller pieces.

Pinyin Name: Ji Xue Teng

English Name: Spatholobus, Chicken-Blood Vine

Pharmaceutical Name: Caulis Spatholobi

Properties: bitter, sweet and warm

Meridians: Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Open Channels

Ji Xue Teng activates the circulation of Blood and is often used clinically for gynecological disorders. Ji Xue Teng also unblocks the channels and aids in dispelling Bi Syndrome and musculoskeletal injuries resulting in pain and weakness in the joints. Through its influence on the Liver, it can relax sinew, further aiding with Bi Syndrome.

2. Tonify Blood

Ji Xue Teng enters the Liver meridian, which is responsible for the storage of Blood. Ji Xue Teng is a very important Blood invigorator because while many moving herbs can deplete Blood, Ji Xue Teng builds and tonifies Blood.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ji Xue Teng is a very important and useful herb because of its ability to penetrate and disperse stasis inside and outside of the channels in addition to tonifying Blood. This strongly reduces the chances of this herb being depleting to bodily resources. Its ability to dispel Bi Syndrome and relax the sinew is also a desirable trait for herbs used in conditioning liniments. Additionally, Ji Xue Teng has some degree of sedative action when used internally.

Ji Xue Teng shows up rarely in dit da formulas but is used in some popular recipes. These include: Modified versions of the Chan Ning Tong, PlumDragon White Dragon iron palm jow,

Pangai Noon dit da jow, Die Da Hao Fang dit da jow, Lau Family training jow, Return the Spirit jow, Shaolin Temple Music plaster, Ten Thousand Respondings plaster, various formulas for use on certain areas of the body such as the back, and is also an addition made by some to Ku Yu Cheong iron palm formulas and its variations. Expect to see this herb appear more frequently as time goes on.

Additionally it appears in a few internal formulas; some of the more well-known include Warming and Quickening wine, Shaolin Live Dragon wine, Great Supplement wine, and Abundant Justice wine.

Ji Xue Teng looks very similar to Hong Teng, and these 2 herbs have been mislabeled on some dit da jow-based websites selling whole herbs. While the herbs used to be interchangeable in China, their actions are quite different. While both herbs do invigorate Blood, Ji Xue Teng works better for Bi Syndrome and has additional properties to relax sinew and especially important, to tonify Blood. Hong Teng, on the other hand, is weaker in its Blood circulating properties and is more useful for clearing heat and reducing pain and inflammation. Please pay special attention to the observable differences in the pictures of these 2 herbs; with a detailed look, the difference in patterning in these 2 herbs is obvious.



Ji Xue Teng

Pinyin Name: Tou Gu Cao

English Name: Speranskia

Pharmaceutical Name: Caulis Impatiensis/Speranskia

Properties: bitter, sweet, spicy and cool

Meridians: Liver, Spleen, Kidney

SLIGHTLY TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Dispel Stasis

Tou Gu Cao is used principally for external injuries that produce bleeding and bruising, swelling, and inflammation. Tou Gu Cao reduces stagnation to relieve pain but does not have any purely analgesic properties.

2. Clear Heat and Dampness, Cools Blood

Tou Gu Cao is cool and reduces swelling and inflammation at the site of injury. It cools the blood to stop bleeding and relieve burns, and also penetrates dampness at the site of injury. Combined with its moving property, this can help unblock stagnation inside of and outside of the channels.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Tou Gu Cao is absent in many Materia Medica publications and the ones it does appear in commonly place it as a Wind-Damp dispelling herb. While Tou Gu Cao does have utility as a Wind-Damp herb, its action tends to focus more on movement from the experiences we have had with the herb. While it provides less utility in clinical settings, it is an important herb for martial artists and athletes.

Tou Gu Cao, literally meaning "Penetrate bone herb" functions well to enter the bones through its interaction with the Kidney meridian, enter the sinew through its interaction with the Liver, and enter the muscle layers through its interaction with the Spleen. It is quite useful for training in this context as it hits perhaps the 3 most important areas of the body from the perspective of the martial artists.

While Tou Gu Cao is occasionally listed as slightly toxic, Chen & Chen does not claim any level of toxicity. However, more than 1 individual who has trained in Shaolin claims that it is an herb that is only used externally. Despite this information, it does appear in several internal Shaolin formulas such as the Shaolin Connect the Bones Elixir, Protect the General Wine (Bao Jiang Jiu), and Long-Winded Emperor Assist Training wme.

Tou Gu Cao also appears in the externally applied Soothe the Sinews decoction and Soothe the Sinew and Quicken the Network Vessels decoction. The use of this herb is most pronounced in heated herbal washes and soaks meant to prepare the hands prior to hand conditioning. Examples of this include

the Shaolin Iron Sand Palm soak and related hot mixes, as well as the Shaolin Lian Gong soak, whereby a portion of the herbal mixture is added to hot water and the hands soaked in the mixture prior to iron palm. Note that if vinegar is used to prepare this mixture then it should *not* be used prior to or immediately following serious conditioning sessions such as iron palm or iron body work.

Pinyin Name: San Leng

English Name: Bur-Reed Rhizome

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Sparganii

Properties: bitter and neutral

Meridians: Liver, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Strongly Dispel Blood Stasis

San Leng is one of the strongest herbs to penetrate and dispel serious Blood stasis. It has a very potent moving function used for physical masses of stagnation and pain. It is used for injury and a number of severe clinical patterns.

2. Move Qi

San Leng also has potent action to move Qi and break up Qi stasis characterized by more dullish pain that one cannot specifically point to. San Leng's ability to move Qi and Blood make it a very useful herb for both injury and conditioning.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

San Leng is a very strong substance for serious stasis and pain. It has exhibited a very strong function to inhibit the coagulation of platelets and can potentiate the effect of anticoagulant drugs and

should not be used when on drugs such as warfarin. Internally, San Leng can be very depleting and is often used with tonic herbs so an individual's constitution can be maintained.

San Leng has also been used clinically for its inhibitory effect on the growth of several types of cancer cells.

Herbs like San Leng are generally not necessary in many dit da formulas, being more moving (and hence depleting) than necessary when only minor injuries are being addressed. While it is used in somewhat low overall frequency in dit da formulas, it shows up in high frequency with strong injury and iron palm liniments. An abbreviated list includes: Shaolin Die Da Shen Yan Liang Fan and Ho Family dit da jow, PlumDragon Bruise JIUce and Ancestors Advanced iron palm jow, Chan Ning Tong iron palm jow, Black Hand, Leung Jan Wing Chun dit da jow, Hua Tuo Eight Immortal bruise liniment, Lau Family training jow, Return the Spirit jow, Shaolin Ten Thousand Respondings plaster, and Pangai Noon dit da jow. It is also added by some people to the Ku Yu Cheong formula, although this is not an original inclusion.

San Leng is also used in the following internal formulas: Flying Dragon Life-Robbing elixir, Thirteen Flavors formula, and a few small internal decoctions for injuries and pain in various areas of the body.

San Leng is often used with E Zhu for their synergistic effect. Nearly 90% of the above mentioned formulas use these 2 herbs as a pair. Please refer to E Zhu for additional remarks about how these herbs differ from each other.

San Leng can be used raw but should be well crushed or ground to facilitate better extraction. Additionally, San Leng can be fried with either vinegar or alcohol to enhance its ability to move Blood and break stasis.

Pinyin Name: E Zhu

English Name: Curcuma Zedoaria

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Curcumae

Properties: bitter, spicy and warm

Meridians: Spleen, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Dispel Stasis

E Zhu is one of the strongest herbs to penetrate and dispel serious Blood and Qi stasis. It has a very potent moving action that is used as for the most stubborn cases of stasis. This includes injury as well as distention, palpable masses, and amenorrhea.

2. Move Qi

E Zhu has strong function to move Qi and reduce pain associated with Qi stasis. This is characterized by dull pain whereas Blood stasis is generally a sharp fixed pain. Like San Leng, these properties make E Zhu very useful for both injury and conditioning formulas.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

E Zhu is a very strong substance for serious stasis and pain. It has pharmacological effects of inhibiting the coagulation of platelets and shows promise as a clinical treatment for Coronary Artery Disease and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease. And like San Leng, it has been used for cancer treatment due to its antineoplastic properties. One should not use this herb if concurrently using antiplatelet medications such as warfarin.

E Zhu has a number of important compounds within its composition. Most interestingly, it houses all of the similar curcumin-based compounds that show up in other species of Curcuma, Jiang Huang and Yu Jin. According to some sources,

E Zhu also has oils camphene and pinene, of which show up in many other penetrating and dispersing herbs.

Like San Leng, E Zhu is not seen in a very large number of formulas but is concentrated most heavily in the stronger of injury and conditioning recipes and appears almost always alongside of San Leng. Most notably, it is used in the following formulas: Shaolin Die Da Shen Yan Liang Fan and Ho Family dit da jow, PlumDragon Bruise JIUce and Ancestors Advanced iron palm jow, Chan Ning Tong iron palm jow, Black Hand, Leung Jan Wing Chun dit da jow, Pangai Noon dit da jow, Lau Family training jow, Return the Spirit jow, Mew Hing Level 2 iron palm jow, and Shaolin Ten Thousand Respondings Plaster.

E Zhu appears in the internal Thirteen Flavors formula as well as a few small internal decoctions for injuries, spotting, and pain in various areas of the body.

E Zhu is often used with San Leng for their synergistic effect. Over 90% of the above mentioned formulas use these 2 herbs as a pair. Both of these are among the stronger Blood invigorating, stasis breaking herbs available, especially when used together. E Zhu has a stronger influence to dispel stagnation of Qi. Because of its influence on the Liver, some sources cite this herb as having Liver wind dispelling properties. San Leng is stronger in addressing Blood stasis. Together, these herbs work together to move Blood and Qi and break stagnation of all kinds.

E Zhu can be used raw but is a very dense and hard bark. It should be well crushed or ground to facilitate better extraction. Additionally, E Zhu can be fried with vinegar to enhance its ability to move Blood and break stasis. San Leng is also often cooked with alcohol for this purpose and while other texts don't mention the use of alcohol, E Zhu can be processed with alcohol as well, not just vinegar.

Pinyin Name: Shui Zhi

English Name: Leech

Pharmaceutical Name: Hirudo

Properties: salty, bitter and neutral

Meridians: Liver

SLIGHTLY TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Dispel Stasis

Shui Zhi is among the most powerful of stasis breaking substances on the planet and is used for a variety of severe forms of Blood stasis, including injuries and bruising with serious pain and inflammation, swollen or hardened masses, amenorrhea, and gynecological complaints.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Shui Zhi is an interesting substance that does a very potent job of dispelling stasis. It accomplishes this function primarily through the chemical hirudin that interferes with the body's ability to produce clots, and therefore it has a strong ability to prevent and reduce coagulations (such as serious bruising from injury) from forming. This herb is useful for a variety of cardiovascular types of ailments dealing with the stagnation of Blood, and has even been used to break up coagulations of cholesterol to reduce high cholesterol levels. Now, the responsible chemical, Hirudin, is the basis of powerful pharmaceutical drugs used as anticoagulants.

Leeches are also used in several other branches of medicine including Ayurveda where the leeches may be used live to extract Blood.

Hirudin is destroyed by prolonged heat so this herb should not be cooked for a prolonged period of time. It is often dry-fried or

roasted for a short period and then crushed or powdered. These procedures reduce the disagreeable odor and optimize extraction while protecting Hirudin content. Shui Zhi is also mildly toxic and should be used with care and should not be used at all by pregnant women.

Shui Zhi has become an expensive substance and is now very difficult to procure in the US. Very few distributors carry this herb and the ones that do rarely have it in stock. Fortunately, this herb is rarely needed and therefore, rarely seen in formulas. This is perhaps best; with other very strong herbs such as San Leng, E Zhu, and Tu Bie Chong readily available and significantly cheaper, Shui Zhi has become an herb of the past for individual consumers.

With that said, if it is available, it can be added to just about any bruise-based formula at the rate of 12 grams per gallon; this will strongly increase the strength of the formula.

Pinyin Name: Tu Bie Chong

English Name: Wingless Cockroach

Pharmaceutical name: Eupolyphaga

Properties: salty and cold

Meridians: Liver

SLIGHTLY TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Break Stasis

Tu Bie Chong has a very strong action to break serious and chronic cases of Blood stasis. Clinically, this includes hardened masses, amenorrhea, and especially important, serious external injuries with pronounced bruising and inflammation.

2. Heal and Strengthen Bone and Sinew

Tu Bie Chong has the added benefit of entering the Liver meridian and directing its actions to the Kidney through its salty nature: It can help heal and strengthen bone and sinew. It is used here for torn tendons and ligaments as well as bone fractures. Its ability to strongly dispel stasis and strengthen bone and sinew make it very useful both for injury and conditioning use.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Tu Bie Chong (also sometimes Di Bie Chong) is probably viewed as one of the more “disgusting” herbs since nobody cares for cockroaches, dead or alive! Even in its dried form, it has a distinct salty odor and appearance that many find repulsive. However, this is a very strong herb that displays substantial pharmacological effect to inhibit platelet coagulation and may physically increase movement of Blood to heal injury, bone, and sinew.

For these reasons, Tu Bie Chong has become popular in several formulas, both externally and internally, where a strong action is desired. An abbreviated list of formulas includes: Shaolin Die Da Shen Yan Liang Fan and Ho Family dit da jow, Plum Dragon Bruise JIUce, Ku Yu Cheong, Ark Wong, and multiple other similar iron palm variations, Iron Goddess hand liniment, Hung Gar Golden Bridge dit da jow, Xing Yi iron palm wash, Bisio/Butler Trauma liniment, Lau Family Training jow, Return the Spirit jow, White-Coated Bodhisattva plaster, Prescription for Injury to Head with Stick, and several other smaller dit da formulas for injury and pain in various locations in the body.

Tu Bie Chong is perhaps equally as common in internally administered formulas. An abbreviated list includes: Classical Dit Da Wan, Bone Knitting powder, Shaolin Recover the Pulse powder, Metal Injury Miraculous Recovery elixir, Injured Sinew Remove the Bone pill, multiple Qi Li San variations used for both internal and external use, Strengthen Sinew and Connect

Bone elixir (Tu Bie Chong is the chief herb and this formula is likely named after the action of Tu Bie Chong), and by request in the Comprehensive iron palm tonic, Heroes pill, Extend the Sinews elixir, Eight Immortals powder (alongside of Shui Zhi), Connect the Bones decoction, and Prescription for Injury to Sinew and Bone.

Also seen (quite rarely) in strong injury formulas is the use of Meng Chong, or the Tabanus Gadfly. Similar in function to Tu Bie Chong, it is deemed to be strong in breaking stasis, a slight bit warmer than Tu Bie Chong, and also slightly toxic. Where this herb appears in formulas, one can simply substitute a slightly larger amount of Tu Bie Chong or Shui Zhi in its stead.

Of Tu Bie Chong, Shui Zhi, and Meng Chong, Tu Bie Chong is quite a bit cheaper and easier to procure than the other 2 substances. While it is of lower potency, it also has the added benefit of addressing bone and sinew, making it potentially more useful than the other 2 substances.



Tu Bie Chong

Chapter 12

Herbs that Resolve Phlegm

Concept

Phlegm is a congealed, denser form of dampness that has not been properly dealt with by the body. Over time, this dampness stagnates and condenses while beginning to cause blockage either within physical areas of the body such as the intestinal tract, the throat and lungs, or within the channels. Herbs that resolve phlegm seek to penetrate and dispel this congealed material.

Because phlegm is generated as a result of poor functioning of the Spleen and because this phlegm is then said to be stored in the Lungs, from a clinical perspective many of the herbs in this category tend to counteract accumulations of phlegm that produce coughing, wheezing, dyspnea, asthma, common cold, and other ailments related to the respiratory system. As such many of these herbs are antitussives, expectorants, and

antiasthmatics; they are often used for coughing, root and branch symptoms of Wind-Cold and Wind-Heat that have penetrated the body, and inflammations such as hard nodules due to injury and other reasons.

Herbs that resolve phlegm tend to run a wide range of energetic temperatures, meridians influences, and flavors. While many tend to be drying, several are moistening; while many are acrid or bitter, several are sweet. Most enter the Lung, but many enter the Spleen, Stomach, Heart, and Large Intestine. These herbs tend to exist in a wide variety of temperatures from hot to cold; some are perfectly safe food-grade herbs and others are incredibly toxic in their raw and even treated forms. This is a very eclectic category of herbs with one main purpose in common: Treat various types of phlegm.

From a martial arts and dit da perspective, there are a number of important herbs in this category. Many of the herbs here are useful in conditioning formulas as they may exert functions to dispel Wind in the form of muscle spasms, cramps, stiffness, and joint weakness; many are useful for opening and clearing phlegm and serious stasis from the channels; others may be more useful to regulate and move Qi and Blood and dispel stasis, while others relieve pain, swelling, and physical masses from injury or Bi Syndrome. Some phlegm resolving herbs also reduce inflammation and cool the Blood, which may be useful to stop bleeding.

Clearly, this group of herbs is very important and worth understanding in detail. Please refer to individual templates for more detailed explanations on the utility of each herb.

Please note that these herbs should **not** be used for external patterns of wind, but rather Exterior Releasing herbs should primarily be used. The various patterns of phlegm are far-reaching and may be quite difficult to differentiate. Additionally, these herbs can often consume bodily resources and should be used with caution internally as they may be depleting. Even externally, their long-term use should be

complemented with the necessary tonifying herbs.

Lastly, several herbs that resolve phlegm are quite toxic when raw and a few are even toxic following processing. Use great caution in using these substances and please be responsible with their use, ideally using them in concert with the advice of your local healthcare professional.

Preparation

There are very few restrictions for processing of herbs that resolve phlegm. While some may have fragile compounds which are noted on individual templates, these herbs are often cooked for the full decoction length. Furthermore, the stronger herbs in this group are very toxic when raw and either come to the consumer in a state where they have already been cooked or otherwise prepared so as to reduce toxicity, or should be cooked well to aid in extraction.

The processing of herbs that resolve phlegm is often necessary for those substances which are toxic in their raw form, such as Ban Xia and Tian Nan Xing. These are very important herbs, both in clinical settings and to the martial artist. In the past, these herbs were often available to consumers in their raw state. Despite the fact that they are stronger when raw, they are also very dangerous. In current times, these herbs come directly from distributors in an already processed state and are mostly not available directly for purchase in their raw form. For example, Ban Xia is nearly impossible to purchase (aside from perhaps an obscure shop in China town) because it makes very little sense to not process it; toxicity can be decreased without harming the important effects of the herb.

Pinyin Name: Ban Xia

English Name: Pinellia

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Pinelliae

Properties: spicy and warm

Meridians: Spleen, Stomach, Lung

TOXIC IN RAW FORM

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dissolve Phlegm and Dampness

Ban Xia enters the Spleen and has a strongly warming, drying property to dry dampness and break accumulations of phlegm. Clinical applications are countless but often deal with the physical sputum of a clear nature.

2. Dissipate Nodules and Stagnation

Nodules and swellings are seen as stagnation caused by phlegm. Ban Xia is very good at dissipating these nodules, reducing stagnation, and unblocking the channels.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Raw Ban Xia is very toxic and generally only sold today in the processed form—although it is likely still available occasionally in some Chinatown herb stores. Ban Xia processed with ginger juice is perhaps the best form to get, but it can also be processed with Alumen and Gan Cao. These forms of Ban Xia are non-toxic and are safe for internal use.

Ban Xia is one of the best antitussive herbs, and is also used clinically for “Rising Stomach Qi” which generally manifests as nausea and vomiting, and as an antineoplastic herb. From a martial arts perspective, it does a very good job of dissipating stagnation and it also has small amounts of Ephedrine alkaloid present in it, making it a good CNS stimulant and useful for conditioning and injury formulas.

Ban Xia is often added to formulas that do not use this herb, when there is a desire to increase the formulas capability to reduce pain and swelling of nodules. An abbreviated list of formulas that always use Ban Xia include: Ho Family dit da jow, Shaolin Iron Sand Palm hot soak and similar variations, Qi Li San variations, PlumDragon Bruise JIUce, Leen Goang Jau, Immortal Monk, Li Family iron palm jow, Wing Chun Anti-Contusion jow, Seven Star Praying Mantis injury jow, Ancient Way/Monks Fist dit da jow, All-Purpose Bak Fu Paid it da jow, Bak Mei “Dim Mak” dit da jow, Shaolin Training formula, Hua Tuo Eight Immortal Bruise liniment, several iron palm hot soaks, and a Fukien Province iron palm jow.

Additionally, Ban Xia in its treated form is commonly used internally as well. An abbreviated list of internal formulas which Ban Xia is used in includes: Classical formulas Er Chen Tang and Six Gentleman’s Herbs, Ying Gong tieh ta wan, Troop Deployment powder, Two Flavors Recover Life powder, Shaolin Live Dragon wine, and Prescription for Effusing and Scattering the Upper Part.

Ban Xia is said to be incompatible with the various species and forms of Aconite root per the Eighteen Incompatibilities. While this combination of herbs should be avoided internally, it has been used with a good degree of success and no adverse reactions in a number of external dit da jow formulas.

Ban Xia and Tian Nan Xing are herbs which fulfill a similar function. They are both quite strong and both toxic when raw. Ban Xia is not toxic after treatment and suitable for internal use, while Tian Nan Xing is not. Both are very drying and warming. Ban Xia is geared more towards dispelling chronic states of Dampness while Tian Nan Xing enters the Liver meridian to more directly address Wind and tension in the body.

Pinyin Name: Tian Nan Xing

English Name: Arisaema, Jack-in-the-Pulpit

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Arisaematis

Properties: bitter, spicy and warm

Meridians: Liver, Lung, Spleen

TOXIC IN RAW FORM, SLIGHTLY TOXIC WHEN PROCESSED

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dissolve Phlegm and Dampness

Tian Nan Xing is very effective in its ability to dissolve dampness and severe states of phlegm and is often used clinically for serious forms of coughing and oppression in the chest.

2. Dispel Wind

Tian Nian Xing strongly clears Wind to open the channels and clinically addresses numbness, seizures, convulsions, tetanus, and stroke. It is also used for spasms and cramps, numbness and weakness in the extremities, clenching and other forms of tightness that may impact sinew and muscle.

3. Dissipate Nodules

Through its strong dispersing and drying function, Tian Nan Xing can dissipate hard nodules and reduce swelling from repeated traumatic injury.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Tian Nan Xing is an incredibly potent herb. It is slightly toxic even in its treated form and is generally regarded as stronger than Ban Xia in its ability to dissipate phlegm and stagnation in the channels. Tian Nan Xing also has the added ability to strongly clear Wind and obstructions from the channels and is useful for musculoskeletal problems. Clinically, it exhibits

pharmacological effects as an antiseizure and anticonvulsive substance. It is also used (especially raw) as a strong analgesic herb, although no real research has been done on its purely analgesic effects. Tian Nan Xing may also produce sedative effects so care should be taken not to use this herb when taking medications.

Because of the strength and actions of this herb, it is favored in a number of formulas, mostly for conditioning purposes. It is used in the following external dit da formulas: Shaolin Die Da Shen Yan Lian Fan, Shaolin Iron Sand Palm hot soak, Leen Goang Jau, Immortal Monk, Wing Chun Anti-Contusion jow, Hung Gar Golden Bridge dit da jow, Hua Tuo Eight Immortal Bruise liniment, Ancient Way/Monks Fist dit da jow (although Dan Nan Xing may be used by some groups instead), Lau Family training jow, Seven Star Praying Mantis dit da jow, multiple Bak Mei/Bak Fu Pai formulas, Li Family iron palm jow, Fukien Province iron palm jow, Five Raw Anesthetics powder, and sometimes as an addition to base formulas like Qi Li San to deal with pain.

Tian Nan Xing also appears in a few internal formulas, although its use here should be with great caution due to the toxicity of this herb. These formulas include: Original version of Tiger Bone Training wine, Precious Jade powder, Nine Tigers elixir, Quicken the Blood elixir, and Shaolin Level Wind elixir. Many of these internal formulas are used for serious conditions rather than as casual training formulas. Their inclusion here is primarily for the purpose of thoroughly listing formulas that may be known to the reader.

Tian Nan Xing and Ban Xia work in a similar fashion and have overall utility to open the channels, dissipate nodules, and reduce pain. They have some overlapping actions with other conditioning and injury herbs that open channels and dispel Wind to treat musculoskeletal issues. Where Ban Xia is more drying, Tian Nan Xing addresses the musculoskeletal system more specifically. Many people note that Tian Nan Xing when used in iron palm formulas has a stronger ability to reduce pain

and increase range of motion in the hand. Therefore, it is potentially more useful in iron palm formulas where Ban Xia may be better used in injury jows where there is more swelling due to excess Dampness.

Tian Nan Xing is sliced and then processed with Ginger (Sheng Jiang) or in Ginger juice. This is in contrast to Dan Nan Xing, which is processed in bile. Please refer to Dan Nan Xing on additional details about the differences of these two herbs.



Tian Nan Xing

Pinyin Name: Dan Nan Xing

English Name: Bile-Treated Arisaema

Pharmaceutical Name: Arisaema cum Bile

Properties: bitter and cool

Meridians: Liver, Lung, Spleen

SLIGHTLY TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dissolve Phlegm, Clear Heat

Dan Nan Xing dissolves phlegm from within and outside of the channels, especially phlegm due to heat.

2. Dispel Wind and Convulsions

Dan Nan Xing dispels Wind and Damp and is useful for spasms and cramps affecting the musculoskeletal system and may be applied topically for injury or conditioning purposes. Clinically it may be used for seizures, convulsions, tetanus and stroke when there may be an underlying Yin deficiency.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Dan Nan Xing is simply powdered Tian Nan Xing that has been further processed in bile. The bile processing reduces the harsh drying and warming actions of Tian Nan Xing. Dan Nan Xing will not be overly drying for those with a tendency to dryness, but it still retains a very good function to dispel Wind and relieve tension in the muscles and joints such as cramping and reduced range of motion. This makes it a useful conditioning and injury herb.

Dan Nan Xing is used rarely in dit da formulas. While some other herbs have been noted as being underutilized, this herb probably does not deserve the same comment. While it is a very good herb, it is significantly more costly than other strong herbs that don't get much attention. This should not be a deterrent for

its use, but rather a simple analysis of why it will likely not grow in popularity as herbalism continues to evolve based on cost, availability, and potency.

Dan Nan Xing is used in a Fukien Province iron palm jow, Seven Star Praying Mantis dit da jow, PlumDragon Jun Fan/JKD dit da jow as well as by some sources in the Ancient Way/Monks Fist dit da jow—some sources cite Dan Nan Xing in this formula while other cite Tian Nan Xing. Trials with both versions have indicated that both herbs seem to produce the same perceptual effect in the formula.

Pinyin Name: Bai Fu Zi

English Name: Typhonium

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Typhonii

Properties: spicy, sweet and warm

Meridians: Spleen, Stomach

TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dissolve Phlegm and Wind-Damp

Bai Fu Zi has strong capability to dispel chronic accumulations of phlegm and dampness and is often used to address issues with Bi Syndrome, unblock the channels and relieve spasms, cramps, and achy joints that experience muscular weakness and reduced range of motion. Clinical indications include tetanus, muscle spasms, clenched jaws, and facial paralysis.

2. Dissipate Nodules

Bai Fu Zi differentiates itself by exhibiting the ability to soften and dissipate nodules in the form of phlegm. This function makes Bai Fu Zi important both for severe injuries as well as intense conditioning.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Bai Fu Zi is a diamond in the rough! This is a strong herb with high utility to the martial artist, especially in conditioning formulas. It is used rarely in dit da formulas but is quite strong in action, it is not well known, and is inexpensive and easy to procure.

Bai Fu Zi is used in the following dit da formulas: Ho Chun hot soak (referred to as Red Phoenix by one supplier), Precious Jade Powder, Level Wind elixir, and a couple of very small formulas for severe pain due to injury.

Cooking Bai Fu Zi by stir-frying with fresh ginger can reduce the toxicity of this herb. Sheng Jiang can be purchased at any grocery store and makes a worthwhile addition to many injury formulas.

Bai Fu Zi is named as such because it looks very similar to Fu Zi (Aconite) but is white in color. This herb has no relation to Fu Zi and their actions and uses are quite different, although they both handle specific types of Bi Syndrome as secondary functions. While Bai Fu Zi primarily dissolves phlegm and clears the channels, Fu Zi has pure Yang tonifying energetics, warming the interior of the body and providing strong heating function. These herbs should not be confused or substituted for one another. Please refer to Fu Zi, Cao Wu, and Chuan Wu for more information on Aconite.

Pinyin Name: Bai Jie Zi

English Name: White Mustard Seed

Pharmaceutical Name: Semen Sinapis

Properties: spicy and warm

Meridians: Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dissolve Phlegm, Dissipate Cold

Bai Jie Zi is very warm, drying, and dispersing in nature; it dissolves accumulations of phlegm especially in the Lung, and hard nodules. Bai Jie Zi enters the Lung to warm the middle and dissipate Cold. Externally, Bai Jie Zi clears coagulations in the form of hard nodules and swelling/inflammation that reduce normal circulation.

2. Open Channels, Regulate Circulation

Bai Jie Zi unblocks and dilates the channels. It moves Qi and regulates circulation to reduce swelling due to phlegm and reduce pain from Bi Syndrome and can be used to remedy injuries causing significant hardened masses.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Bai Jie Zi is the white or yellow mustard seed that is found very commonly around the world as a culinary spice and is one of several medicinal herbs that are utilized abundantly around the world in cooking. This herb is generally of the Sinapis genus. However, black mustard seeds are from the brassica genus, which may contain a slightly high concentration of essential oils. However, white or yellow mustard seeds are much more common and can be used in slightly higher quantity in formulas that call for the black mustard brassica seed.

Bai Jie Zi contains a number of strong constituents to include sinalbin, sinapine, as well as enzymes and organic acids. When

applied topically, many of these compounds may act as skin irritants which can spur an increase in local circulation. Bai Jie Zi has also shown effect as an expectorant and clearing blockage in the upper portions of the body that might cause numbness.

Bai Jie Zi is underutilized as a dit da herb and is used often for substitutions of other herbs, such as Zao Jiao and black mustard seeds, which are less commonly available. It is used in only a few external formulas to include: Some versions of Ho Family dit da jow, as a substitute in Bak Mei Tieh Sao jow, Bak Mei conditioning jow, Hua Tuo Bruise liniment, and several formulas used to stimulate acupuncture points and for spotting due to injury. It is also used in internal formulas such as Injured Sinew Remove the Bone pill, and Dang Gui Drink.

Bai Jie Zi should always be added near the end of decoctions processed that use heat in order to preserve the volatile essential oils in this seed. Furthermore, Bai Jie Zi sometimes stir-fried before being decocted or added to liniments. Stir-frying this herb will enhance the ability of this herb to dissolve phlegm and aid in extracting compounds into solution.

Bai Jie Zi has been sometimes used as a substitute for the herb Zao Jiao and Zao Jiao Ci (as well as the black mustard seed of the brassica genus). Zao Jiao and Zao Jiao Ci are not listed in this text due to their continued obscurity in formulas, minimal utility, and recent lack of quality. While they do appear in a few formulas (such as Shaolin Expelling Toxins Decoction), Zao Jiao and Zao Jiao Ci provide the most benefit for a variety of clinical settings, from constipation to tonsillitis. Both herbs are spicy, warm herbs that dissolve phlegm and relieve swellings. These herbs are indeed available on the market and are not expensive. However, it is our recommendation to substitute them with Bai Jie Zi.

Pinyin Name: Jie Geng

English Name: Platycodon Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Platycodonis

Properties: bitter, spicy and neutral

Meridians: Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dissolve Phlegm and Benefit the Lung

Jie Geng has both spicy and bitter components and is beneficial for dissolving and evacuating phlegm from the Lung, while being used often clinically to relieve sore throat, loss of voice, stuffy nose and to dry up copious sputum.

2. Raise Qi

Jie Geng is said to “raise Qi” which manifests as diarrhea, edema in the lower body, anuria, and other similar clinical manifestations. It is sometimes used externally in conditioning liniments as an herb that provides a focus on the upper parts of the body. Entering the Lung, it is said to connect the skin layers making it useful for addressing the skin during conditioning.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Jie Geng is an interesting herb: While its use in hand conditioning formulas for its ability “lift” the effects of the formula upward are questionable, it has shown promising pharmacological activity for its ability to reduce inflammation (especially in the case of allergic reaction), act mildly as an analgesic, and increase blood perfusion to the extremities by dilating blood vessels. It may be useful in conditioning and injury liniments for counteracting the harsh effects of other herbs on sensitive skin, reducing pain, mildly increasing local circulation in the hands, and clearing out coagulations of phlegm.

Jie Geng is used in the following formulas: Leung Jan Wing Chun dit da jow, Wanham Shaolin dit da jow, Broad Application Tendon Trauma liniment, Bak Mei Tieh Sao jow, Bak Fu Pai conditioning jow, Shuai Chiao iron palm jow, Ark Wong iron palm jow, a small injury formula used by several internal martial arts schools, and a handful of formulas used for spotting due to injury.

It also is hidden away in a few internal formulas including Shaolin Troop Deployment powder, Treatment for Unstoppable Hematemesis, and Soothe the Sinews and Quicken the Network Vessels decoction.

Jie Geng can be stir-fried in honey to aid in its ability to benefit the throat and dispel phlegm.

Pinyin Name: Xuan Fu Hua

English Name: Inula Flower

Pharmaceutical Name: Flos Inulae

Properties: bitter, spicy, salty and warm

Meridians: Large Intestine, Lung, Stomach, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dissolve Phlegm, Regulate Water Circulation

Xuan Fu Hua is capable of dispersing coagulations of phlegm through its spiciness, activating circulation and promoting movement through its bitterness, and softening hardnesses to be dissolved through its salty function. This makes this herb very effective at clearing phlegm and other types of stagnation.

Xuan Fu Hua is used clinically for problems such as indigestion.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Xuan Fu Hua, sometimes called Yellow Flower, has exhibited some diuretic, antiasthmatic, and antitussive properties. It also has some mild antibiotic properties and inhibits the growth of staphylococcus infections. Xuan Fu Hua contains caffeic acid and chlorogenic acid, which is seen in coffee and several other herbs that regulate water or provide some level of diuretic effect. Chlorogenic acid is also an antioxidant and has undergone some degree of studies both in the United States and Europe.

Xuan Fu Hua is only used in a couple of formulas and is listed primarily for its inclusion in the Chan Ning Tong iron palm jow and the Black Hand iron palm jow.

Pinyin Name: Chuan Bei Mu

English Name: Fritillaria Bulb

Pharmaceutical Name: Bulbus Fritillariae Cirrhosae

Properties: bitter, sweet and cool

Meridians: Heart, Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dissolve Phlegm

Chuan Bei Mu is both bitter and sweet. This herb is often used internally to resolve and disperse phlegm, especially in the case of chronic cough with little sputum. However, it is sweet and is often used for dry cough due to heat conditions.

2. Clear Heat, Disperse Nodules

Chuan Bei Mu is cooling and can reduce inflammation such as that which presents with physical nodules and hard masses.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Chuan Bei Mu is most commonly used in clinical settings for its substantial effects as an expectorant and antitussive. Only rarely is it used in dit da formulas, as it is more geared towards use for coughing. Nevertheless, it does appear in a couple formulas, namely academic formulas used in acupuncture schools to address basic topics in the field of dit da. It is also used internally in Flying Dragon Life-Robbing elixir

This herb tends to be very pricey, with some wholesale distributors charging in excess of \$100 per pound for this herb. Because it serves little utility in dit da and comes with a big price tag, it's no wonder it is not commonly used.

For formulas that call for Chuan Bei Mu, Zhe Bei Mu can be used in its place. Zhe Bei Mu is a very similar herb, having a slightly colder energy and being more drying, it is stronger to clear heat and reduce nodules and stagnation. It is also very reasonably priced and generally available in good quality.

Pinyin Name: Gua Lou Pi

English Name: Trichosanthes Peel

Pharmaceutical Name: Pericarpium Trichosanthis

Properties: sweet and cold

Meridians: Large Intestine, Lung, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dissolve Phlegm, Regulate Qi

Gua Lou Pi is used primarily for maladies affecting the Lungs such as cough and chest congestion. The cooling energy of Gua Lou Pi aids in clearing heat; the sweet nature allows it to dissolve phlegm without being overly drying; and the draining

property of this herb make it useful for topical application.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Gua Lou Pi has shown in lab studies to dilate arteries and increase blood perfusion. Gua Lou Pi is stronger in its cardiovascular action than Gua Lou Ren. Gua Lou Shi is not listed in this text but it is the entire *Trichosanthes* fruit and has the weakest action of the 3 herbs because per unit mass, Gua Lou Shi fulfills both the actions of Gua Lou Ren and Gua Lou Pi but at half the concentration.

Gua Lou Pi is often used for a traditional pattern known as Xiong Bi, or painful obstruction of the chest. It is very rarely used in dit da formulas. It does, however, appear in 1 large Ku Yu Cheong variation in place of Gua Lou Ren.

Pinyin Name: Gua Lou Ren

English Name: *Trichosanthes* Seed

Pharmaceutical Name: *Semen Trichosanthes*

Properties: sweet and cold

Meridians: Large Intestine, Lung, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dissolve Phlegm, Moisten Dryness

Gua Lou Ren dissolves phlegm especially in the Lung. However, because of its sweet property, it is able to also moisten dryness and while draining copious phlegm. For this reason, it is a common herb used for cough.

2. Dissipate Nodules

Gua Lou Ren is cold and draining, and useful for reducing phlegm and pus in the form of physical nodules.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Gua Lou Ren has a fatty, oily type of consistency when crushed or ground. This moisturizing attribute also makes it useful for lubricating the intestines. Clinically, it is therefore also used for constipation and has been shown to possess laxative properties.

Gua Lou Ren, weaker in cardiovascular action than Gua Lou Pi but stronger than Gua Lou Shi, is used uncommonly in formulas for martial artists and athletes. It is, however, a useful herb for a dry cough. Like Gua Lou Pi, Gua Lou Ren appears in nearly no relevant formulas, save for the original Ku Yu Cheong iron palm jow, and even then in only very small quantities. It is interesting to note that this is one of the few herbs that does not appear on other Ku Yu Cheong variations such as the similar Wong Fei Hung Ark Wong iron palm liniments.

Gua Lou Ren has a fairly resistant outer surface; this herb must be crushed or ground for good extraction and can also be fried prior to use to facilitate extraction and also to warm the very cold energy of these seeds.

Pinyin Name: Xing Ren

English Name: Apricot Seed

Pharmaceutical Name: Semen Armeiacaе Amarum

Properties: bitter and warm

Meridians: Lung, Large Intestine

SLIGHTLY TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dissolves Phlegm, Arrest Cough

Xing Ren is an excellent herb for the treatment of cough for both conditions due to heat and cold. Xing Ren resolves phlegm but is also lubricating; it is also warming and has a significant capability to drain and circulate.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Xing Ren is a really fantastic herb used to treat various types of coughing, especially due to dryness in the throat. It is essential in clinical settings for treating cough. Xing Ren (as well as Pi Pa Ye) contains compounds that are metabolized into hydrocyanic glycosides; these compounds inhibit the cough reflex and serve antitussive pharmacological actions.

Hydrocyanic acid and amygdalin are both present in Xing Ren and both have some toxic properties that are reported to become lethal at a dose of 60 grams. However, small doses (3 grams) are used clinically and have a low potential for problems.

Xing Ren is used uncommonly in dit da formulas but does have some utility due to its phlegm dissolving and moving tendencies. These properties are utilized in a couple of formulas, to include the Wong Fei #2 Hung iron palm formula, Shaolin 1,000 Hammers Plaster, and various small formulas used to treat pain and injury in specific areas of the body, notably the neck.

Xing Ren should be crushed or ground to facilitate extraction of active constituents. However, excessive application of heat can destroy compounds in Xing Ren. Therefore, it should not be ground too finely (which may generate heat through friction) nor should it be cooked for prolonged periods. It is usually added near the end of decoctions.

Xing Ren and Tao Ren are nearly identical looking herbs with very different actions which may be easily confused. Because Xing Ren is mildly toxic, it is very important to always keep Tao

Ren and Xing Ren labeled and separated.

Pinyin Name: Bai Bu

English Name: *Stemona* Root

Pharmaceutical Name: *Radix Stemonae*

Properties: sweet, bitter and neutral

Meridians: Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Moisten Lung, Stop Cough

Bai Bu is used clinically as an effective herb to moisten the Lung and relieve cough. It is used clinically for ailments such as whooping cough, tuberculosis, and cough with cold and flu.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Bai Bu is seen mostly as an herb for treatment of cough but also has a secondary antiparasitic action when applied topically.

Bai Bu is used in a narrow range of dit da formulas, primarily those designed for conditioning. Iron palm formulas and soaks commonly have a battery of very drying herbs that can irritate the skin over time. Bai Bu has a moistening property that offsets some of the drying effects of other strong phlegm resolving or Wind-Damp dispelling herbs. Additionally, while it is not listed in other standard sources, there have been claims that Bai Bu may also provide some degree of analgesic function. This has not been verified.

Bai Bu is used in the following martial arts-based formulas: Shaolin Iron Sand Palm hot soak and similar variations, Leen Goang Jau, Immortal Monk hand soak, a Seven Star praying

Mantis bruise dit da jow, and Ancient Way/Monks Fist dit da jow. While this is not a trivial list of formulas, it is interesting to note that a large majority of them are very similar; it is likely that all of these formulas potentially originated from the same place, were shared and dispersed over time, gained their own names, and now appear as slightly different formulations.

Pinyin Name: Zi Wan

English Name: Aster Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Asteris

Properties: bitter, sweet and slightly warm

Meridians: Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dissolve Phlegm, Arrest Cough

Zi Wan is a mild herb for the treatment of cough and dissolving phlegm. It's mildly warm and will not build too much heat, nor will it dry the body out through its draining property, making it useful for those with weak constitution.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Zi Wan has displayed some expectorant and antibiotic pharmacological activity but is only mild in nature.

Zi Wan has very little utility for martial artists and athletes. It is listed here primarily for its inclusion in a Seven Star Praying Mantis bruise dit da jow that utilizes a large number of phlegm resolving herbs among its ingredients list. Otherwise, it deserves no notable mention and is not an important herb for use in dit da.

Pinyin Name: Sang Bai Pi
English Name: White Mulberry Bark
Pharmaceutical Name: Cortex Mori
Properties: sweet and cold
Meridians: Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Clear Heat from the Lung

Sang Bai Pi is useful in clinical settings due to its cold nature that can effectively clear heat from the Lung to treat coughing and wheezing.

2. Reduce Swelling

Sang Bai Pi regulates the circulation of water to reduce swelling and accumulations, especially of water in the form of edema. This herb also has a downward draining action which tends to promote urination; this diuretic effect is the exit mechanism for edema.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Sang Bai Pi has displayed various actions in laboratory settings, to include diuretic, antihypertensive, and antitussive/sedative properties. Additionally, it appears to increase peristalsis and has an analgesic effect of approximately 25% that of aspirin.

While Sang Bai Pi is used in a few injury and conditioning formulas for its ability to clear heat and inflammation, it also serves significant and potentially higher utility in internal tonics for its ability to counteract the warming and dampening properties of many tonic herbs. It is often combined with herbs like Sheng Di Huang for this purpose.

Sang Bi Pi is used in the Chan Ning Tong and Black Hand iron palm jows, and Bak Mei Tieh Sao jow. It also shows up in

various iterations of Spring wine tonic and Protect the General wine.

Chapter 13

Herbs that Calm the Shen

Concept

Disturbances in an individual's Shen (spirit) are generally seen as disorders of the mind which may inhibit the proper function of one's mental and emotional faculties and cause unusual physical and mental responses.

When there are manifestations such as irritability or anxiety, restlessness or insomnia, congestion, headache, or redness in the upper portions of the body, this may be considered an excess Shen pattern. In these cases, herbs that calm the Shen are chosen for their ability to pacify, sedate, and anchor this excessive mental state. Many of the herbs that address this type of state are often of a very heavy and dense nature, such as minerals, bones, and shells.

When there are manifestations such as light-headedness or dizziness, forgetfulness, fearfulness, and restlessness, these are

often seen as deficiency-type Shen disturbances and often herbs for this type of Shen pattern tend to have some degree of tonifying aspect to them.

Most of these herbs will enter the Heart or Liver meridians. Chinese medicine sees the Shen as being housed within the Heart meridian while emotions are generally controlled by the Liver. Therefore, it is not uncommon for herbs in this category to be used for Shen disturbances that are in addition to, or a result of, patterns that include Liver Qi stagnation, and disharmonies between the Heart in relation to both the Spleen and Kidney.

These herbs tend to generally have sedative and calming effects on the CNS. Additionally, some Shen-calming herbs exhibit analgesic and antiepileptic properties, making them useful for relaxing both the mind and body, and reducing pain. Other herbs in this category have additional functions that are noted in each specific herb template. Because of the sedative effect of many Shen-calming herbs, they should be used with extreme caution when used concurrently with sedative drugs.

From a martial arts perspective, herbs that calm the Shen are perhaps most useful for meditative types of practices and post-training elixirs. While some of these herbs also have minor or moderate abilities in invigorating Blood, reduce stagnation and swelling, act as astringents, and open the channels, these functions are not pronounced. Therefore, they make good additions for internal post-training formulas that may have the overall goal of healing injury but where some Shen-calming aspects are desired.

Additionally, many of these herbs should be used primarily for the purpose of treating specific symptoms and then use should be discontinued immediately once symptoms are resolved.

Preparation

Many herbs in this category are dense materials that require pre-decoction when cooked and require prolonged aging when added to a liniment. Many of the minerals in this category should also be ground prior to use for maximum surface area benefit and subjected to Pao Zhi methods for optimizing extraction.

Zhu Sha is included in this text for historical and academic purposes **only!** While this herb should not ever be used (and for that matter is generally not available for purchase) it should be noted that cooking this herb enhances extraction and solubility of mercury. Therefore, cooking this herb with heat **increases** its toxicity.

Pinyin Name: Zhu Sha
English Name: Cinnibar
Pharmaceutical Name: Cinnibaris
Properties: sweet and cold
Meridians: Heart
VERY TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Calm Shen, Sedate Heart

Zhu Sha has a very dense and downward sinking energy to it that used to be used for disturbances of Shen.

2. Clear Heat and Swellings

Zhu Sha was used topically to reduce swelling and inflammation.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Discussion on Zhu Sha is purely academic and exists in this text only because it was historically used in a number of formulas, both clinically and in dit da. While Zhu Sha is no longer available on the market, it should not be used for any reason even if one is able to find it. It is quite toxic and has a high potential for adverse side-effects and overdose, which can be lethal.

When Zhu Sha was used, it was never processed; cooking this herb allows for a fuller extraction of compounds, namely mercuric oxide. This significantly increases the toxicity of this substance. Therefore, Zhu Sha historically was only given in pill form and often as a light coating over pills.

Despite the toxicity of this substance, it had been used in a number of formulas in the past; those include: Shaolin Recover the Pulse powder, Yang Family Spear Wound powder, Flying

Dragon Life-Robbing elixir, Quicken the Blood elixir, Extend the Sinews elixir, Calm the Spirit and Tranquilize the Brain formula, and Heroes pill.

It also appears in formulas such as Shaolin Pullout Toxins plaster, Shaolin Temple Music Plaster, and White-Coated Bodhisattva plaster as mercuric oxide.

Some of the listed formulas are still used in current day; obviously such formulas are filled either with Zhu Sha omitted or with a suitable non-toxic substitution.

Pinyin Name: Long Gu

English Name: Dragon Bone

Pharmaceutical Name: Os Draconis

Properties: sweet and cool

Meridians: Heart, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Calm Shen, Anchor Rising Yang

Long Gu is a heavy material that enters the Liver meridian to calm Liver Yin deficiency that does not properly anchor Yang; clinical causes include irritability, short temper, muscular rigidity, insomnia, and anxiety.

2. Prevent leakage of Fluids

Long Gu is astringent in nature and helps to consolidate bodily fluids while also preventing the loss of these fluids, often due to Kidney Yin deficiency.

3. Promote Generation of Flesh

When calcined, Long Gu is helpful for promoting the generation of flesh and the healing sores, wounds, and rashes when applied topically.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Long Gu is the fossilized bone of animals and is composed primarily of various states of calcium, and other trace elements. This substance is often used for internal purposes to calm the Shen but also has some utility for its ability to generate flesh and also provide calcium to the body so that it can be used for bone strength and development. For this reason it is often used both internally and externally.

Long Gu is often used as a substitute to Hu Gu (Tiger Bone) whose use is illegal and unethical. However, Long Gu operates in a significantly different way than Hu Gu; it does not have any of the Wind-Damp properties of Hu Gu, and Hu Gu does not have the Shen calming properties of Long Gu. Nevertheless, both herbs are composed largely of calcium, making Long Gu a reasonable but traditionally and energetically inaccurate substitution. Qian Nian Jian is perhaps a closer fit to Hu Gu while Lu Jiao Jiao is also reasonable in place of Hu Gu internally. Nevertheless, Long Gu makes a nice complement for those who are interested in this herbs ability to calm the Shen and anchor Yang.

Whether Long Gu functions differently than Hu Gu when used externally is a question still yet to be answered. Over time, hopefully these sorts of questions can undergo some serious scientific testing...

Long Gu is currently used in a number of dit da formulas in place of Hu Gu. An abbreviated list of formulas it appears in or is used in place of Hu Gu includes: Hung Gar iron palm jow, Ku Yu Cheong, Ark Wong, and several other variations of these formulas, Shaolin Iron Sand palm hot soak, Immortal Monk, and other similar variations, Leen Goang Jau, Wanham Shaolin dit

da jow, Seven Star Praying Mantis bruise jow, Ancient Way/Monks Fist dit da jow, Bak Mei general conditioning jow, Golden Lotus, and Metal Injury powder.

It is also used internally in Iron Bone Training powder, Iron Warrior, Metal Injury Miraculous Recovery powder, Flying Dragon Life-Robbing elixir, Heroes pill, multiple tissue generating formulas, and several classical and patent formulas, including Gold Lock tea pills. Keeping track of non-clinical formulas that Long Gu appears in is difficult because in most (if not all) of these instances, Long Gu is simply a substitute for Hu Gu; it was not originally used, and in many cases not even the best substitute. For potentially better substitutes, please reference Qian Nian Jian.

Long Chi, the teeth of fossilized animals, have a very similar use to Long Gu. Long Chi is used in its own small list of formulas and is seen in recipes such as Abundant Justice Wine, for which Long Gu can be used in its stead if necessary.

Pinyin Name: Hu Po

English Name: Amber Resin

Pharmaceutical Name: Succinum

Properties: sweet and neutral

Meridians: Heart, Liver, Urinary Bladder

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Calm the Shen

Hu Po calms the Shen to aid against sleep and mental disorders involving Shen such as insomnia and forgetfulness. Hu Po also enters the Liver to reduce tension as a result of Shen disturbance such as convulsions and general cramping.

2. Invigorate Blood Circulation

Hu Po invigorates Blood circulation to dissipate nodules, palpable masses, hematoma from injury, as well as stagnation related to heart and gynecological disorders. Its neutral energy also makes it useful for reducing inflammation.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Hu Po interacts to varying degrees with pharmaceutical drugs that have a sedative aspect such as barbiturates. Hu Po may potentiate sleeping time and may cause drowsiness when used alone.

Hu Po factors into only a couple of dit da related formulas; however, its sedative, Shen pacifying, and mild blood invigorating properties have made it useful in formulas used for meditative and qigong purposes in martial arts.

Hu Po is used in the Chan Ning Tong iron palm jow, Black Hand, Ancestors Advanced, Iron Goddess Hand Training liniment, and Iron Lotus; Hu Po is one relevant explanation as to why these liniments tend to have a thicker smoother consistency. Hu Po is also seen in internal formulas such as Five Treasure elixir, and Calm the Spirit and Tranquilize the Mind formula for its sedating properties.

Hu Po contains acids that are sensitive to heat. Hu Po is often post-decocted or taken in powder form to preserve the potency of the substance. It is easily ground, facilitating its use in pills.



Hu Po

Pinyin Name: Suan Zao Ren

English Name: Zizyphus Seed

Pharmaceutical Name: Semen Zizyphi Spinosae

Properties: sweet and neutral

Meridians: Heart, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Calm the Shen, Nourish the Heart

Suan Zao Ren is a very effective herb to counteract Shen disturbance due to Heart or Liver deficiencies. Clinical uses include sleep disorders, irritability, and dizziness/vertigo. Combined with the right herbs, it can also address Shen disturbance due to Spleen or Kidney deficiency.

2. Astringe Leakage of Fluids

Suan Zao Ren can stop various types of sweating and nocturnal emissions. Night sweats is a textbook symptom of Kidney Yin deficiency.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Suan Zao Ren is a relatively strong sedative substance with applications from insomnia to its pacifying effect that may be of use for meditative practice. It has some degree of analgesic action and can also help reduce stress and anxiety levels.

Suan Zao Ren is not an herb used in external injury or conditioning recipes, but is used in a few of internal tonics and elixirs, such as Shaolin Temple Tiger Fighting Elixir, and some small post-training formulas used to calm and nourish the body following a hard training session. Meditation is the key use in martial arts for Suan Zao Ren.

Suan Zao Ren is the seed from the Wild Jujube date and so it not surprisingly contains significant amounts of Jujuboside, a compound that is also found in Da Zao, which is responsible for its Shen calming aspects as well.

Because Suan Zao Ren has a hard exterior surface, crushing or grinding this herb is necessary for good utilization of the active compounds such as Jujuboside. The herb is also sometimes fried to increase its energetic heat and Shen calming effect.

Pinyin Name: Yuan Zhi

English Name: Polygala

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Polygalae

Properties: Acrid, bitter, and warm

Meridians: Lung, Heart

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Calm the Shen, Pacify the Heart

Yuan Zhi is used clinically for calming the Shen when presentations include restlessness, anxiety, forgetfulness, and even disorientation. The traditional uses of this herb centers around the Chinese medical phrases of "expelling phlegm" and "clearing the orifices of the Heart." This is not a physical explanation but rather an analytical tool for describing the problem.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Similarly to other Shen calming herbs, Yuan Zhi is found (perhaps less commonly) in formulas that martial artists use for calming the mind, meditation, and focusing thought. As an example, we see it appear in the Shaolin Temple Tiger Fighting Elixir, Many Years Persistent Injury Wine, Thirteen Flavors formula, and in multiple unnamed and classical formulas used by various individuals and Oriental herbal centers.

Yuan Zhi has exhibited some ability to suppress the CNS and provide a significant expectorant ability, perhaps due to its effect on the CNS.

Pinyin Name: He Huan Pi

English Name: Albizia Bark

Pharmaceutical Name: Cortex Albizia

Properties: sweet and neutral

Meridians: Heart, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Calm the Shen

He Huan Pi enters the Heart and Liver to address various types of emotional disturbances; its mild action can aid with irritability, depression, insomnia, and flares in temperament. For these uses, it is often an assisting herb in formulas where stronger herbs are used.

2. Invigorate Blood Circulation

He Huan Pi increases blood circulation to aid in the healing of traumatic injury, ranging from bruising and inflammation to more serious injuries such as simple bone fractures.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

He Huan Pi is among the list of interesting herbs in the sense that it has some clinical Shen calming properties, but also some very specific utility in dit da for its additional ability to increase blood flow and heal minor or major injuries. It is not markedly strong in this respect, nor does it appear in a long list of formulas; nevertheless, it is often combined with Tao Ren, Ru Xiang, Gu Sui Bu and so on. Texts such as Chen & Chen claim that it is "one of the most important herbs for treatment of external trauma and injuries". While that may be overzealous, certainly for its inexpensive price tag and lack of overuse, this is an herb that should remain on the "watch list" as we continue to roll into an unknown future with many of the more exotic and expensive herbs currently becoming more difficult to purchase.

He Huan Pi is also useful for meditative practice or as a post-training herbal tea for its ability to calm the Shen. Please see the template for Ye Jiao Teng for more information on this.

Pinyin Name: Ye Jiao Teng

English Name: Polygonum Vine

Pharmaceutical Name: Caulis Polygoni Multiflori

Properties: sweet and neutral

Meridians: Heart, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Calm the Shen

Ye Jiao Teng focuses its strength on correcting deficiency of Blood, particularly, in the Heart meridian regarding issues with sleep patterns, including insomnia and dreaming excessively.

2. Open Channels, Dispel Wind

Ye Jiao Teng can open the channels and disperse Bi Syndrome that causes pain and stiffness in the joints. Again, as a nourishing herb, this is Wind and Bi Syndrome primarily as a result of deficiency.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ye Jiao Teng can shine through for its ability to focus its attention on the health of the musculoskeletal system by opening the channels and dealing with pain and stiffness arising from Bi Syndrome—an important trait for conditioning formulas. As we know, herbs that fight off Bi Syndrome help form the basis of iron palm formulas, and also appear to some degree in various injury formulas.

Ye Jiao Teng and He Huan Pi are both important herbs for the martial artist and athlete. While there are stronger herbs that perform each of their actions, when used in combination, they have a somewhat unique effect: Aiding in healing injury from training, and calming the mind. The latter of these 2 is important for multiple reasons: For the modern martial artist or athlete, this helps return the body to a state of relaxation. For the traditional martial artist, this translates more towards meditative activity. These 2 herbs are very good choices for those who are seeking to build a post-training formula that is useful for meditation and qigong, while also supporting the injurious needs from training.

Pinyin Name: Ling Zhi

English Name: Ganoderma

Pharmaceutical Name: Ganoderma

Properties: sweet and neutral

Meridians: Heart, Liver, Spleen, Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Calm the Shen

The nourishing properties of Ling Zhi enter the Heart meridian to address insomnia and the Lung meridian to address disturbances that manifest as coughing, wheezing, rapid respiration and asthma as well.

2. Tonify Qi and Blood

Ling Zhi can tonify the Spleen to promote the production of Qi and Blood and fight against fatigue and poor appetite.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ling Zhi is one of several species of mushrooms that have been used to help strengthen the body and promote general health and well-being. Ling Zhi has been identified in various studies and trials to have a wide range of uses and therapeutic properties, ranging from cardiovascular health to immune strengthening benefits, aside from its sedative and antiasthmatic properties.

Ling Zhi is not commonly seen in formulas, certainly not for dida-specific use. However, it is a food-grade substance that can be used with or without tonics to help promote general health and strengthen Qi and Blood.

Chapter 14

Herbs that Calm the Liver and Extinguish Wind

Concept

Herbs which are used to calm the liver and extinguish Wind are those that address a range of symptoms and problems related to the internalization of Wind, causing a variety of fairly complex set of patterns, often dealing with physical and mental tension, dizziness and vertigo, anger, and a variety of disorders of the eyes and heart, and sleeping patterns. Examples of Internal Liver Wind include everything from musculoskeletal pain and tightness, hypertension, seizures, and even stroke. These and more symptoms can be a complex weave of both patterns of Yin deficiency which causes Liver Yang to rise, or of excess where Heat or Wind are culprit.

From the perspective of the athlete and martial artist, many of the herbs in this category have far-reaching and critically important uses for internal and external use, ranging from relaxing the tendons and flexibility work to meditation, Bi Syndrome that causes joint pain, and even to some degree, reduction of swelling and pain from injury.

Like many other categories which are further divided into subcategories, herbs that calm the Liver can be placed in several different sub-categories. Clinically, herbs that purge Liver Fire deal primarily with disorders dealing with vision and heat in the upper part of the body. These disorders are of real importance to martial artists, but the herbs in this sub group have additional actions which are strongly beneficial to martial artists.

Herbs which sedate Liver Yang deal with restlessness that creates anger, insomnia, irritability, and more physically, dizziness. Again, herbs here have ancillary functions that concern martial artists and athletes. These herbs can calm the mind and may be useful for meditation.

Lastly, herbs which calm Liver Wind will have strong and more direct concern for martial arts formulas. These herbs address all types of tension, to include tremors, musculoskeletal pain and tightness, seizures, and spasms. These herbs are important for flexibility training, relieving cramps due to overtraining, and can also aid with hypertension when properly used by your healthcare professional.

The list of herbs included in this text for this category has been abbreviated more than some other categories. Herbs such as Ling Yang Jiao are left out primarily due to obscurity and issues with potential ethical boundaries. Mu Li and Zhen Zhu Mu are 2 other worthwhile herbs not listed here; although, they do occupy an important place in a clinical settings.

Preparation

Many herbs in this category vary based on physical and chemical structure. Some herbs must be cooked thoroughly and best used when ground or crushed. Other herbs are only to be post-decocted, such as Gou Teng, which can lose some of its actions through prolonged cooking.

While Mu Li and Zhen Zhu Mu are purposely omitted here, shell-like substances and minerals such as these should be pre-decocted and cooked for longer periods of time for a full extraction.

Pinyin Name: Gou Teng

English Name: Gambir, Hook Vine

Pharmaceutical Name: Ramulu Uncariae cum Uncis

Properties: sweet and cold

Meridians: Liver, Pericardium

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Extinguish Wind and Spasms

Gou Teng is useful for extinguishing Liver Wind and has utility for relieving physical types of tension such as spasms and cramps, convulsions, grinding of the teeth, hypertension, stroke, and more mental forms of tensions such as restlessness and irritability.

2. Clear Heat and Sedate Liver Yang

Gou Teng has a cooling effect on the body and sedates rising Liver Yang that presents headache, dizziness, vertigo, hypertension, and sensations of heaviness.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Gou Teng is a critically important herb for internal Wind clinically as well as for the martial artist and athlete. It has exhibited an antihypertensive pharmacological activity in addition to its ability to relax the body, suppress physical activity, and counteract the effects of caffeine on the CNS. Lastly, Chen & Chen (p. 784) claims that Gou Teng and Tian Ma used together have a free-radical scavenging ability in addition to the other functions.

Gou Teng displays a significant usage for martial artists and athletes in both internal and external formulas. Externally, it can be useful for relaxing sinew and reducing cramping that may take place during training, conditioning, or due to injury. Because of its cold nature, it may also help reduce heat and

inflammation at the site of injury.

Internally, it can have a significant impact on releasing tension from muscles and becomes a useful substance for flexibility training as well as controlling the buildup of heat from training and pacifying one's self following training.

Gou Teng is used in PlumDragon's Jun Fan/JKD dit da jow, Broad Application Tendon Trauma wine, in some iterations of the Ku Yu Cheong iron palm jow, and PlumDragon Flexibility pack. The Flexibility pack is one of the most popular PlumDragon products because while it is a seemingly simple formula, people find great benefit in using the formula for increasing flexibility; this is in part due to Gou Teng.

Pinyin Name: Tian Ma

English Name: Gastrodia

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Gastrodiae

Properties: sweet and neutral

Meridians: Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Extinguish Wind and Spasms

Tian Ma has strong functions to extinguish Wind from the Liver meridian and dispel phlegm from the channels to remedy various types of musculoskeletal tensions such as spasms and cramps, tetany, and seizures; it is also used clinically to deal with serious conditions such as stroke.

2. Sedate Liver Yang

Tian Ma sedates and anchors Liver Yang to address various types of headaches, dizziness, and hypertension in clinical settings.

3. Dispel Bi Syndrome

Tian Ma is used for its ability to reduce pain in the musculoskeletal system. It can relieve tension in the joints and increase range of motion and reduce pain.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Tian Ma is a strong herb with sedative properties; it reduces pain due to tension or headache; and it tends to increase cardiac blood flow and have positive effects for those with hypertension. Additionally, Tian Ma differs from many other herbs which disperse or penetrate Wind or Dampness in that Tian Ma has a sweet nature that provides it a minor Yin tonic aspect. While many other herbs of this nature can injure the Yin and dry the body, Tian Ma will not produce this problem.

Tian Ma is not used in external dit da formulas but is used in the occasional internal training wine. It can have positive effects in regards to those interested in meditation, working on flexibility, or those with excessive physical or mental tension. As an added bonus to address Bi Syndrome, it is useful for martial artists who are deep into conditioning.

Tian Ma is used in internal formulas such as Precious Jade powder, Shaolin Live Dragon wine, Tiger Bone Training wine, and Abundant Justice wine. Externally, the only notable formula it is used in is Ten Thousand Respondings plaster, which is probably a waste or inappropriate use of the herb. This herb tends to be on the more expensive side, although it is a very important herb, perhaps more so for those who treat patients clinically and lesser for the martial artist or athlete.

Pinyin Name: Quan Xie

English Name: Scorpion

Pharmaceutical Name: Scorpio

Properties: spicy and neutral

Meridians: Liver

TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Extinguish Wind and Convulsions

Quan Xie very strongly extinguishes internal Wind to pacify chronic and serious spasms, cramps, twitches, migraines, convulsions, seizures, tetanus, and stroke. This substance is very powerful in its effects to relieve various types of tension in the body.

2. Disperse Nodules and Swellings

Quan Xie is very drying and can reduce swollen masses, nodules and painful accumulations.

3. Open Channels

Quan Xie, very penetrating and dispersing in nature, strongly opens the channels to treat Bi Syndrome, arthritic joint pain, and decreased range of motion due to pain and tension. The venom has strong analgesic functions.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Quan Xie is one of the strongest herbs on the planet to extinguish internal Wind and open the channels via the Liver. The powerful buthotoxin venom contains a long list of proteins that have shown strong actions to relax muscles and reduce seizures, convulsions, and blood pressure; many of these proteins are now synthesized for pharmacological use.

Quan Xie is a toxic substance and great care should be taken when handling the raw herb. The venom sack in the end of the tail (which is not surprisingly the most potent portion of the animal) contains enough venom to warrant a trip to the hospital should one accidentally prick themselves with a scorpion tail.

Quan Xie is not used commonly in dit da recipes as it is fairly rare and expensive. Even then, it is not necessary for most training liniments but tends to be more useful for those with serious debilitating problems, or in very small dose in internal training wines. Some sources cite that various pockets in China feel that the consumption of scorpion is very important for fighting off disease.

Quan Xie is used in Die Da Song iron palm jow, Ten Thousand Respondings plaster, Worm wine, and internally in Level Wind elixir, and Abundant Justice wine.

There are several species of similar scorpions to the commonly used Quan Xie (*Buthus Martensii*), living in various places around the world. While there is no real way to know how well these other species work, several PlumDragon customers have experimented with other species of scorpions with good success.

Pinyin Name: Wu Gong

English Name: Centipede

Pharmaceutical Name: Scolopendra

Properties: spicy and warm

Meridians: Liver

TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Extinguish Wind and Convulsions

Wu Gong very strongly extinguishes internal Wind to pacify chronic and serious spasms, cramps, twitches, chronic migraines, convulsions, seizures, grinding of teeth, tetanus, stroke, and delirium. Wu Gong is strongly penetrating and effectively addresses various types of physical and mental tension in the body.

2. Disperse Nodules and Swellings

Wu Gong reduces toxic nodules and swellings internally and externally, to include various types of lumps as well as snake bites and bites from other venomous animals.

3. Open Channels

Wu Gong opens and unblocks the channels to treat Bi Syndrome causing pain and tension in the joints.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Wu Gong has historically been paired with Quan Xie in many of the formulas in which it appears, both clinically as well as in martial arts formulas. Please refer to the template for Quan Xie for a list of similar formulas that Wu Gong may appear in.

Wu Gong has becoming increasingly expensive and difficult to find in the past decade. Since there are other herbs that work as well, are cheaper, and easier to find, it is difficult to justify continuing the use of this herb.

Wu Gong has displayed some ability as an antineoplastic herb, an antiseizure agent, and interestingly, as an antibiotic; of particular interest is its antibiotic property against some Staph infections.

Pinyin Name: Di Long
English Name: Earthworm
Pharmaceutical Name: Pheretima
Properties: Salty and cold
Meridians: Liver, Spleen, Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Extinguish Wind, Clear Heat

Di Long has a very cooling energy and great ability to extinguish Wind and excess Heat. Clinical manifestations include convulsions, epilepsy, seizures, mania, as well as fever and respiratory issues where Heat is present.

2. Open Channels

Di Long opens and unblocks the channels to treat Bi Syndrome causing pain and tension in the joints. Di Long is particularly useful for blockages in the joints or due to injury where there is also Heat causing swelling, pain, and stiffness. Application of Di Long externally helps aid in the healing process.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Di Long is the common earthworm. Di Long works in much the same manner as Wu Gong, Quan Xie and other "worm" herbs which unblock flow. The difference can be summarized as following: Di Long is about 4-5 times weaker in action than Wu Gong or Quan Xie, but it is not toxic. Additionally, while it is much less expensive than Wu Gong or Quan Xie, it suffers from very poor availability, unless you're willing to use Di Long (extract powder) in your liniment. Di Long extract is widely available on the internet and has significant analgesic effect.

Di Long used to be a reasonable substitute for Quan Xie or Wu Gong when the strength of those herbs was not necessary. But today lack of availability makes it a less common herb. It does

still appear in several formulas. Most of them are obscure, but some of the well-known ones include Yang Jin Hua Yao Jiu, the purported iron palm formula of Ying Xing Chan, an Anhui College of TCM liniment, and a handful of small Shaolin formulas as well as salves and poultices such as Qu Yu Xiao Zhong Gao and Zhi Tong San.

Pinyin Name: Bai Ji Li

English Name: Tribulus, Caltrop Fruit

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Tribuli

Properties: bitter, acrid and cool

Meridians: Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Pacify the Liver

Bai Ji Li enters the Liver to address Liver Yang Rising, which tends to affect the upper portions of the body with manifestations such as dizziness, headache, and issues with vision. Bai Ji Li is said to brighten the eyes.

2. Disperse Liver Qi Stagnation

Bai Ji Li aids in smoothing the flow of Liver Qi when obstruction in the Liver is present. Clinically, this is a broad grouping, and can range from pain and distention in the chest, hypochondriac pain, menstrual pain, lactation problems, and pain due to palpable masses, which may or may not be a result of injury.

3. Dispel Wind

Bai Ji Li dispels Wind primarily from the exterior layers of the body, namely the skin and related disorders.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Bai Ji Li is an herb that has some mild attention in the world of internal tonics. While it is not a tonic in and of itself (it is clearing in nature), it is found in some tonic formulas. Since it has a broad range of functions, is neutral in thermal energy, and is mildly drying, this herb can be useful either to balance certain tonic formulas as well as to provide secondary or tertiary functions when needed.

Bai Ji Li is found in only a small cross section of relevant formulas. It appears in some Shaolin formulas for the treatment of bleeding in and around the eye, where it is used in conjunction with other herbs which more specifically stop bleeding; in Shaolin Great Strength Pill, Shaolin Heroes Pill, Shaolin Great Supplement Wine, and Iron Warrior Wine.

Bai Ji Li has some functions that are not necessarily of particular importance to the martial artist. And while this herb is not currently expensive or difficult to procure, if it ever became such then its substitution would be quite easy. That is to say, to the author this herb is not of any large importance.

Chapter 15

Herbs that Open the Orifices

Concept

In Chinese medicine, herbs that open the orifices are defined as those substances which dispel blockage in the body. There are a variety of different types of obstructions and blockages; most often in this category, this is in reference to blockages that interfere with sensory ability, and some herbs work very specifically to revive individuals from unconsciousness.

Orifice-opening herbs tend to enter the Heart (and sometimes the Lung and Spleen meridians) meridian and clear blockage from “sensory orifices of the heart”. It is important to note that this description does **not** intend to propose that there is a physical blockage in the heart. These herbs can often be very depleting to the body, and should be used with care (even externally) for those who have low constitution.

In biomedicine, similar types of blockages are often mapped over to the CNS, and of course the brain. So it is not surprising that trials and tests on substances in this category tend to stimulate the CNS, increase general circulation, and stimulate breathing in the Lungs, and are usually only used for short-term symptomatic treatments. This is why these substances can be depleting to the body.

A thorough discussion of the patterns associated with blockage of the sensory orifices can be a lengthy and detailed matter, dealing with a number of foreign concepts. That discussion is beyond the scope of this book. However, it is worth noting that herbs in this category are often used for problems such as seizures, stroke, loss of consciousness, pronounced stiffness throughout the body, heat stroke, and even various serious infections such as meningitis and pneumonia.

While using herbs and performing some self-diagnosis is fairly safe, one should not attempt to use these herbs internally without the direct help of your local health care provider. It can be dangerous.

Dose on these herbs is always very small when used internally. External liniments often have less of a restriction for dosage.

In this chapter, only 2 substances are listed. While there are several more, they are increasingly less common on the market and are not of necessity for the martial artist. Of the 2 herbs listed, only 1 is realistically available. The other being mentioned because of its significant impact in the past and the impressive list of formulas it has been used in.

Preparation

Most of the herbs listed in this chapter are strongly aromatic, meaning that they contain large amount of volatile oils and compounds which aromatically penetrate and disperse blockage. As such, they can be quite sensitive to heat.

Unless otherwise noted in specific templates, herbs in this category should always be post-decocted, or added after the rest of the herbs have been removed from the heat source, if cooking. Naturally, for aged liniments, herbs that open the orifices can be added with all the other herbs, even if the water or alcohol is being heated before addition, since it is no longer in contact with the heat source once it makes contact with these sensitive herbs.

Lastly, many of these herbs are not highly soluble in water solutions. When producing liniment, it may be necessary to mix these substances up with some warm water before adding to a liniment and stir thoroughly to spur dissolution. When used in decoction, they can be simply added at the end, or used in pills or capsules.

Pinyin Name: She Xiang

English Name: Deer Musk

Pharmaceutical Name: Moschus

Properties: acrid and warm

Meridians: Heart, Liver, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTINS

1. Open Orifices, Awaken the Shen

She Xiang (in good quality) is potentially the strongest substance used for reviving the Shen in cases of lost consciousness. This includes fainting and stupor, stroke and convulsions, epileptic seizures, and tetanus.

2. Invigorate Blood Circulation, Open Channels

She Xiang also increases local circulation and opens the channels when used externally. When used externally for injury, it aids in healing injury, regenerating tissue, reducing swelling and nodules, and is very useful for reducing pain caused by Blood stasis and other types of injury.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

She Xiang is the collection of material from the glands of the Musk Deer and is composed principally of substances Muscone and Normuscone, which has undergone a decent degree of study in research settings. Muscone has a direct effect on the CNS, the cardiovascular system, and the immune system through its mild antibiotic properties.

It is very strongly penetrating and dispersing, being probably the strongest of all the aromatic herbs. It invigorates the Blood, breaks stagnation, and is often said that because it is so strongly

dispersing throughout the body, that it enters and unblocks all of the meridians and relieves pain in all areas of the body.

Unfortunately, She Xiang is very expensive and in recent years the cost has driven upwards while the quality has dropped. As a result, it's very rare to see She Xiang used, although it is still available. Today, formulas sometimes substitute 3 times the quantity of Bing Pian, or 1-2 times Su He Xiang. Other herbs used to emulate the effects of She Xiang include various combinations of Bing Pian, An Xi Xiang, Ding Xiang, in concert with other herbs to cool or increase Blood circulation. None of these herbs directly match the effects of She Xiang exactly. For a very good substitution, the details of a given formula should be considered to make the most legitimate substitution.

She Xiang used to be used in a fairly large cross-section of formulas. We just don't see this much anymore because it has been removed and substituted out. Historically, those formulas include older versions of Qi Li San, classic Die Da Wan, Five Treasure Elixir, Formula #1 of the 3-stage Ministerial conditioning system, Injured Sinew Remove the Bone Pill, Extend the Sinews Elixir, Extract Toxins and Engender Flesh Powder, Ginseng and Deer Antler pills, Harmonize and Regulate the Qi Mechanism formula, Original Brightness powder, Red Origin powder, Seven Flavors powder, Connect the Bones Elixir, Gentleman's Companion plaster, Shaolin Medicinal thread, Quicken the Blood Elixir, Recover the Pulse powder, Temple Music plaster, Ten Thousand Respondings plaster, Spear Wound powder, Ten Thousand Abilities to Stop Bleeding powder, Unblock the Orifices and Invigorate Blood decoction, and White-Coated Bodhisattva plaster.

In addition to those listed above, She Xiang also appears in a list of smaller formulas of past use. As we can see, it was at one time, an integral "herb" in the context of Chinese medicine. Today, the price of this substance can end up north of \$100/gram for a good quality product, with lower quality musk or the raw unprocessed pellets closer to \$100/ounce. In any case, these costs are unreasonable when herbs that are 1/100 of

the cost are not nearly that weak in comparison.

Su He Xiang and An Xi Xiang are without their own templates in this text. However, both of these herbs are useful as substitutions for She Xiang in different cases.

Su He Xiang has a warm energy like She Xiang that is good for opening and warming the channels. It aids in relieving pain, can provide some anticoagulant and moving properties, and is used in about ½ the potency of She Xiang.

An Xi Xiang also has a warm energy and a very dispersing nature. It also relieves pain and moves Blood, perhaps more beneficially than Su He Xiang. However, it is slightly less potent when compared to She Xiang in its penetrating and dispersing properties.

Bing Pian also fits alongside of these 2 herbs as suitable substitutions. However, it is noticeably cooler than the above 3 and does not have the same moving aspect. It is, however, at about the same potency in its ability to open and disperse.

Ding Xiang also has a very penetrating function; it is warmer than She Xiang, does not have the moving component, but is also a better pain killing herb.

Pinyin Name: Bing Pian

English Name: Borneol

Pharmaceutical Name: Borneolum Syntheticum

Properties: acrid, bitter and cool

Meridians: Heart, Spleen, Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Open Orifices, Awaken the Shen

Bing Pian awakens and revives the Shen in cases of unconsciousness such as dizziness, fainting, and convulsions.

2. Clear Heat, Relieve Pain

Bing Pian has a cool and very dispersing function which helps clear heat and inflammation from the skin and various areas in the upper body. Bing Pian has some antibiotic activity and can also relieve pain topically.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Bing Pian, literally translated as “ice slice”, is the substance Borneol, derived naturally from the *Dryobalanops Aromatica* plant. While Borneol in its natural form is available at a high price, the synthetic version is the form of choice because it has a very similar level of strength and is currently (2012) about 30 times cheaper than the natural form.

Bing Pian also shares some similarities with She Xiang, of which it is approximately 1/3 the strength of She Xiang in its penetrating and dispersing action. However, Bing Pian does not have the strong moving properties that are characteristic of She Xiang and it is colder. For this reason, substitutions often include one or more herbs in tandem with Bing Pian which increase the temperature of the substitution, and add a Blood moving capability.

Bing Pian is used in a sizeable list of formulas, mostly external. Those include: Classical Qi Li San variations, PlumDragon Southern Fist Iron Body jow, Sunrise Training dit da jow, Ten Thousand Abilities to Stop Bleeding Powder, Prescription due to Injury to Sinew, and Brian Grays dit da jow, Shaolin Red Origin Powder, Seven Flavors Recover and Recuperate Powder, Shaolin Pull Out Toxins plaster, Shaolin Quicken the Blood elixir, Extend the Sinew elixir, Eight Immortals Powder, Shaolin Medicinal Thread, Spirit Connecting powder, Toad Skin plaster, Shaolin Return Spring plaster, Shaolin Thousand Hammers

plaster, Shaolin Temple Music plaster, White-Coated Bodhisattva plaster, Five Twigs plaster, Shaolin Gentleman's Companion plaster, and at least 5 or 6 other plasters from Shaolin, and Fang Sou Yi (Formula #1) of the ministerial conditioning system.

Chapter 16

Herbs that Tonify

Concept

The word “tonify” marks a very important aspect of Chinese Medicine. Most systems of medicine work to reduce illness and are symptomatic in nature. Tonic herbs are an important dipole-opposite of those more clearing substances and mark a large tier of herbs that work towards strengthening decline of bodily function, and also working towards longevity and prevention of future disease. Tonifying is the function of building, strengthening, and nourishing various aspects, functions, and parts of the body. Tonic herbs seek to improve the overall function of organs in the body and the operation of the body as a whole, increase immunity, health, and constitution, and nourish the substances and processes within the body.

There are 4 clear delineations within the larger family of tonic herbs, marked by 4 tangible and intangible components of the body: Qi, Blood, Yin, and Yang. Clinically, these 4 substances are significant for the following reasons:

1. Qi tonic herbs are those herbs which strengthen Qi and generally strengthen some type of declining physical functionality in the body. Qi tonics often enter the Spleen and Lung to strengthen these organs functions of production and transportation of energy. Qi tonics often address feelings of lethargy, shortness of breath, lack of energy, weakness, fatigue, edema, and poor appetite. Qi tonic herbs tend to be sweet and somewhat cloying.
2. Yang tonic herbs are those herbs which build Yang and, like Qi tonics, strengthen some type of declining physical function. Yang tonics work directly on the Kidney. Being hot and dry, Yang tonics often address coldness, weakness in lower back and knees, weakness of the bones, and a variety of issues with the reproductive organs, such as premature ejaculation, impotence, and urinary problems.
3. Blood tonic herbs strengthen Blood and generally strengthen substances in the body as opposed to functions. These herbs may actually help build red blood cells as well. These herbs often enter the Liver, Heart, and Spleen as these organs store Blood and control the Blood and vessels. Blood tonics are very useful especially for gynecological deficiencies with women, but also for unnecessary weight loss, palpitations, insomnia, paleness, mild lethargy, and slow rate of healing from injury.
4. Yin tonic herbs build bodily fluids and, like Blood tonics, strengthen or nourish substances within the body as opposed to functions of the body. Yin tonics often enter the Kidney and Liver, and more rarely, the Stomach and Lung. These herbs address a variety of problems such as infertility, premature graying of hair, dizziness and issues with vision, weakness in the knees and lower back and bone strength, cough due to dryness,

and general dryness or thirst in the body.

Because tonics is such a broad topic and very important theoretical piece of Chinese medical theory and practice, these herbs can enter a variety of meridians, comprise a variety of active chemical compounds, have a variety of energetic temperatures, and provide a large diversity of actions and benefits for health and healing. This is a very important and a rich portion of herbalism, one which requires a good deal of study.

Please refer to individual sub-categories for more specific details on each. And keep in mind that there are some patterns that should originate while looking at each sub-group. Picking up on those differences and similarities will be important for gleaning a deep understanding of how all tonics fit into the bigger picture.

Preparation

Tonic herbs are very often heavy and dense substance which requires a full cooking cycle or significant aging time to optimally extract constituents from these herbs. Some should be cooked for the normal period and others should be pre-decocted. Very few, if any, herbs in this category are sensitive to heat.

Additionally, grinding these herbs will help aid in extraction. Many texts advise that clinically, these herbs should be given in pills and capsules to increase patient compliance. However, tonics taste significantly better than herbs in other categories. Nevertheless, grinding and prolonged cooking, regardless of method of administration, are important for best effect.

Section 1 – Qi Tonifying Herbs

Pinyin Name: Ren Shen

English Name: Ginseng Root

Pharmaceutical name: Radix Ginseng

Properties: sweet, bitter and warm

Meridians: Lung, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Strongly Tonify Source Qi

Ren Shen has a strong function to tonify Yuan Qi, the source of energy in the body from the TCM perspective. It restores constitution and vitality, due to deficiency that may occur from excessive activity, illness, or loss of excessive blood, fluids, or other bodily substances.

2. Tonify Spleen and Lung, and the 4 Bodily Substances

In addition to acting as a general Qi tonic to the whole body, Ren Shen also strengthens the function of the Spleen and Lungs to promote digestion and respiration, and dispel excess dampness, shortness of breath, and wheezing. Ren Shen also helps the body to produce Blood and Qi, while also aiding in tonifying Yang and Yin to aid in thirst and dryness, and issues such as impotence. Steamed ginseng tends to tonify Yang more strongly while the unsteamed white variety of ginseng is more appropriate for addressing deficiencies of Yin.

In this way, Ren Shen can be viewed as a kind of homeostatic herb.

3. Calm the Shen

Ren Shen has some intrinsic ability to aid in mental focus and increase poor cognitive function, especially if it is due to lack of Qi and Blood.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ren Shen is often called the King of tonic herbs. And as we can see from the impressive list of actions above, it is no wonder. While ginseng is not a cure-all, it can be very useful for dealing with just about any deficiency in the body. It works on the body at a very deep level and can produce a profound impact on health when used properly. It has been shown in clinical studies to have positive effects on coronary artery disease, the CNS, Diabetes, and glandular response of the endocrine system. It has shown effectiveness in research for sexual dysfunction, as an immunostimulant, shock, and Addison's. It positively affects cognitive function, and has even shown some promise in studies related to helping patients finish chemotherapy in situations where they were unable.

Research and work is still being done on ginseng, and no doubt more positive benefits will develop with the use of this herb. It is important to once again note, however, that it is not a cure-all substance and much of what is on the market (tea-based commercial products, trendy extracts and such) is terrible quality. It works in a specific way and a quality product should be used properly for the right reasons, rather than just by everyone who thinks that adding ginseng to their list of edibles is the right thing to do. Not everyone needs ginseng.

Ren Shen is a common ingredient in far too many formulas to list. Most of these are classical and patent formulas so they will not be mentioned here as other sources have thoroughly covered those areas. It is used in a vast variety of tonics. Very briefly, it appears as the chief herb in the father tonic formula, Four Gentleman's, and most variations thereof, including stronger tonic formulas such as various formulas of Spring

Wine, Qi and Yang tonics, and perhaps hundreds of training formulas based in and out of Shaolin. It is also a common addition to formulas to increase their tonifying aspect. And because it can be a bit expensive, it is often removed from tonic formulas and Dang Shen used in its stead when a strong tonic is not necessary. Dang Shen is usually used at the rate of 3 times the quantity of ginseng.

Standard market-grade Kirin ginseng currently costs around \$5/oz retail and is mostly of decent quality, although relatively speaking, it is of very low potency when compared to other more sought after varieties. Other varieties of quality ginseng include:

Transition is a mid-end cut of ginseng that boasts potency and strength that is significantly higher than the standard cut Kirin ginseng on the market. This Transition grade is perhaps the best of both worlds, providing a serious level of potency but without the price tag of Korean or Wild Chinese ginsengs.

Yi Shan Shen, or Wild crafted Mountain Ginseng, is a variety of ginseng that is often planted in select forested regions and left to grow on its own for as little as 8 years all the way on up to 16 years or more. Yi Shan Shen is then usually picked, carefully cleaned by hand, and sun dried, making these special mountain varieties a white ginseng rather than red. They are remarkably more potent than the Transition ginseng, and the use of this type of ginseng comes with a profound impact when used over the long-term. These are extremely potent roots for the longevity of the body. Retail prices on this herb starts around \$35/oz and runs up to well over \$50/oz for older roots and special varieties such as Pahuo Yi Shan Shen.

Korean Ginseng is very warming and can be quite expensive. It appears in several varieties and grades. While most people are only aware of the common “good” and “heaven” grade reds, Korean Ginseng is also available as white varieties and with various strains, such as the “Big Claw” stocked at PlumDragon and organic cuts available in medium and large sizes, somewhat

akin to the good and heaven ratings given to the most standardized market cuts.

Chang Bai Shan Ginseng is often referred to as a special variety of a very powerful root. However, the reader should bear in mind that Chang Bai Shan refers to a mountainous region in which many growers decide to plant their seeds and roots. Attaching the name, “Chang Bai Shan” to the front of Ren Shen does not qualify these roots as high quality. It simply refers to a popular place for growers to raise their roots. Some Chang Bai Shan is of very high quality, and some of it is quite normal in stature, or even of low quality. These roots are often subject to marketing hype.

Lastly, it should be noted that many current tea-based products in the USA advertise that they contain some amount of ginseng extract. No doubt this is for the marketing factor of ginseng. Please note, however, that the combination of ginseng with virtually ANY tea tends to reduce the effectiveness of ginseng. That is, ginseng should NOT be used with green tea or other types of tea as it will degrade the capability of the ginseng, which to be candid, is likely not very high in commercial tea-based drinks as it is...

It should be noted briefly that Siberian Ginseng is marketed somewhat aggressively. While Siberian Ginseng is indeed a tonic herb, Siberian Ginseng is not Ginseng at all, but only a creative marketing name.



Yi Shan Shen, Wild Mountain Ren Shen

Pinyin Name: Xi Yang Shen

English Name: American Ginseng

Pharmaceutical name: Radix Panacis Quinquefolii

Properties: sweet, bitter, and cold

Meridians: Kidney, Heart, Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Qi and Yin

Xi Yang Shen tonifies Kidney Qi and nourishes the Yin of the Lung to address chronic deficiencies. It helps to generate fluids, reduce fatigue, and expel fire from the body.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Xi Yang Shen is often referred to as American Ginseng. While these roots do share a similar function and the roots even can look quite similar, they are not related. American Ginseng is of a distinctly different family of plants.

Ren Shen is much warmer and more potent in its action to tonify the body. Conversely, Xi Yang Shen works less strongly on the body, has a very cooling energetic effect, and is more useful for symptoms of heat. Both herbs tonify Qi and nourish Yin.

Xi Yang Shen grows wild in various parts of the USA and some people prefer to use this native herb for that reason alone. While it is not a direct substitute, it can be used in place of Ren Shen. Please keep in mind however, that it will change the overall essence of the formula to varying degrees, depending on the other herbs in the mix.

Standard quality Xi Yang Shen root generally has a similar cost to the standard cut Kirin Ren Shen on the market. There is rarely a higher grade Xi Yang Shen available as there is for Ren Shen; often, it is only available in a single quality.

Pinyin Name: Dang Shen

English Name: Codonopsis

Pharmaceutical name: Radix Codonopsis

Properties: sweet and neutral

Meridians: Spleen, Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Qi and Middle Jiao

Dang Shen tonifies the Spleen, Stomach, and Lung, to enhance overall function in the middle burner. This includes the transportive functions involved in digestion, issues with fatigue and low constitution, prolapse of organs, and even constipation.

2. Tonify Blood and Yin

Dang Shen nourishes both Blood and fluids in the body.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Dang Shen, often referred to as “Poor man’s ginseng”, is a very useful herb for tonification. While it does not exhibit the pronounced deep effects reminiscent of Ren Shen, its mild nature is very good for strengthening the body in a variety of ways, helping to increase energy levels and constitution, raise the digestive function, and spur the production of Blood and Yin through its effectiveness at tonifying Qi.

Dang Shen has also shown some promise for use as an adaptogenic and immunostimulant, and appears to show positive benefit in increasing cardiac output and blood perfusion, and produces a physical increase in red blood cell count and decrease in white blood cell count.

Dang Shen is used in many of the same types of formulas that Ren Shen is found in. Of particular note is that Dang Shen actually appears in 2 separate dit da jow formulas. One is a generic Bak Fu Pai formula called Bak Fu Pai #1. It also appears in an old Shuai Chiao/ShaoLin beginners iron palm formula. In both cases, it is an interesting addition, primarily because it serves no real purpose for healing injury, but was chosen primarily to balance the formula. Yet, it is an odd choice and worthy of note.

Pinyin Name: Huang Qi

English Name: Astragalus

Pharmaceutical name: Radix Astragali

Properties: sweet and slightly warm

Meridians: Spleen, Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Qi

Huang Qi has very good ability to tonify general Qi deficiency, Spleen Qi deficiency, and tonify the defensive Wei Qi. Ranging from fatigue or tiredness, shortness of breath, spontaneous perspiration, dizziness, organ prolapse, and a variety of other clinical manifestations where a general strengthening of the energy system or constitution is important.

2. Regulate Water Circulation

Huang Qi, through its influence on the Spleen meridian, can regulate water to combat edema, sensations in the body of weight or dampness.

3. Generate Flesh

Huang Qi exhibits an upward and outward energy. It enters the Spleen and Lung meridians to address the muscle and skin layers of the body, aids in healing sores and ulcerations on the skin. It is used in some formulas to direct the actions towards the muscle layers.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Huang Qi is an incredibly useful herb in a variety of different formulas. It is also fairly inexpensive and readily available on the market, often in multiple levels of quality. In addition to the stated actions above, Huang Qi also is useful for pain and numbness in the muscles due to poor circulation of Blood or Blood deficiency. It also can “raise the Yang” and tends to push

energy upwards. This interesting property has translated well in labs to Huang Qi being a viable herb for organ prolapse. However, it can also create headaches if one is prone to them.

Huang Qi is a wonderful immune system enhancer and mild antibiotic, being used in Jade Windscreen Powder when combined with Fang Feng and Bai Zhu; it is useful for increasing basal metabolic rate, decreases blood pressure in lab animals, and has shown viability in numerous clinical studies, ranging from prevention of colds, flu, pulmonary tract infections, and asthma, to the treatment of prolapse, hepatitis, psoriasis, rhinitis, and a variety of immune disorders and prolapse. It is an integral herb in clinical practice and is also very important to the martial artist and athlete.

Huang Qi can be found in as long a list of herbs as something like Ren Shen. It is not found much in dit da formulas, but is tantamount in a variety of classical and patent formulas, which is covered very well in other texts.

However, it does appear in many noteworthy formulas that the martial artist should be aware of. Aside from the previously mentioned Jade Windscreen, it is also an addition in many versions of Four Gentleman's for its ability to hit the Spleen and address the immune system and regulate water circulation. It can be found in most Spring Wine formulas, in Huang Ti Tea, the Ying Gong training formula, Recover the Pulse decoction, Shaolin Strengthen Sinew and Connect Bone elixir, as the chief herb in Abundant Justice wine, Good Luck elixir, Twelve Spiritual Generals wine, Iron Warrior tonic, Internal Strength and Balance wine, Many Years Persistent Injury wine, Three Treasures soup, Daily Internal Qi Builder, Worm wine, Martial Artists Recovery formula, and PlumDragon's Iron Bone Training powder.

Additionally, Huang Qi actually appears in multiple popular dit da jow formulas for its benefit to the muscular layers of the body. It can be found hiding away in Dit Da Kuan Jin Yao Jao Ho dit da jow, Chow Gar Southern Praying Mantis dit da jow,

Hua Tuo Eight Immortals dit da jow, and was also used in the original version of the White Dragon iron palm dit da jow.

Good quality Huang Qi has a subtle yellow pith and a mildly sweet and pleasant taste. Longer pieces of Huang Qi are often machine pressed, so size of this root is not necessarily indicative of quality.

Pinyin Name: Jiao Gu Lan

English Name: Gynostemma

Pharmaceutical name: Herba Gynostemmatidis

Properties: bitter and cold

Meridians: Lung, Heart

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Yin

Jiao Gu Lan moistens the Lung and promotes the generation of fluids in the body. This herb has a generalized effect to strengthen and nourish the body and is used for a wide range of manifestations in clinical settings.

2. Clear Heat

The cooling energy of Jiao Gu Lan makes it useful as an anti-inflammatory to reduce various types of swellings and nodules.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Jiao Gu Lan is an interesting herb in that, in addition to a variety of chemical compounds that produce the actions stated above, it also contains many of the same compounds found in Ren Shen, namely ginsenoside. This herb works quite differently than Ren Shen; it is not as strong or capable as Ren Shen, and is definitely

not a suitable substitute, but it does have much of the same chemical makeup. In some ways, it works almost oppositely.

Jiao Gu Lan shows promise as an immunostimulant and can address cardiac issues such as high cholesterol and hypertension. This herb is still quite unknown by the martial arts community. However, it is one to keep an eye on. As prices on other similar herbs increases, this one may find its way into the spotlight.

Pinyin Name: Bai Zhu

English Name: White Atractylodes

Pharmaceutical name: Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae

Properties: bitter, sweet and warm

Meridians: Spleen, Stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Qi and Spleen

Bai Zhu tonifies the Qi of the Spleen and Stomach to promote the digestive process, dry excess dampness, and strengthen the transforming and transporting properties of the Spleen, reduce shortness of breath, addressed decreased food intake, and diarrhea.

2. Dry Dampness

Bai Zhu aids in drying dampness through its influence on the Spleen meridian, but it also dries dampness as an inherently drying substance, making it most useful where there is excess dampness in the presence of Spleen Qi deficiency.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Bai Zhu is a good example of a tonic herb that has some inherent tonifying aspect as well as some inherent clearing aspect. Here,

Bai Zhu tonifies the Spleen to remove dampness by strengthening the job of the Spleen as a “water pump”. However, it also possesses some intrinsic property to remove excess through its inherent drying capability. Bai Zhu is stronger to tonify and has mild damp dispelling properties. This is in contrast to Cang Zhu, which has a very strong capability to dry dampness and only very minor ability to tonify the Spleen.

Bai Zhu figures into a large number of classical and patent formulas, including Jade Windscreen and Four Gentleman’s, perhaps 2 of the more important ones for martial artists. It also appears in Ten Brocade pill, Three Treasure soup, Tai Chi Tea, Shaolin Great Supplement wine, and Abundant Justice wine.

Coincidentally, it also finds its way into a few dit da jow formulas. These include the Fung Doe Duk Coconut break jow and PlumDragon’s Jun Fan/JKD jow, where it was eventually replaced with Cang Zhu to provide a more drying action.

Pinyin Name: Shan Yao

English Name: Dioscorea

Pharmaceutical name: Rhizoma Dioscoreae

Properties: sweet and neutral

Meridians: Kidney, Lung, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Qi and Yin

Shan Yao is an important herb for the tonification of deficiencies including Qi and Yin, especially when related directly to the Spleen, Stomach, and Kidney. It is useful for a wide range of items, geared towards the digestive and energy producing faculties of the Spleen and Stomach, while also covering Kidney Yin issues such as weak back and knees,

premature ejaculation, and night sweats due to Yin deficiency.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Shan Yao is the Japanese Yam Rhizome. This herb is useful primarily for gastrointestinal issues, and has some limited use for diabetes and can be combined with other specific herbs to address weakness in the Spleen and Kidney. It is also used for what the Chinese refer to as Wasting and Thirsting syndrome.

For this herb's ability to address deficiency of Qi and Yin, it is found in the Iron Warrior training formula, Golden Relic pills, Internal Strength and Balance wine, Three Treasure soup, in a couple versions of Spring Wine, and a small handful of Shaolin internal formulas.

Pinyin Name: Gan Cao

English Name: Licorice Root

Pharmaceutical name: Radix Glycyrrhiza

Properties: sweet and neutral

Meridians: Spleen, Stomach, Lung, Heart

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Qi, Strengthens Spleen

Gan Cao addresses Spleen Qi deficiency to aid in the transporting and transforming functions of this meridian, including shortness of breath, fatigue and malaise. For purposes of tonification, Gan Cao is usually used in its processed form: Fried in honey.

2. Harmonize other Herbs

Gan Cao is one of only a few herbs specifically used for the purpose of harmonizing. The herb mitigates the strong action of some herbs, and neutralizes the toxicity of others. As such, it also addresses poisoning from chemicals, drugs, food, and heavy metals.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Gan Cao has some very interesting properties and uses. While it is first and foremost a Qi tonic, that is potentially the least useful of its properties. The most important use of this herb is potentially its use as a moderator. It can moderate the effects of very hot or cold herbs; it can neutralize the toxicity of aconite based roots; and it is useful for clipping the peak effect of some very strong or harsh herbs and prolonging their effect over a longer period of time. Herbs such as Da Huang, which have a very strong onset, can be controlled with Gan Cao.

This property of moderating carries over to other substances as well. Ingestion that causes side effect and poisoning can be mitigated by using a decoction of Gan Cao.

Lastly, the corticoid-based compounds in Gan Cao make it useful for those undergoing cortisone treatments. Laboratory studies have shown that Gan Cao can prolong the effects of cortisone, therefore allowing those using Gan Cao to reduce their dosage of Cortisone when allowed by their doctor. Gan Cao also tends to have anti-inflammatory and pain relieving effects that are useful for painful joints, arthritis, and edema.

Gan Cao finds its way into a number of formulas, and while it appears in many, it is often added as a customization in order to bring about the moderating effects described above. It can be added to any internal formula for this reason. Most texts advise a dosage of 3 to 10 grams, with a maximum of 30.

It is not recommended that this herb be added to external formulas, as it will potentially reduce the overall effectiveness

needed from an external training liniment during intense training. Because external liniments are not used internally, their overall effect is not the same, and the same issues with toxic herbs are generally not a worry.

Gan Cao is one of several Chinese herbs that have been studied in fairly significant depth in the last decade. There is a great amount of research and study available on this substance and its uses, its herb-drug interactions, and potential uses.

Gan Cao quality has always been quite good and this herb is inexpensive to procure. Every herbal distributor carries at least 2 grades of this herb, making it a very easy herb to keep around. Please note that while higher grades of many herbs are desirable, because this herb moderates the functions of other herbs, it may be preferable to obtain grades of this herb other than top grade. This will allow you to control more closely the level of effect you would like to produce in a formula.

Pinyin Name: Da Zao

English Name: Jujube Date

Pharmaceutical name: Fructus Jujubae

Properties: sweet and warm

Meridians: Spleen, stomach

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Qi and Blood

Da Zao tonifies the functionality of the organs of the middle jiao and is beneficial to the production of Qi and Blood, making it ideal for an assistant herb to aid with weak digestion, stomach related issues, fatigue, and a feeling of dampness in the body.

2. Calm the Shen

Da Zao has a mild action to calm the Shen, addressing irritability, adverse sleep patterns, and emotional unrest.

3. Harmonize other Herbs

Da Zao can harmonize and moderate the strong or harsh functions of other herbs. Most herbs that Da Zao is combined with for this function are no longer used in practice.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Da Zao has a unique dual function to assist in strengthening the body, particularly the Spleen and Stomach. Studies have shown that therapeutic use of Da Zao can bring about improved endurance, stamina, and strength when compared to placebo groups.

Da Zao is often combined with Sheng Jiang to address exterior conditions and soothe the stomach. Da Zao can moderate the strong function of Sheng Jiang while providing tonification properties as well. It is also found in some meditative types of formulas for its utility in calming the Shen and focusing the mind.

Da Zao appears in Huang Ti tea, the Internal Strength and Balance formula, and classical formulas such as Decoction of Cinnamon twig, Xiang Sha Yang Wei tang, and Zhi Gan Cao tang. It also makes an appearance in a Bak Mei Southern Training dit da jow as well as Hua Tuo Eight Immortal dit da jow.

Da Zao is often available in 2 separate strains, black (Hei Zao) and red (Hong Zao). While these 2 herbs are interchangeable and have nearly identical strength and properties, there is 1 very minor difference: The red variety is slightly more effective at tonifying Qi while the black variety is slightly better at tonifying Blood. Both work great to harmonize and calm.

Pinyin Name: Feng Mi

English Name: Honey

Pharmaceutical name: Mel

Properties: sweet and neutral

Meridians: Spleen, Lung, Large Intestine

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Spleen and Stomach

Feng Mi mildly tonifies the organs of the middle jiao to increase energy while reducing pain and fatigue due to deficiency.

2. Moisten Lung and Large Intestine

Feng Mi aids in moistening the Lung to stop cough as well as the intestines to relieve constipation and promote peristalsis.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Feng Mi, or honey, is a substance which appears here primarily for its use in making pills for the martial artist and home herbalist. Honey is used as a binding agent to hold powdered herbs together for use as internally administered pills, such as dit da wan. The sweet taste of honey is a welcome benefit of using this as a binding agent. Some texts also state that honey can provide some level of “time release” action, allowing herbs to be slowly released and processed by the digestive system.

In addition, honey can be useful for a variety of non-martial arts related issues. It appears to have some natural cough suppressant action through its ability to coat the throat, and is quite useful for relieving constipation. Ingesting several spoonfuls of honey per day is a mild and natural way to relieve pain and stasis in the intestines.

There is a great deal of discussion and even argument amongst various parties in regard to the health benefits of honey. Honey

is composed almost entirely of dextrose, fructose, sucrose, and dextrin. These substances have no real nutritional value. However, honey does have traces of malic and acetic acid, and other compounds based on the flowers that nectar and pollen was collected from. There are likely some health benefits from local honey for dealing with local allergies and such, but this function is probably not pronounced.

Section 2 – Yang Tonifying Herbs

Pinyin Name: Lu Rong

English Name: Deer Antler

Pharmaceutical name: Cornu Cervi Pantotrichum

Properties: sweet, salty and warm

Meridians: Kidney, Liver

RELEVAN HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Kidney Yang, Nourish Jing, Strengthen Bone and Sinew

Lu Rong strongly tonifies the Yang and Jing of the Kidney, manifesting as weakness of the lower back and knees, impotence, tinnitus, and even in some cases, infertility. Lu Rong aids in strengthening bone and sinew through its entrance to the Kidney and Liver meridians.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Lu Rong is the velvety antler of the young deer, often times the red Sitka deer. Many of these antlers are harvested from farm-raised deer in various eastern countries in the world, including both China and New Zealand. Lu Rong is a very expensive substance and quality varies substantially with price. While more inexpensive Lu Rong is still quite effective, the stronger more potent quality antler can retail upwards of \$100/oz.

Lu Rong slices have 2 concentric circles, one within another. As the quality of Lu Rong increases, the slices will display a larger inner circle and the outer region towards the exterior of the slice will be thinner. These types of slices with a thicker inner antler originate from the base of the antler.

Lu Rong is one of the best herbs for strengthening the Kidney meridian and therefore addressing most issues related to the reproductive system, maintaining good energy levels and endurance, bone, joint, and tendon strength, and increasing low constitution which causes slow healing and development.

Due to the strength of this “herb”, Lu Rong appears in a number of powerful tonic formulas, including probably all regional and popular variations of Spring Wine and the lesser known Winter wine, PlumDragon’s Comprehensive Iron Palm tonic and Iron Bone Training powder, Iron Warrior tonic, Five Seeds Two Emperor Supplement the Essence tea, Shaolin Temple Tiger Fighting elixir, Deer Antler Ginseng wine, and Ginseng Deer Antler pills (these are indeed 2 different formulas).

Pinyin Name: Lu Jiao Jiao

English Name: Deer Horn Gelatin

Pharmaceutical name: Gelatinum Cornu Cervi

Properties: sweet, salty, and warm

Meridians: Liver, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Liver and Kidney

Lu Jiao Jiao strengthens both the Liver and Kidney to address deficiencies in these organs, including reproductive and developmental issues.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Lu Jiao Jiao is the gelatin extract from the mature deer antler, referred to as Lu Jiao. Lu Jiao is rarely available directly for

retail purchase and instead the glue, Lu Jiao Jiao, is sold. Lu Jiao Jiao has very similar actions as Lu Rong but weaker. As such, it is often seen alongside of Lu Rong to enhance the function and assist in tonifying the body. While there are formulas that Lu Jiao Jiao is used in that Lu Rong does not appear (for example, Internal Strength and Balance wine and Shaolin Great Supplement wine), please refer to Lu Rong for a list of formulas that may contain Lu Jiao Jiao.

While Lu Jiao Jiao is significantly less expensive for consumers than Lu Rong, there have been examples of poor quality Lu Jiao Jiao on the market, especially originating from China that contains filler in the herb that reduce its potency. Therefore, it is a very good idea to purchase this herb from a supplier that you trust has a good relationship with their distributor.

In the processing of Lu Jiao, the glue (Lu Jiao Jiao) is separated from the antler. The remaining horn material is known as Lu Jiao Shuang, or deglutinated deer horn. While it is available on the market for fairly low cost, it is weaker than Lu Jiao Jiao and does not serve much practical purpose.

Pinyin Name: Dong Chong Xia Cao

English Name: Cordyceps

Pharmaceutical name: Cordyceps

Properties: sweet and warm

Meridians: Lung, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Kidney Yang and Jing

Dong Chong Xia Cao has wide application in addressing Kidney and Lung deficiencies relating to pain in the joints, overactive

bladder, nocturnal emissions and premature ejaculation, impotence, chronic respiratory disorders, spontaneous sweating, and general weakness and fatigue of the body.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Like some of the other Yang and Qi tonics, Dong Chong Xia Cao is a very effective herb for a variety of issues related to the Kidney and Lung meridians. It has shown success with a number of actions in clinical studies, including Arrhythmia, reduced platelet count, sexual dysfunction, and in some cases even cancer. It stimulates the immune system and the adrenal gland, and aids the relaxation of bronchial muscles in asthma patients.

Dong Chong Xia Cao is a wonderfully useful herb for building the body back up from a state of very low constitution and weakness, and can be used safely for long periods of time. The herb displays a very low chance for overdose and can be added safely to most tonic formulas. The only drawback is that this herb is very rare and very expensive. There are companies that farm good quality Dong Chong Xia Cao, but it is still very rare to find. It is mentioned here primarily for its historical importance in tonic formulas and clinical therapeutic value.

Pinyin Name: Ge Jie

English Name: Tokay Gecko

Pharmaceutical name: Gecko

Properties: salty and neutral

Meridians: Lung, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Lung and Kidney

Ge Jie tonifies both the Lung and Kidney and is useful for chronic debilitating respiratory trouble as a result of Lung and Kidney deficiency. There may also be signs of weak lower back and knees, soreness in the joints, or difficulty breathing.

2. Nourish Jing and Blood

Ge Jie nourishes both Jing and Blood to address sexual dysfunction as a result of either previous deficiency or sexual over activity. Ge Jie strongly influences the reproductive system.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

The Tokay gecko, usually sold in wholesale as a male and female pair, is a very strong herb that should be used with care and intent. The power of Ge Jie lies in the skin and tail, where some of the most important compounds and oils help to stimulate the secretion of hormones in the body.

Ge Jie appears in a choice selection of internal tonics, and is useful to the martial artist when combined with the right herbs. However, clinical applications are geared more towards its benefit on the Lungs. With that said, it does appear in a select set of relevant tonics, including the more popular iterations of Spring Wine (Yang Sen, Ng Family, and General Li), and as a chief herb in the important tonic patent, Gecko Tonic.

Pinyin Name: Rou Cong Rong

English Name: Cistanche

Pharmaceutical name: Herba Cistanche

Properties: sweet, salty and warm

Meridians: Kidney, Large Intestine

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Kidney Yang and Jing

Rou Cong Rong is beneficial for deficiencies of both Kidney Yang and Jing where there may also be Blood deficiency.

Manifestations include reproductive issues, lack of sexual desire, impotence and infertility, weak knees, lower back, and joints, and tinnitus.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Rou Cong Rong has a more mild action to tonify Yang and Jing. This does not make this herb useless. Many often incorrectly assume that less potent herbs are not useful. However, Rou Cong Rong has the benefit of being utilizable for long periods of time, either alone, or as an assisting herb to other Yang tonics. Additionally, Rou Cong Rong is not as cloying as other heavy tonic herbs, making it useful for those who may tend towards dampness.

Historically, Rou Cong Rong was of good quality and only moderately expensive. In the last few years, it has experienced a surge in cost and lack of availability. Additionally, I have had the fortune of being in touch with an older individual who often enjoys purchasing herbs from PlumDragon for the sole purpose of relating the current market herbs with the herbs available at Shaolin temples in China 40-50 years back. This gentleman's sentiment is that the commonly seen black tarry Rou Cong Rong, with its sticky damp nature is not nearly of the same quality as the Rou Cong Rong more readily available 10 or more

years ago, which was much smoother and less sticky to the touch.

Bottom line, Rou Cong Rong is among the list of herbs that is very likely to continue to gravitate into obscurity as the years pass by. It does not appear that it will become easier to procure or less expensive. This is quite a shame, because herbs like Rou Cong Rong have a great deal of usefulness to the martial artist.

Fortunately, Suo Yang serves a similar action with the difference being it is a better Yang tonic where Rou Cong Rong serves as a slightly better Jing tonic. Please refer to the template for Suo Yang for more information.

Rou Cong Rong appears in a few formulas, including a larger and lesser known variant of the Ku Yu Cheong, Bak Mei Southern Training dit da jow, Fung Doe Duk Coconut Break, Golden Lotus iron palm, Bak Fu Pai #2, and a Bak Fu Pai formula referred to as All-Purpose Iron Palm/Dim Mak Combination formula. From this list we can infer that this is an herb that is of particular interest to the regions where Bak Mei trained in China, and by extension, Bak Fu Pai. Very few Northern system formulas seem to make much use of this herb.

However, we do find that it is used in a couple of internal formulas from systems in differing regions than that where Bak Mei formulas would be found. These include Zhi Ti Fa Bagua Zhang tieh ta wan and the Shaolin Temple Tiger Fighting elixir.

Pinyin Name: Suo Yang

English Name: Cynomorium

Pharmaceutical name: Herba Cynomorii

Properties: sweet and warm

Meridians: Liver, Kidney, Large Intestine

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Kidney Yang

Suo Yang enters the Kidney to strengthen Yang and address reproductive system deficiencies such as impotence, nocturnal emissions, and infertility. Suo Yang has a mild function to nourish Jing, and enters the Liver to mildly nourish Blood.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Suo Yang is a mild herb for tonifying Kidney Yang, with even milder functions to nourish Jing and Blood. It is useful for most reproductive problems but also appears in formulas for weakness of the knees and lower back, such as the classical formula, Hidden Tiger Pill. Because it is mild, it is of good utility in controlling how strong a formula is, by not adding stronger herbs that that push an action overboard. It also exhibits some stimulating effect on the immune system and pairs well as an assistant to Huang Qi.

Suo Yang shows up in a small cross-section of formulas, most notably the General Li version of Spring wine, but also in Bald Hen Tea, Internal Strength and Balance wine, and Shaolin Great Supplement wine.

Pinyin Name: Ba Ji Tian

English Name: Morinda

Pharmaceutical name: Radix Morindae Officinalis

Properties: acrid, sweet and warm

Meridians: Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Kidney Yang

Ba Ji Tian enters the Kidney meridian to aid with deficiencies in Kidney Yang where manifestations primarily include reproductive system deficiencies, such as impotence and infertility.

2. Strengthen Bone and Sinew, Dispel Wind-Damp

Ba Ji Tian enters the Kidney to strengthen bone and sinew due to Kidney Yang Deficiency and Cold. Additionally, Ba Ji Tian helps dispel Bi Syndrome Wind-Damp that penetrates the joints and causes stiffness and cramping, pain, and reduced range of motion. Salt-frying this herb increases its ability to strengthen bone and sinew.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ba Ji Tian seems to be a popular herb among hobby herbalists and martial artists, no doubt for its ability to warm and tonify Yang while also strengthening bone and dispelling pain due to Bi Syndrome—all functions that are useful for men training iron palm or other types of rigorous conditioning.

Ba Ji Tian has thus been used in a handful of formulas both internal and external. Some of those external formulas include Golden Lotus iron palm, Clouds in Heaven All Purpose jow, and some groups even add this herb to their version of Ho Family dit da jow, although this herb does not appear in the standard Ho Family recipe. Internal formulas include Shaolin Great

Supplement wine, Iron Warrior tonic, as well as an assisting herb in Gecko Tonic tea pills.

Pinyin Name: Yin Yang Huo

English Name: Epimedium

Pharmaceutical name: Herba Epimedii

Properties: acrid, sweet and warm

Meridians: Kidney, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Kidney Yang

Yin Yang Huo enters the Kidney to strengthen Kidney Yang associated with trouble related to weakness in the knees and lower back as well as the reproductive system, including impotence, premature ejaculation, and lack of sexual desire.

2. Dispel Wind-Damp

Yin Yang Huo is dispersing in nature and aids in dispelling Wind-Damp Bi Syndrome. It enters the Liver to help relax tendons and increase circulation due to deficiency.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Yin Yang Huo is a fairly strong herb for use in strengthening Kidney Yang and should not be used long-term. Studies have shown that it can increase sperm count, increase tactile sensation, and increase libido. There is also some other less relevant pharmacological activity that has been linked to the leaves of this plant.

Raw Yin Yang Huo is most useful for dispelling Wind-Damp painful obstruction while the oil-fried form is best for dealing

with Kidney Yang deficiency. This herb should be combined with other herbs that balance the formula well so as to not produce an overabundance of heat.

Yin Yang Huo is a very inexpensive herb that is commonly available. Quality has not been a problem, making this a great herb to have at one's disposal. As such, it appears in several formulas, such as the more popular version of Spring wine, Golden Phoenix Liquor, Bald Hen tea, Nine Seeds Return to Spring pill, and Tom Bisio's Osteophyte powder. Additionally, it is used very rarely in external liniments, but does crop up, as is the case for Gua's Imperial Fire and Yang Jin Hua Yao Jiu.

Pinyin Name: Xian Mao

English Name: Curculigo

Pharmaceutical name: Rhizoma Curculiginis

Properties: acrid and hot

Meridians: Kidney

SLIGHTLY TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Kidney Yang

Xian Mao has a very strong function to tonify Kidney Yang to aid with impotence and spermatorrhea.

2. Dispel Wind-Damp

Xian Mao is also useful to treat Bi Syndrome resulting in pain, numbness, and weakness in the joints. Xian Mao can be useful with other Yang tonics to strengthen bone and sinew, the knees, and lower back.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Xian Mao is a very strong herb to tonify Kidney Yang and address both bone strength as well as reproductive disorders. It has exhibited an ability in clinical trials to physically increase the size of ovaries in female rats and testicles in male rats and has shown some benefit as an immunostimulant.

Xian Mao has been used both internally and externally. Being that this herb is mildly toxic and is very hot, it is not suggested for internal use or for long-term use. It does appear in the rare formula, such as the Chow Gar Training dit da jow. However, due to its overall strength and mild toxicity, it has not appeared in many formulas despite its obvious advantageous actions from the perspective of the martial artist.

Pinyin Name: Hai Long

English Name: Pipe Fish

Pharmaceutical name: Syngnathus

Properties: sweet, salty, and warm

Meridians: Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Kidney Yang

Hai Long enters the Kidney meridian to strengthen and build Kidney Yang. It is most commonly used for those with deficiency causing reproductive malfunction and losses of strength and fortitude.

2. Reduce Swelling

Hai Long is one of the few tonics that possess a function to clear. Hai Long aids in dispersing swelling and nodules that may or may not result from injury.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Hai Long, literally meaning “Sea Dragon”, is today one of the more rare and exotic of the Yang tonics. It is both expensive and difficult to find. While there are many who prefer to fill formulas in their authentic manner, there is likely a diminishing return with the use of this herb as wholesale prices have risen to \$100/lbs or more in the last couple years. Many distributors even sell this herb in ½ lbs quantities since it is rarely used in formulas and is so expensive and rare.

Hai Long is composed of a number of proteins and cholesterols which very likely have a large degree of bioactivity and aid in some way with hormone levels.

Hai Long is used very rarely in Shaolin formulas. More importantly is its somewhat notorious appearance in the full Ku Yu Cheong iron palm and similar associated formulas. As these mixes have become more popular in recent years, some people have decided to whimsically add Hai Long to other formulas such as the Black Hand and other big hand formulas. As a result, Hai Long has grown mildly in popularity despite its price tag and the threat that it may become unavailable in the years to come.

Pinyin Name: Hai Ma

English Name: Sea Horse

Pharmaceutical name: Hippocampus

Properties: sweet, salty and warm

Meridians: Kidney, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Kidney Yang

Hai Ma is a strong herb for the tonification of Kidney Yang when there is a deficiency. While it is commonly used in this regard for reproductive system ailments, it is also useful for lack of energy and stamina in a similar way as Hai Long.

2. Invigorate Blood Circulation

Hai Ma aids in dispelling stasis in the form of physical masses by increasing blood circulation, primarily in the middle burner.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Hai Ma is a very strong herb for the strengthening of the Kidneys. And like Hai Long, it is both expensive and difficult to procure. It is even more expensive than Hai Long and is in a more serious threat of being unavailable. Unfortunately for the martial artist and athlete, it is also more commonly used and more well-known, being one of the chief herbs in a number of different tonic formulas, including several versions of Spring Wine, Lian gong Jiu Training Wine, Iron Warrior Wine, and Internal Strength and balance Wine.

In addition to providing androgenic effects in mice, Hai Ma has demonstrated some ability to increase mental and physical performance in mice.

Please note that if you are part of an organization that tests for substance use prior to participation, it would be germane to speak with your healthcare professional to determine if herbs such as Hai Ma and Hai Long are clear for use. Because they can produce some natural stimulation of hormones, it is possible that one may test positive for use of substances that may be banned by certain organizations.



Good quality Hai Ma

Pinyin Name: Du Zhong

English Name: Eucommia Bark

Pharmaceutical name: Cortex Eucommia

Properties: sweet and warm

Meridians: Kidney, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Kidney Yang, Strengthen Bone and Sinew

Du Zhong enters both the Kidney and Liver meridians to strengthen the bones and sinews throughout the body and help heal fractures. Du Zhong also has a special affinity to strengthen the knees and the lower back as well.

Du Zhong also addresses a variety of reproductive system ailments through its interaction with Kidney Yang.

2. Lower Blood Pressure

Du Zhong may be useful to address hypertension when combined with other herbs in a well designed formula to lower blood pressure and benefit the heart.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Du Zhong is a very versatile and useful herb. It is widely available and usually comes in 3 or more different grades depending on the strength desired. These grades are due to variations in concentration of the rubbery material at the center of the bark. It has a significant list of items that have been tested for effectiveness in various studies and trials. Most importantly, it has shown some ability to increase the duration of physical exertion in mice, is effective when combined with other herbs for sciatica, hypertension through its ability to dilate blood vessels, support the immune system, and also exhibits some sedative properties, and is a mild antibiotic against both Staph and strep infections.

Du Zhong appears in a fairly significant number of formulas, both internal and external, for its useful tonifying attributes to address bones and sinew, but also for its sedative and vessel-dilating abilities. Some of the external formulas include: Golden Lotus, Bak Fu Pai #1 and #2, Bak Fu Pai All-Purpose jow, Bak Mei Southern dit da jow, Clouds In Heaven dit da jow, Lotus Palms iron palm jow, Lung Ying dit da jow, Qi Conditioner jow, PlumDragon's White Dragon Iron Palm jow, Iron Goddess hand liniment, Chow Gar Southern Mantis dit da jow, and one large Ku Yu Cheong variation, which also uses

additional yang tonics such as Rou Cong Rong.

Notable internal formulas include: PlumDragon's Iron Bone Training Powder, Prescription for Effusing and Scattering the Middle, Bone Break Decoction, Bone Knitting Powder, Tiger Fighting Elixir, Twelve Spiritual Generals Wine, Iron Warrior Wine, Internal Strength and Balance Wine, Many Years Persistent Injury Wine, Three Treasures Soup, Warming and Quickening Wine, Flying Dragon Life-Robbing Elixir, Strengthen the Sinew Connect the Bone Elixir, Shaolin Dang Gui drink, Shaolin Heroes Pill, Modified Thirteen Flavors formula, Prescription for Effusing and Scattering the Middle, Lian Gong Jiu Training Wine, and in many (but not all) versions of Spring Wine. Additionally, Du Zhong appears in multiple internal/external pair formulas.

Pinyin Name: Xu Duan

English Name: Dipsacus, Teasel Root

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Dipsaci

Properties: bitter, sweet, acrid and warm

Meridians: Liver, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Liver and Kidney

Xu Duan addresses deficiency of both the Liver and Kidney, and is beneficial for the strength of the musculoskeletal system and is useful for lower back and knee weakness and pain, and spermatorrhea.

2. Invigorate Blood Circulation

Xu Duan invigorates Blood circulation to aid in the healing of injuries such as sprains, strains, and fractures. Xu Duan speeds up healing of injuries where there is pain, swelling, stasis, and

injury to the bones or tendons. The circulation promoting aspect of Xu Duan can help clear blockage from the channels.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Xu Duan literally translates as “restore what is broken” and primarily refers to the ability of this herb to aid in healing bone fractures. This herb tends to be one of the more important herbs for this purpose and its function is often augmented by the inclusion of other herbs for use in injury formulas where there is often not fracture, but there may be deep bruising and potential damage to bone. It is also often used in iron palm formulas internally and externally to help aid in the process of building up bone size and density over time. It is important to note that while herbs like this can help facilitate an increase in bone mass and density, it is ultimately the physical training that spurs this development.

Like Du Zhong and Gu Sui Bu, Xu Duan is inexpensive, easily accessible, and serves a very important purpose for the martial artist and athlete who are into rigorous training. As such, it is found in a variety of formulas, some external ones: Lau Family training jow, Bak Fu Pai #2, both the original and modified Chan Ning Tong, Broad Application Tendon Trauma liniment, Clouds in Heaven dit da jow, Ho Family dit da jow, PlumDragon’s White Dragon Iron Palm jow and Jun Fan/JKD jow, Golden Lotus, Fung Doe Duk, Shaolin Return the Spirit jow, nearly all iterations of the Ku Yu Cheong, Hung Gar, Robert Chu modified Qi Li San, Wong Fei Hung Ten Tigers and Ark Wong formulas, Frank Yee iron palm, Fukien Iron Palm jow, Iron Lotus, Sinew-Bone Poultice, Yang Jin Hua Yao Jiu, Iron Goddess hand liniment, Hong Zi Su Ye Gao, Hua Tou Eight Immortals, and multiple formulas used at acupuncture schools for the treatment of injury.

Some internal formulas include: Zhi Ti Fa Bagua Internal hit pills, Bone Break Decoction, Bone Knitting Powder, Strengthen Sinew Connect the Bone Elixir, Shaolin Heroes Pill, Modified

Thirteen Flavors Formula, Twelve Spiritual Generals Wine, Three Treasures Soup, Warming and Quickening Wine, Prescription for Effusing and Scattering the Lower and Middle, Ying Gong Training formula, PlumDragon's Iron Bone Training Powder, and in commercial tea pills such as Golden Flowers Tieh Ta Wan and both Great Mender and Gecko Tonic from Plum Flower.

It is worth noting that when compared to Du Zhong in the template above, there is a slight shift with Xu Duan from internal formulas to external use. That is, it is clear that Xu Duan is more commonly used in external formulas where we see Du Zhong more prolific in internal mixtures. This is likely because Du Zhong has a more intrinsic property to tonify the Kidney and Liver, while Xu Duan has a better ability to heal injury. The function of strong tonic herbs is somewhat lost with external use; to be fully and completely utilized, a good tonic should really be used internally. Therefore, we see Xu Duan utilized more externally because it has more widespread use than just tonifying.

Pinyin Name: Gu Sui Bu

English Name: Drynaria

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Drynariae

Properties: bitter and warm

Meridians: Liver, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Kidney and Liver

Gu Sui Bu tonifies the Liver and Kidney to strengthen aspects of these meridians. Lower back and knee pain are often treated with Gu Sui Bu, as well as bone fractures due to injury. Additionally, the Kidney is said to open into the ears, and this

herb is clinically used for tinnitus and loss of hearing.

2. Heal and Strengthen Bones, Dispel Stasis

Gu Sui Bu is often used for healing of painful injuries, including sprains and strains, Blood stasis, fractures, osteoarthritis, damage to sinew, and recovery from surgery.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Gu Sui Bu, like other herbs in this category, has a name that directly correlates to its use: "Bone Fracture Remedy". It is an important herb in many formulas that heal and strengthen bone. It is worth noting that Chen & Chen states that Gu Sui Bu may prove helpful in increasing the absorption of Calcium. This is a critical statement, because it provides insight into the fact that there is more to strengthening bone than just calcium intake; herbs like Gu Sui Bu can help optimize the strengthening process.

Often times, Gu Sui Bu and Xu Duan are used together for their similar and synergistic effects.

An abbreviated list of the external formulas Gu Sui Bu appears in include: PlumDragon's Jun Fan/JKD, Ho Family, Ancestors Advanced, and Southern Fist formulas, Bak Fu Pai #2, Burning Palm, Mew Hing Level 2 iron palm, multiple Ku Yu Cheong and Wong Fei Hung variants (this addition is a fairly rare addition, however), a modified Chan Ning Tong, Iron Goddess Hand liniment, Chow Gar dit da jow, Hung Gar Golden Bridge dit da jow, Bak Mei Southern dit da jow, Fung Doe Duk, Golden Lotus, Iron Lotus, Hua Tou Either Immortals, Lau Family training jow, Shaolin Fukien Iron Palm jow, and several regional formulas not well known to the public.

Internally, an abbreviated list of popular formulas it is used in include: Strengthen the Sinew Connect the Bone Elixir, Bone Knitting Powder, Osteophyte Powder, PlumDragon's dit da wan and Iron Bone Training Powder, Prescription for Effusing and

Scattering the Upper, Ying Gong Training formula, multiple internal/external formula pairs, most notably, from the library of Bak Mei formulas, and in commercial tea pills such as Golden Flowers Tieh Ta Wan and both Great Mender and Gecko Tonic from Plum Flower.

As was observed with the listing of Xu Duan in relation to Du Zhong, we see the same general trend here as well: Gu Sui Bu is more often used externally for both its ability to move and dispel stasis as well as healing and strengthen bone. Du Zhong is more often reserved for more concentrated tonic formulas which are best used internally.



Gu Sui Bu

Pinyin Name: Bu Gu Zhi

English Name: Psoralea Fruit

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Psoraleae

Properties: bitter, acrid and hot

Meridians: Kidney, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Kidney Yang and Jing

Bu Gu Zhi is a very warm Yang tonic, addressing feelings of cold as well as issues with impotence, premature ejaculation, spermatorrhea, and other reproductive ailments which may be due to sexual overactivity. Bu Gu Zhi also addresses lower back and knee pain and reduced range of motion.

2. Warm The Spleen

Bu Gu Zhi enters the Spleen and provides a very warm thermal property that is clinically used for reducing moisture, strengthening the transforming aspect of the Spleen, and therefore, is an herb used for diarrhea and bloating.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

While the traditional actions noted above for Bu Gu Zhi do not specifically discuss a direct effect of this herb on the bones, it is prudent to mention that it can be very useful for strengthening bone. Its name translates as "tonify bone resin", and it is often used internally with other Yang tonics to strengthen bone. The distinction here is that it is not used so much for injury as it is for the general building process. Additionally, it is worth noting that most all Kidney Yang (and some Yin) tonics will have a direct or indirect influence over bone strength.

Bu Gu Zhi is not seen in as nearly as many formulas as the previous 3 Yang tonics; however, it does have its place among a variety of formulas. It is an important ingredient in

PlumDragon's Iron Bone Training Powder, and can also be found in other internal formulas such as: Strengthen Sinew and Connect Bone Elixir, Shaolin Heroes Pill, Protect the General Wine, Lian Gong Jiu Training Wine, Many Years Persistent Injury Wine, and Nine Seed Return to Spring Pill.

Externally, it only appears very rarely. Examples include Bak Mei Tieh Sao Jow and Bak Fu Pai Conditioning jow. Like other herbs which have mostly intrinsic tonic properties, Bu Gu Zhi is best used internally.

Pinyin Name: Tu Si Zi

English Name: Cuscuta Seed

Pharmaceutical Name: Semen Cuscutae

Properties: acrid, sweet and neutral

Meridians: Liver, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Kidney Yang, Yin, and Jing

Tu Si Zi has a fairly strong function to tonify aspects of the Kidney meridian due to deficiency which cause issues such as impotence, spermatorrhea, various urinary disorders caused by Jing deficiency, as well as weakness in the knees and lower back.

2. Brighten the Eyes

Tu Si Zi also enters the Liver meridian to address focal problems such as blurry vision, dryness, and dizziness.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Tu Si Zi is a useful Yang tonic due to its neutral energetic temperature. Most Yang tonics are warm or hot. This herb is neutral and can be useful to tonify both Kidney Yang and Yin. Therefore, it is not as unbalancing as some other herbs in this category. However, it is principally a Yang tonic and should be used with care for those who display signs of Deficiency Heat.

Tu Si Zi is not generally used in external formulas, although it does make random appearances here and there, such as is the case in one Ark Wong iron palm variation

Seven Seeds, Wu Zi Bu Shen Tang, Zhi Ti Fan Bagua Internal hit pill, Shaolin Seven Li Powder (not to be confused with Qi Li San used in dit da), Strengthen Sinew Connect Bone Elixir, Shaolin Abundant Justice Wine, Lian Gong Jiu Training Wine, Bone Knitting Powder, and Nine Seeds Return to Spring Pill.

Looking at some of the formulas that Tu Si Zi appears in, one might confer that Tu Si Zi is a very useful herb for the healing and strengthening of bone. While all Yang tonics have some capacity to strengthen the systems of the body that maintain bone health, Tu Si Zi is only an assistant herb in these formulas. There are generally more germane herbs to use if the goal is to heal and strengthen bone and sinew.

Pinyin Name: Sha Yuan Zi

English Name: Astragalus Seed

Pharmaceutical Name: Semen Astragali Complanati

Properties: sweet and warm

Meridians: Kidney, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Kidney Yang and Jing

Sha Yuan Zi tonifies the function of the Kidney and acts to stabilize the loss of fluids, primarily Jing, as is the case in situations like premature ejaculation and vaginal discharge.

2. Brighten the Eyes

Sha Yuan Zi enters the Liver to address blurry vision, dizziness, and other visual disorders.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Sha Yuan Zi is rarely used in tonics for martial arts, and never would appear in an external liniment. It is mentioned here primarily as a notable mention. This herb has shown some benefit in lowering blood pressure and increasing blood vessel perfusion to various regions of the body. Additionally, it smells absolutely wonderful.

Sha Yuan Zi can be found rarely in internal formulas, such as the Tiger Fighting Elixir and a couple other small Shaolin tonics. Nevertheless, it is a useful Kidney tonic which can be added to internal formulas on a case by case basis.

Pinyin Name: Zi He Che

English Name: Placenta

Pharmaceutical Name: Placenta Hominis

Properties: sweet, salty and warm

Meridians: Kidney, Liver, Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Replenishes Jing and Blood

Zi He Che strongly supplements deficiency of Kidney Jing in both men and women and strongly addresses a variety of issues

with the reproductive organs as well as lactation problems.

2. Tonify Lung Qi

Zi He Che strengthens the Lung to address chronic coughing and other respiratory disorders.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Zi He Che is noted here primarily for educational purposes. Zi He Che is rarely used in martial arts formulas and even more rarely used clinically. Many people are put off by the idea of ingesting placenta, and some feel that if it is not processed properly, that it may be a disease vector. Additionally, a decreasing number of suppliers sell Zi He Che, and when they do, it is fairly expensive. However, it is also one of the stronger Yang tonics and large formulas such as Abundant Justice Wine use this substance; it is also an important component in some Spring Wine formulas, although those found clinically seem to lack this ingredient more often than not.

Generally, Spring Wine is an idea. While many martial artists may be familiar with Spring Wines from General Li or Yang Sen, these are only 2 of a myriad of Spring Wine formulas. Many herbalists maintain their own Spring Wine formula, some being stronger tonics and others being more moderate. Zi He Che is commonly found in the General Li version of Spring Wine, but often does not appear in many herbalist or acupuncturist personal versions. Many opt for herbs such as Dong Chong Xia Cao, Rou Cong Rong, Ba Ji Tian, or other substitutes, while many herbalists feel that the inclusion of items such as Zi He Che or Hai Ma is entirely unnecessary for the general populous and simply leave them out.

Section 3 – Blood Tonifying Herbs

Pinyin Name: Dang Gui

English Name: Chinese Angelica

Pharmaceutical Name: Radicis Angelicae Sinensis

Properties: sweet, acrid and warm

Meridians: Heart, Liver, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Blood

Dang Gui addresses Blood and Qi deficiencies in various areas of the body where there may be anemia, pale complexion, hot flashes, fatigue or general lack of energy, and issues with sleep and insomnia.

2. Invigorate Blood Circulation

Dang Gui invigorates the flow of Blood, both internally as is the case for numerous menstrual disorders, menopause, and amenorrhea/dysmenorrhea, as well as externally for the treatment of injuries where there may be Blood stasis, pain due to Bi Syndrome, or soreness and weakness in the muscles or extremities.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Dang Gui is one of several very common and well-known herbs that have continued to permeate Western culture. It is one of the most important herbs for women, who lose a great deal of blood and nutrients through their routine menstrual process and through child birth. Dang Gui has been shown to ease menstrual pain, increase physical blood cell counts, and is useful on a

number of accounts for pregnant women. It can benefit general circulation, provide a hepatoprotective effect to the body, relax smooth muscle, especially in the uterus, and reduce plasma cholesterol levels. Unquestionably, this is a very important herb and will hopefully enjoy continued study and use.

In addition, it also finds good utility in the martial arts world, primarily through its external application, where it is useful for increasing blood circulation, dispelling Bi syndrome in the joints, reducing pain and swelling, and alleviating stasis. Because it is also tonifying to the Blood, it is not depleting like other Blood invigorators.

Dang Gui refers to the entire root. In addition, Dang Gui Wei is commonly used in place of Dang Gui for use in formulas for injury and conditioning. While both herbs have a relatively mild action to invigorate Blood when used externally, Dang Gui Wei has a stronger effect in this regard, while Dang Gui (or just the head Dang Gui Tou) is a stronger tonifying function and is less capable as a Blood invigorator. For information on Dang Gui Wei, please refer to Chapter 11, Herbs that Invigorate Blood and Remove Stasis.

Dang Gui is available from a variety of different family businesses in China, which have been operating for many generations. Many of these family or village businesses do nothing but grow this root. As a result, there are a variety of different grades and sources of Dang Gui, nearly all of which are quite good. Fortunately, the whole root is not terribly expensive, running less than \$20 per pound wholesale cost for top quality root at the time of this writing.

Dang Gui, as one might expect, is a notable ingredient in many of the dit da recipes and tonics used today. While this is far from an exhaustive list for this herb, it appears in such external formulas as Sinew-Bone Poultice, Shaolin Metal Injury Powder, Five Fragrance Wine, Shaolin Temple Music Plaster, Shaolin Ten Thousand Respondings Plaster, Fang Sou Yi of the Ministerial liniments, a small Shuai Chiao training jow, Ancient

Way/Monks Fist, Yang Jin Hua Yao Jiu, Broad Application Tendon Trauma Liniment, Brian Grays dit da jow, Chow Gar dit da jow, Hong Zi Su Ye Gao, Bak Fu Pai All Purpose jow, Bak Mei Southern training jow, Bak Fu Pai Qi Conditioner, Bak Fu Pai #2, Fung Doe Duk, Golden Lotus, Clouds in Heaven All-Purpose jow, Mew Hing Level 2 iron palm, Burning Palm, Shattering Palm, in various Balur formulas from the Philippines, Phoenix Institute of Herbal Medicine & Acupuncture dit da jow, Pangai Noon dit da jow, Die Da Hao Fang, Cao Chong dit da jow, some iterations of Ho Family jow, and a variety of lesser known formulas from Shaolin and other sources such as small martial arts schools.

Internally, it can be found in even more formulas than it is found in externally. A short list of those formulas include: Many variations of the classical dit da wan hit pills, PlumDragon dit da wan, Ying Gong internal training formula, Twelve Spiritual Generals Wine, Zhi Ti Fa Bagua internal hit pills, Ten Brocade Pill, Bone Knitting Powder, Prescription for Unstoppable Bleeding, Metal Injury Miraculous Recovery Elixir, Injured Sinew Remove the Bone Pill, Flying Dragon Life-Robbing Elixir, Shaolin Seven Li Powder, Dang Gui Drink (No kidding!), Shaolin Great Strength Pills, Shaolin Heroes Pill, Extend the Sinew Elixir, Nine Tigers Elixir, Winter-Time Troop Deployment Powder, Eight Battle Formations Elixir, Connect the Bones Elixir, Jie Gu Tang, Protect the General Wine, Live Dragon Wine, Long-Winded Emperor Assist Training Wine, Shaolin Great Supplement Wine, Thirteen Flavors Formula, Lian Gong Fang, Soothe the Sinew Elixir, Free-Flowing Qi and Blood Training Powder, Shaolin Good Luck Elixir, Harvest the Training powder, Iron Warrior tonic, Eight Immortals Elixir, Three Treasures Soup, General Purpose Stop Bleeding Formula, Bone Break Decoction, Tai Chi Tea, Double Harmony Tea, Tiger Bone Training Wine, all versions of Spring Wine, Winter Wine, Golden Phoenix Elixir, Ginseng Deer Antler Pill, and of course, classical and patent formulas such as Dang Gui Four, Gecko Tonic, and Great Mender.

For a more complete listing of formulas that this herb appears in, please reference Dang Gui Wei in Chapter 11.

Dang Gui can be processed in a number of ways to direct its functions as needed. Most commonly it is either stir-fried dry or with wine, or carbonized. When the herb is dry-fried, it enhances its warmth. When it is stir-fried with wine, it strengthens the effect of Dang Gui to invigorate Blood and thus makes it more useful for traumatic injury where there is bruising or stasis, pain, and Bi Syndrome blockage. Lastly, it may be carbonized, which is a frying method where the herb is fried until it becomes blackened. This method of Pao Zhi produces a Dang Gui root with a more focused ability to stop bleeding.

Naturally, the wine-fried Dang Gui is the most useful for martial arts formulas. However, this herb is still quite useful when used in its uncooked version, especially since it is often added to alcohol, which will facilitate that extra circulation.



Dang Gui Head and body

Some western herbal suppliers sell a species of Angelica called Angelica Archangelica. While this herb does not have the exact functions of Dang Gui, it is similar. It is highly recommended that martial artists in the USA play with this herb in formulas and learn about its differences in function.

Pinyin Name: Shu Di Huang

English Name: Cooked Rehmannia

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Rehmannia Preparata

Properties: sweet and slightly warm

Meridians: Liver, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Blood

Shu Di Huang builds and nourishes Blood for cases of anemia, and various menstrual disorders. Deficiency can reduce blood circulation. While Shu Di Huang is not a moving herb, it can correct Blood deficiency that results in poor circulation.

2. Tonify Liver and Kidney Yin, Jing

Shu Di Huang operates deeply on the body, having a beneficial impact on Kidney and Liver Yin. Weak knees and lower back, night sweats, issues with vision, are often signs of Yin deficiency. Shu Di Huang also aids in building and consolidating Jing to aid in developmental delays or signs of premature aging.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Shu Di Huang is most often referred to simply as Shu Di, just as the raw form is often referred to as Sheng Di. Clinically, these herbs are often used in combination for their similar but somewhat balancing differences in action.

Shu Di possesses a fairly cloying, damp nature with a tendency to clog and cloy from its strong Yin tonic function. Often times, Shu Di is combined with some moving and/or aromatic herb to balance the cloying nature of this herb. Today, Mu Xiang is often used to help regulate flow when large amounts of Shu Di are used. Traditionally, Bai Dou Kou was pounded into the surfaces of Shu Di before use, to help penetrate some of the

dampness that would come about from the use of Shu Di. Other regulating herbs are also useful when using Shu Di with other Yin tonics; these include Chen Pi, Qing Pi, and damp drying herbs such as Cang Zhu and Huo Po used in small quantity.

Shu Di is an herb that is used fairly rarely in external formulas but appears in a respectable list of internal formulas. It has little utility to directly heal injury (especially externally), but does serve some indirect purpose in aiding the body with healing and general well-being; because of its tonifying effect on Kidney Yin, it can help aid in maintaining bone strength, specifically the marrow, and aid in any situation where the Kidney may be undermined by training, such as often the case of sexual over activity, or any time the bones are concerned (like in iron palm training).

As such, it is found alongside a number of other herbs in tonic formulas that are important to the martial artist and athlete. Some internal formulas it can be found in include: Bone Break Decoction, Strengthen Sinew Connect Bone Elixir, Tai Chi tea, Double Harmony Tea, Golden Relic Pills, PlumDragon Comprehensive Iron Palm Tonic and Iron Bone Training Powder, Ten Brocade Pill, Injury Recovery Pill, all versions of Spring Wine, Flying Dragon Life-Robbing Elixir, Strengthen Sinew Connect Bone Elixir, Protect the General Wine, Shaolin Live Dragon Wine, Shaolin Great Supplement Wine, Bone Knitting Powder, Osteophyte Powder, Golden Phoenix, Three Treasures Soup, and as a very important herb in many classic and patent formulas, such as Dang Gui Four, Rehmannia Six, Rehmannia Eight, Great Tonify the Yin Pill, Hidden Tiger Pill, Restore the Right Kidney Decoction, Kidney Qi Pill from the Golden Cabinet (Jin Gui Shen Qi Wan), and Gecko Tonic tea pills.

Additionally, it is found in the occasional external formula. Examples include: PlumDragon Jun Fan/JKD dit da jow and Bruise JIUce, a small Shuai Chiao training liniment, Black Hand, Leung Jan's Wing Chun dit da jow, Iron Lotus iron palm

jow, and Broad Application Tendon Trauma Liniment, Bak Fu Pai Qi Conditioner.

Pinyin Name: He Shou Wu

English Name: Polygonum, Fo-Ti

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Polygoni Multiflori

Properties: sweet, bitter, and slightly warm

Meridians: Kidney, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Blood, Nourish Liver, Kidney, and Jing

He Shou Wu is astringent and strongly nourishes Blood and Jing in the Liver and Kidney as a result of deficiency creating graying of hair and other forms of premature aging, weakness in the lower back, knees, and extremities, anemia, and nocturnal emissions or vaginal discharge.

2. Eliminate Toxins

Raw He Shou Wu is useful for eliminating toxic swellings and sores from the body.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

He Shou Wu is a crucial herb for anyone involved in herbalism to be aware of. This herb works very deeply and potently on the body. However, He Shou Wu by itself is a well-balanced herb; it is not hot so it does not create excess heat or dryness, and while it helps retain and produce Yin in the body, it will not create excess dampness. In addition, while many other strong and useful herbs have realized large increases in price, He Shou Wu is very inexpensive to purchase.

He Shou Wu figures into several internal formulas such as Bone Knitting Powder, Osteophyte Powder, PlumDragon Comprehensive Iron Palm Tonic, Shaolin Great Supplement Wine, Abundant Justice Wine, Zhi Ti Fa Bagua internal hit pills, as a rare inclusion in Spring Wine, Twelve Spiritual Generals Wine, Eight Immortals Tonic, and is an important part of more traditional formulas such as Shou Wu Chih and He Shou Wu Wine, Taoist Longevity tonic, Preserving Youth Pill, and Dull Thinning Graying Hair formula.

An interesting quirk about He Shou Wu that is not common with other herbs is that it should not come into contact with metal at any time. Most herbs can touch metal without a problem but risk degradation when cooked in reactive metal pots due to oxidation reactions. However, He Shou Wu should not ever be stored for any time in metal, as it can hinder the effectiveness of the herb. If you are to grind this herb in a metal grinder, do your grinding and remove it from the grinder promptly.

Pinyin Name: Bai Shao

English Name: White Peony

Pharmaceutical Name: Radix Paeoniae Alba

Properties: bitter, sour and cool

Meridians: Liver, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Blood and Yin

Bai Shao tonifies Blood and Yin and is used for a wide variety of clinical reasons, ranging from treatment of injury to constitutional deficiency, to gynecological problems. Bai Shao mildly invigorates Blood circulation and can aid in healing of injury and pain due to Bi Syndrome, especially due to deficiency.

2. Tonify and Soften Liver

Bai Shao enters the Liver to calm Yang and aid with dizziness, irritability, headache, vertigo and other symptoms associated with Liver Yang rising. Bai Shao also softens the Liver to reduce spasm, cramps, and pain in the muscles and tendons, and aid with Bi Syndrome, especially when due to deficiency.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Bai Shao is a very useful herb that all martial artists who deal with herbs should be aware of. The tonifying aspect is useful, but what is more important is that Bai Shao has a similar action as Dang Gui to invigorate Blood circulation and dispel Bi Syndrome, making it useful as an assistant herb in injury formulas. Perhaps equally useful is this herb's ability to aid in relaxing the musculoskeletal system and reduce tension mentally and physically, making Bai Shao useful for flexibility work and to some degree for iron palm training.

Bai Shao has displayed a number of pharmacological effects through study and trial. Especially important are its ability as an anticoagulant, an anti-inflammatory, and its effect to dilate blood vessels and relax muscle spasms. Bai Shao has also exhibited some antibiotic action against Staph, Strep, E. Coli, and Salmonella, although this herb is rarely used in herbal antibiotic preparations.

Because of the multiple uses of Bai Shao, it figures into a relatively significant list of both internal and external formulas, both for tonifying, conditioning, and injury. An abbreviated list of external formulas it appears in includes: All variations of the Ku Yu Cheong, Ark Wong, and Wong Fei Hung Ten Tigers iron palm jows, PlumDragon White Dragon iron palm jow, Bruise dit da jow, and Jun Fan/JKD jow, Chow Gar training jow, Shaolin White-Coated Bodhisattva Plaster, and a number of smaller regional formulas used both for blood stasis and sprains/strains.

Bai Shao also appears in several internal formulas to include: Bone Knitting Powder, PlumDragon Iron Bone Training Powder, Flexibility Pack, and dit da wan, Iron Warrior tonic, Treatment for Unstoppable Bleeding, Bone Break Decoction, Penetrating Bone Pill, Strengthen Sinew Connect Bone Elixir, Tai Chi Tea, Double Harmony Tea, Eight Battle Formations Elixir, Abundant Justice Wine, Three Treasures Soup, and in classical and patent formulas such as Dang Gui Four, Cinnamon Twig Decoction, and Great Mender from Plum Flower.

Bai Shao has similar but different uses and actions than Chi Shao. Bai Shao is warmer and chiefly a Blood tonic. Chi Shao is cool and is primarily used for clearing heat and cooling the Blood. Both herbs invigorate Blood circulation but Chi Shao probably acts stronger in this capacity while Bai Shao is a better tonic.

These herbs are therefore not interchangeable, but do sometimes appear in formulas alongside each other. A prime example is in the Ku Yu Cheong where they are both used in 12 gram quantities.

Pinyin Name: E Jiao

English Name: Donkey Hide Glue

Pharmaceutical Name: Colla Corni Asini

Properties: sweet and neutral

Meridians: Lung, Liver, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Blood and Yin

E Jiao is used clinically in cases of anemia and menstrual disorders. E Jiao also moistens the Lung and nourishes Lung Yin to address coughing and asthma due to dryness.

2. Stops Bleeding

The prepared form of E Jiao can stop bleeding both internally and externally.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

E Jiao is the extracted gelatin or glue from the skin of a donkey. This substance is a very sticky, dampening substance to the body. When used for its stop bleeding function, it is sometimes and combined with other charred stop bleeding herbs such as Pu Huang or Jing Jie.

E Jiao is noted here primarily for its historical use and mention in a couple of formulas. Today, E Jiao is sold by only a small handful of distributors and at a fairly high price tag. It is my opinion that this is one of the herbs discussed in this text that can simply fade away into history. There are a large selection of other wonderful Blood tonics available, and an even larger diversity of stop bleeding herbs that work both more strongly and less. Of most importance though, is that nearly all of these other herbs do not come with a high price tag or are difficult to procure.

In lieu of that position, E jiao is worth mentioning for its inclusion in the following formulas: Treatment for Unstoppable Bleeding, many versions of Spring Wine, Ying Gong Training formula, and Internal Strength and Balance Wine.

Pinyin Name: Long Yan Rou

English Name: Longan Berry

Pharmaceutical Name: Arrilus Longan

Properties: sweet and warm

Meridians: Heart, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Blood and Qi

Long Yan Rou may benefit the production of both Blood and Qi with symptoms such as fatigue, shortness of breath, and exhaustion.

2. Calm the Shen

Long Yan Rou enters the Heart meridian to calm the Shen. Over activity, excessive worrying or anxiety, forgetfulness, and insomnia can all have a negative impact on the Heart and Spleen. Long Yan Rou aids in correcting that impact.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Long Yan Rou is high in the sugars glucose and sucrose and is therefore a relatively sweet-tasting herb. It is potentially the best tasting herb in this book, with Guo Qi Zi and Shu Di taking in 2nd and 3rd. Coincidentally, these are all Yin or Blood tonics.

Because Long Yan Rou is not misbalancing and therefore safe for long-term use, it can be snacked on during daily routine, or added to herbs such as Suan Zao Ren prior to bed to aid in falling asleep.

While Long Yan Rou is not common in formulas, it does exhibit some properties that make it attractive both for inclusion in certain internal drinks and for single use. With that said, it does appear in Modified Immortal Monk hand soak, Bak Mei Southern dit da jow, Fung Doe Duk, and Abundant Justice

Wine. Interestingly, 3 of those 4 formulas are for external use. Long Yan Rou, with its Shen calming and tonic properties and mild nature, is really much better off being used internally, either by itself or in a Shen calming formula. It is possible that its use in an external liniment may provide some feel to the liniment, but otherwise, it makes no difference in the operation of those jows.

Section 4 – Yin Tonifying Herbs

Pinyin Name: Tian Men Dong

English Name: Asparagus Tuber

Pharmaceutical name: Radix Asparagi

Properties: sweet, bitter and very cold

Meridians: Lung, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Yin, Moisten Dryness

Tian Men Dong is a very moistening substance use for a variety of conditions of excess dryness. It addresses textbook Yin deficiency patterns, including night sweats, constipation, wasting of muscles, and seminal emissions.

2. Clear Heat

Tian Men Dong has a very cold energetic temperature, making it useful for clearing heat, especially in the Lung, when there is cough due to dryness or Wind-Heat.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Tian Men Dong is a very useful herb in clinical settings, but it is not of serious use to the martial artist. It does provide some Heat clearing ability and is of course great as a Yin tonic to help generate moisture in the body, but its use is mostly rare and only as an assistant or deputy herb to help backup or balance functionality.

Tian Men Dong does provide some utility as it is used in PlumDragon Fundamental Texture tonic and Shaolin Tiger

Fighting Elixir. Additionally, the formula Many Years Persistent Injury Wine calls for the use of Mai Men Dong, but some individuals who fill this formula prefer to do so with Tian Men Dong.



Tian Men Dong

Pinyin Name: Huang Jing

English Name: Polygonatum, Solomon's Seal

Pharmaceutical Name: Rhizoma Polygonati

Properties: sweet and neutral

Meridians: Spleen, Lung, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Yin and Jing

Huang Jing tonifies Lung Yin to aid in relieving dry cough where there are signs of Yin deficiency. Huang Jing also enters the Kidney to build Jing where deficiency may lead to weakness in the lower back and knees, graying of hair prematurely, and other symptoms of deficient Kidney function.

2. Tonify Spleen Qi

Huang Jing is beneficial for Spleen Qi deficiency where there is poor appetite, fatigue or malaise, when there are no signs of excess Dampness.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Huang Jing, also commonly known as Solomon's or King Solomon's seal, and is an important herb for martial artists to be aware of; it is important for its ability to assist and balance. It is very dampening and cloying, so it should rarely be used in high dosage or as a chief herb, but it serves some important functions as a secondary herb in formulas. Huang Jing can decrease blood pressure and cholesterol levels, increase artery dilation, increase endurance, and perhaps most importantly to those interested in conditioning regimens, Huang Jing is said to promote generation of bone marrow through its ability to tonify Jing.

Huang Jing does not appear in a large list of formulas, but it is an herb which is finding its way into some as time goes on. It has become a favorite at PlumDragon where it has been added to the Ancestors Advanced iron palm jow and is also now an accepted addition to the Comprehensive Iron Palm tonic, Iron Bone Training Powder, and Spring Wine. It also appears in Bak Mei Southern dit da jow, a Hakka conditioning jow, Broad Application Tendon Trauma Liniment, and Hua Tuo Eight Immortal Bruise Liniment.

Huang Jing can be used to substitute other Yin tonics. For example, while it may not have the focus on bone strength that Gui Ban does, even if Gui Ban is available, Huang Jing provides a much more efficient extraction and is very easy to procure.

Pinyin Name: Gou Qi Zi

English Name: Lycium Berry

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Lycii

Properties: sweet and neutral

Meridians: Liver, Kidney, Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Yin

Gou Qi Zi has a mild action to tonify Yin of the Liver, Kidney, and Lung meridians and aids in generating fluids in the body. Based on the herbs it is used with, it can help address deficiencies with any of these meridian systems, such as infertility where there is low sperm count, nocturnal emissions, night sweats, problems with vision, and other Yin deficiency patterns.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Gou Qi Zi is the sweet red fruit of the *Lycium Barbarum* plant, a member of the nightshade family. It is also known as wolfberry and is commonly sold in western stores as an addition to tea or other food items as Goji berries. These berries are sweet enough to eat and house a variety of essential vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that make them a great snack. Since they are mild in nature, they are not overly stagnating and can be used long-term, either in formulas or singly as a daily snack.

Gou Qi Zi is a worthwhile herb for anyone to have around. Despite the traditional uses of Gou Qi Zi, it is an important antioxidant; it enhances general immune system function, and promotes the generation of blood cells.

Given its mild nature, Gou Qi Zi is commonly seen in tonics ranging from mild to very potent, and even in external formulas, albeit extremely rarely. It can be found in Golden Relic Pills,

Golden Phoenix Elixir, all versions of Spring Wine, Winter Wine, PlumDragon Iron Bone Training Powder, Internal Strength and Balance Wine, Seven Seeds, Five Seeds Two Emperor Supplement the Essence Tea, Twelve Spiritual Generals Wine, Many Years Persistent Injury Wine, Three Treasures Soup, Warming and Quickening Wine, and classical formulas and patents such as Modified Rehmannia Six and Gecko Tonic tea pills.

Interestingly, Gou Qi Zi is also hidden away in external formulas such as Seven Star Praying Mantis bruise jow, Bak Mei Southern dit da jow, and Immortal Monk. In Immortal Monk, it appears alongside Long Yan Rou; both are mild herbs that aid in moisturizing dryness, among other things. However, the other functions of these herbs are lost with external use.

Pinyin Name: Nu Zhen Zi

English Name: Privet Fruit

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Ligustri Lucidi

Properties: sweet, bitter and cool

Meridians: Liver, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Liver and Kidney Yin and Jing

Nu Zhen Zi has a mild action to tonify Yin and build Jing. Jing often relates to the development and maturation process, and as such, Nu Zhen Zi can be useful for a variety of disorders relating to issues with development and premature aging, especially when due to excess Heat.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Nu Zhen Zi is composed of a number of acidic compounds that provide it some mild pharmacological actions. Like other Yin tonics, it can be useful for supporting general immune system function and promoting the production of blood cells. Additionally, it can be useful as a mild antibiotic against Staph infections and Salmonella poisoning, and acts as a mild anti-inflammatory.

Nu Zhen Zi is utilized in all of the commonly seen versions of Spring Wine, Shaolin Great Supplement Wine, Virility Wine, and externally in Gua's Imperial Fire. Additionally, it is found in relevant classical formulas and patents such as Shen Tong Zhu Yu Tang (when used for Kidney Yin deficiency) and Gecko Tonic.

Pinyin Name: Gui Ban

English Name: Turtle Shell

Pharmaceutical Name: Plastrum Testudinis

Properties: salty, sweet and cold

Meridians: Liver, Kidney, Heart

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Yin, Anchor Yang

Gui Ban is a cold herb that enters the Liver. It tonifies Liver Yin and sedates Liver Yang rising, seen as redness in the face and eyes, dizziness, vertigo, and emotional disturbances such as irritability and a hot temper.

2. Tonify Kidney to Strengthen Bone

Gui Ban addresses Kidney and Liver deficiency manifesting as weakness in the bones and sinew, knees, and lower back, and a frail skeletal nature. Gui Ban also builds Jing to counter

nocturnal emissions, spermatorrhea, and other Yin deficiency signs.

3. Tonify Blood, Stop Bleeding

Gui Ban tonifies Heart Blood to calm the Shen. This type of deficiency can often lead to bouts of anxiety and restlessness. Gui Ban also stops bleeding, primarily in the case of menstrual bleeding where there is Yin or Blood deficiency.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Gui Ban is the shell (or plastron) of the fresh water turtle. Currently, both the ventral and dorsal side of this animal is used. Bie Jia is a similar herb which refers to the plastron of a turtle with a softer shell that may exist either in fresh water or brackish regions, meaning that sea water and fresh water are at a mixing point so the salinity is greater than zero, but lower than that found in seas and oceans.

Gui Ban is only mentioned for educational and historical purposes. Sentiment on using turtle shells for use in martial arts formulas is that it is entirely unnecessary. Many types of turtles and tortoises around the world are endangered species, including the species used for Gui Ban. It is therefore, very unethical to use the shell of these animals and against the opinions of the author, especially in the context of physical training where the healing of disorder is not the focus of the formula. Even though Gui Ban is still available on the market, other herbs exist which potentially work better for certain jobs and are not endangered or expensive.

When you see Gui Ban used in a formula, it is best to either find a substitute or simply leave it out of formula. Huang Jing does not exactly match the actions of Gui Ban, but it is a good substitution. There are a number of other herbs in this text which are cooling, stop bleeding, or tonify the Kidney to strengthen bone and sinew. Some are significantly stronger than Gui Ban in this regard, some are not.

Chapter 17

Herbs that are Astringent

Concept

Herbs that are astringent have the effect of preventing loss of substance from the body when the body is in a state of deficiency or state of disease that is allowing an overabundance of “losses”. Adjectives commonly used to describe astringent herbs include bind, consolidate, and restrain. Theoretically, the substances that we are trying to astringe are commonly Jing and/or Blood, although Qi and other various bodily fluids are also substances that we can seek to astringe.

Astringent herbs tend to bank on the well-known philosophy of input and output, consumption versus production, or gain versus loss. Classically speaking, as our body goes into a state of deficiency, it is due to the fact that output is great than input,

losses out weigh gains. Where tonic herbs aid the body in increasing production, astringent herbs seek to minimize losses, or consumption. Therefore, tonic herbs and astringents can work together to bring someone out of a state of disharmony by approaching the problem from both sides: Increase gains and decrease losses, as opposed to simply viewing the problem from a single angle.

Physically, these leakages that increase consumption may be present as any number of things, seen conceptually as leakage. This includes diarrhea, various types of bleeding, spontaneous perspiration and night sweats, frequent urination, incontinence, nocturnal emissions, and excessive vaginal discharge. These symptoms can occur due to a fairly complex set of patterns in multiple meridians; although, the meridians usually affected are the Kidney, Liver, Heart, Large Intestine, and Lung.

When we think of foods that are astringent, we often have images of lemons that make the mouth pucker and produce saliva, even just on the thought of it. Similarly, astringent herbs are said to have a sour flavor and one can compare this feeling of astringency with the concept of astringent herbs.

Astringent herbs have displayed a few pharmacological effects, from antibiotic to antidiarrheal. Of interest to the martial artist is primarily the ability of some of these herbs to provide a hemostatic effect to stop bleeding. Additionally, some may enhance immune function and may be useful in training wines for their ability to restrain Jing when training in intensive iron palm programs, or other situations where the Kidneys are being stressed from training.

Interestingly, as astringent herbs have a strong binding and consolidating effect, they can reduce the effectiveness of pharmaceutical drugs and should not be taken with prescription drugs in the case that pharmaceutical potency may be reduced.

Preparation

Astringent herbs are often seeds and fruits. While these items generally have no cooking or aging restriction, it is important that in the case of hard seeds, that they are broken up for maximum extraction.

Additionally, many astringents can be prepared with traditional Pao Zhi methods to either enhance or alter the action of the herb. Where relevant, these methods will be discussed in each template.

Pinyin Name: Wu Wei Zi

English Name: Shisandra Fruit

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Schisandrae Chinensis

Properties: sour and warm

Meridians: Kidney, Lung, heart

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Nourish Kidney, Restrain Leakage of Lung Qi and Jing

Wu Wei Zi can act astringently to restrain leakage of, and encourage production of, Lung Qi and Jing that may manifest as chronic coughing, asthma, shortness of breath or difficulty in breathing, and fatigue. Wu Wei Zi also enters the Kidney to restrain fluids due to nocturnal emission, spermatorrhea, enuresis, diarrhea, and more generally, night sweats due to Yin deficiency.

2. Tonify Heart, Calm the Shen

We Wei Zi nourishes the Heart and calms the Shen and may be useful for anxiety and insomnia, and other mental disturbances where one feels agitated.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Wu Wei Zi, literally meaning “Five Flavored Seed” is one of several herbs that is also commonly used in other systems of herbalism. The Chinese refer to this herb as five-flavored because it has a very complex flavor profile and can be seen as composing all of the 5 flavors used in TCM.

Wu Wei Zi has a number of pharmacological effects that have been observed in trials and studies, including an ability to increase mental alertness, as a cardiovascular regulator, in the treatment of asthma, and as both a reproductive system and immune system stimulant. Additionally, Wu Wei Zi has demonstrated some ability to inhibit the growth of various strains

of Staph infection, Bacillus, and Salmonella. It has been useful in treating Asthma, Dysentery, and Hepatitis.

Wu Wei Zi is somewhat obscure in lists of formulas. However, it is hidden away in some internal mixes such as: Seven Seeds, Five Seeds Two Emperor Supplement the Essence formula, in some version of Spring Wine, Dull Thinning Graying Hair Formula, and Nine Seeds Return to Spring Pill.

Pinyin Name: Shan Zhu Yu

English Name: Cornus Berry

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Corni

Properties: sour and slightly warm

Meridians: Kidney, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Liver and Kidney Yin

Shan Zhu Yu provides a tonic effect to the Liver and Kidney when there are issues with weakness and soreness in the knees and lower back, impotence, lack of nourishment due to impaired flow of Blood, and issues with both hearing and vision.

2. Restrain Fluids

Shan Zhu Yu addresses deficiencies of Yin and restrains leakage of Jing which can manifest as excessive sweating and trouble with urine retention such as dripping following urination.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Shan Zhu Yu is one of a couple herbs that are very beneficial for tonifying the Kidney following over exertion or a great deal of physical and mental stress that can weaken the body. Shan Zhu Yu (often paired for these purposes with Wu Wei Zi) can help

strengthen the Kidney and Liver and help to retain that strength through its astringent and consolidating action. For this reason, this herb can be useful for those who train hard, whether it be through hard physical exertion, through rigorous iron palm training, or just a very busy schedule that may wear one down over time.

Shan Zhu Yu is used in Bone Break Decoction, Golden Relic Pills, Ginseng and Deer Antler Pill, and PlumDragon Comprehensive Iron Palm Tonic. It may be a useful herb to include in other formulas where one seeks to tonify the Kidney and may desire some degree of astringency as well.

Pinyin Name: Fu Pen Zi

English Name: Chinese Raspberry

Pharmaceutical Name: Fructus Rubi

Properties: sweet, sour and slightly warm

Meridians: Kidney, Liver

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Kidney and Liver, Restrain Jing

Fu Pen Zi strengthens the Kidney meridian and consolidates jing to address common ailments of this meridian including impotence, nocturnal emissions, premature ejaculation, and spermatorrhea. It also enters the Liver and may aid with a number of vision-related issues.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Fu Pen Zi is one herb used alongside other more focused Yin and Yang tonics. The theory is that stronger tonic herbs will build and strengthen these meridian systems, and herbs such as

Fu Pen Zi will work to lock that strength in and not let it diminish through what the Chinese refer to as leakage. These types of explanations often seem to lack sound technical detail and can feel hokey to those not familiar with Chinese medicine. However, as a working model, it is actually a poetic way to explain what the Chinese observed about the body. Ultimately, the clinical goal is still to map these terms into a specific disorder and treat it.

For the martial artist, there isn't much of a clinical goal, but rather these herbs are used to build or retain jing when there may not be a deficiency. As such, they are commonly used in smaller quantity in longevity tonics such as Spring Wine where it's likely there is not a significant deficiency that exists; here, the important action is to use the herb as a mild way of astringing in the case that there is some minor degree of leakage.



Fu Pen Zi

Pinyin Name: Qian Shi

English Name: Euryale Seed

Pharmaceutical Name: Semen Euryales

Properties: sweet and neutral

Meridians: Kidney, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Spleen to Dispel Dampness

Qian Shi has an astringent function that operates on the Spleen's ability to transform and transport fluids properly through the body, especially as it pertains to the digestive system.

2. Tonify Kidney to Retain Jing

The astringency of Qian Shi enters the Kidney meridian to address spermatorrhea and moderate serious vaginal discharge.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Qian Shi is not commonly used in tonics used by martial artists and even more rarely used in dit da, for obvious reasons. However, it is included here for its coincidental inclusion in 1 external formula. It is used as an assistant herb in the Bak Mei Southern training formula. There may be some other formulas it appears in, but like some of the other herbs in this category, Qian Shi is not a very important herb and does not warrant a great deal of investigation. Its addition on an as-needed basis is far more important to understand.

It is worth noting that its inclusion in an external formula is mostly insignificant. To reap the benefits of this herb, it should be used internally.

Qian Shi can be dry-fried to enhance the herbs tonifying aspects towards both the Spleen and Kidney.

Pinyin Name: Lian Zi

English Name: Lotus Seed

Pharmaceutical Name: Semen Nelumbinis

Properties: sweet and neutral

Meridians: Heart, Kidney, Spleen

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Tonify Spleen and Kidney, Restrain Jing

Lian Zi is an astringent herb that strengthens the Kidney and restrains leakage of jing due to premature ejaculation and vaginal discharge. Lian Zi also strengthens the functions of the Spleen to address poor appetite and digestion, diarrhea, and fatigue.

2. Calm the Spirit

Lian Zi enters the heart meridian to calm the spirit in cases of anxiety and irritability.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Lian Zi is one of several parts of the Lotus plant in use as a medicinal substance. Lian Zi is mentioned here only for its use in some obscure formulas used in the martial arts. Other notable portions of the plant relevant to the reader of this text include Ou Jie, He Geng/Lian Geng, and Lian Fang. Most of these herbs have some type of astringent property.

Lian Zi is utilized in the internal formula Gold Lock Tea pills, which is a noted formula in multiple older texts written by martial artists and is sometimes an adjunctive formula used for iron body training. Despite its very rare inclusion in other regional formulas, Lian Zi is more commonly found in clinical settings where more classical TCM formulas are utilized. With that said it is of mostly little to no importance to the martial artist and is mentioned primarily for the opportunity to mention

its use in Gold Lock Tea pills. However, other portions of the plant, especially Ou Jie, are certainly more important and a bit more proliferated at this point in time.

Chapter 18

Herbs for External Use Only

Concept

Herbs that are reserved for external use only have a wide variety of uses and applications. Generally, these herbs can be classified as either:

- Of high toxicity and should not be used internally. Rather, their external use allows absorption into the skin to produce a therapeutic effect.
- Used to treat external regions of the body, such as dermatological issues, snake and insect bites, burns, injuries, rashes, and other issues associated with the external layers.

Several herbs from this category are very useful for martial arts based formulas, both injury and conditioning. Some of them are very strong and others are milder. Because of the diverse nature

of herbs in this category, only those herbs are included which have specific value for the martial artist and athlete *and* are used in multiple formulas. Many of the actions stated for these herbs may not provide a clear understanding of why this herb may be used in an injury or conditioning formula. Additional information will be available in the supplemental sections of each herb.

Lastly, many of these herbs are either very difficult to procure today or are no longer used. Some may be included here and potential substitutions will be offered for herbs of this nature. Others are simply not listed because they are either rarely used, difficult to procure, or are very toxic and no longer sold. Herbs of this nature include Ban Mao, Chan Su, Xiong Huang, Mi Tuo Seng (Lead Oxide), and various forms of Mercury, including Zhu Sha, Qing Fen, and Qian Dan. For more information on these, please consult sources listed in the Bibliography or contact PlumDragon at the websites listed in the back of the book.

Preparation

Due to the diversity of this group, the processing of these substances is addressed for each herb individually. However, many of these herbs are processed both to reduce toxicity as well as allow for optimal extraction in decoctions and liniments.

Pinyin Name: Li Lu

English Name: Veratrum, False Hellebore

Pharmaceutical name: Radix et Rhizoma Veratri

Properties: spicy, bitter and cold

Meridians: Lung, Liver, Stomach

VERY TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Induce Vomiting

Li Lu was used historically as an emetic herb to induce vomiting in an effort to physically dispel phlegm or toxic materials that had been ingested.

2. Dispel Wind and Phlegm

Li Lu is very penetrating and very moving; it strongly extinguishes Wind and dispels phlegm. It may be used both for injury or conditioning to strongly break up and purge accumulations through its spicy and moving action.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Li Lu is a very powerful herb that is both dispersing and moving. It can break up accumulations of phlegm and Wind-Damp and open the channels while also having a strong function to invigorate circulation in a similar but decidedly stronger way than Da Huang.

Some sources claim that the inclusion of Li Lu synergistically increases the potency of other herbs in a formula. This may or may not be true. Either way, it is a very strong herb.

Li Lu is very toxic and should **never** be used internally for any reason. It is strictly an external use only substance. While Li Lu is an important component for the few formulas it is used in, I consider it to be an antiquated and mostly obsolete herb outside

of the realm of dit da: Clinically, its uses are very low and restricted and its potential for poisoning is relatively high. For these reasons, it is very difficult to get in the United States despite its low cost—nobody cares about this herb other than the martial arts community who uses it in hand conditioning formulas. Additionally, Li Lu has its own dedicated list of herbs it should never be combined with. Please see the Eighteen Incompatibilities at the front of this text for details.

In lieu of the above discussion, Li Lu is indeed a potent addition in the following external conditioning and injury formulas it is used in: Multiple Northern Praying Mantis injury dit da jow and training liniments, Chan Ning Tong iron palm jow, Shaolin Iron Sand Palm and Immortal Monk hot soaks, Black Hand, and Iron Lotus iron palm liniment.



Li Lu

Pinyin Name: Liu Huang

English Name: Sulfur

Pharmaceutical name: Sulfur

Properties: sour and warm

Meridians: Kidney

TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Relieve Toxicity

Liu Huang is used externally to relieve itching, rashes, eczema, sores, infections of the skin and other dermatological disorders.

2. Tonify Kidney Yang

Liu Huang has been used historically in very small doses internally to treat Kidney Yang deficiency causing a weakness of the knees, general coldness in the body, impotence and decreased libido.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Liu Huang also used to be employed as a preservative for other herbs. Herbs treated with sulfur tend to last longer and look brighter and more favorable. However, the use of sulfur can alter the effect of herbs and also provide some level of worry due to its toxic nature. Additionally, sulfur may contain heavy-metal impurities, making it of even more concerning. Today, many herb companies have rightfully stopped using sulfur to preserve herbs and have opted to use safer methods.

Sulfur is used in very few formulas. It appears in the Shaolin Iron Sand Palm and Immortal Monk hot soaks, a Seven Star Praying Mantis dit da jow, Leen Goang Jau, the Shaolin Three Yellows plaster (which is drastically different than the more common San Huang San), and Toxin Resolving plaster. The first four formulas listed are of a very similar structure and it is

likely that all these formulas originated from the same original source and evolved in their own direction over the years.

Pinyin Name: Ming Fan

English Name: Alum

Pharmaceutical name: Alumen

Properties: sour and cold

Meridians: Lung, Liver, Spleen, Stomach, Large Intestine

TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Eliminate Toxins, Clear Heat and Dampness

Ming Fan has been used historically to treat rashes, eczema, and various types of itching and skin problems. Ming Fan also clears heat and dispels dampness and coagulated states of phlegm to reduce swelling, inflammation, and redness.

2. Stop Bleeding

Ming Fan has an astringent effect that has some utility to stop bleeding in cases such as traumatic injury where cuts and lacerations are present.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ming Fan (also sometimes called Bai Fan) is a very cold herb and has some antibiotic properties, making it potentially useful for “toxic” skin infections such as staphylococcus; it has dual benefit to help the healing of sores where these types of infections may enter the body, while also inhibiting the continued growth of the infection externally.

Ming Fan is used rarely in dit da formulas. It is used primarily in old Shaolin formulas such as Shaolin Original Brightness powder, Seven Flavors Recover and Recuperate powder, Ten Thousand Respondings plaster, and Treatment of Failure to Recover after Arrow Injury. It is purchased occasionally as part of formulas at PlumDragon, but this is often for small focused conditioning formulas that are not well known to the public.

Ming Fan is still available but is one of the more uncommon herbs that are used in current day. While it is carried at PlumDragon Herbs, its use generally makes little sense as it doesn't show up in serious or well-known formulas. Often times, its exclusion from a formula will have minimal impact, or it can be substituted easily with any other herb that has cold and astringent properties.

Pinyin Name: Ma Qian Zi

English Name: Nux Vomica, Horse Coin

Pharmaceutical name: Semen Strychni

Properties: bitter and cold

Meridians: Liver Spleen

VERY TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Unblock Channels, Dispel Wind-Damp

Ma Qian Zi is used to strongly unblock and open the channels. This herb dispels Wind-Damp to treat severe cases of Bi Syndrome, spasms, cramps, numbness, weakness, and pain in the muscles and joints. These properties make it useful for conditioning liniments.

2. Reduce Swelling

Ma Qian Zi has a bitter and cold energy that is useful in reducing painful swelling and inflammation including hard nodules formed from repeated trauma. This action makes this herb very useful for injury formulas.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ma Qian Zi is the herb from which the chemical substance strychnine is obtained, although this herb also contains a number of other important compounds such as brucine, iso-brucine, and chlorogenic acid. This herb is very toxic and generally not available in raw form. Even the treated form is toxic if ingested; less than 1/10 of a gram of strychnine chemical is a lethal dose for a human. Extreme care must be in mind when using Ma Qian Zi, even for external use. Ma Qian Zi also has a strong stimulating effect on the CNS.

Because of the overall strength of this herb, it is rarely used in basic formulas for minor injuries or conditioning use, but rather reserved for the upper echelon of injury and conditioning formulas, based on the other herbs which it is used with. Some of the more well-known formulas that use Ma Qian Zi include: Shaolin Die Da Shen Yan Liang Fan/Ho Family dit da jow, Southern Fist Iron Body jow, PlumDragon Bruise JIUce, Brian Gray dit da jow, Return the Spirit jow, Eight Immortals powder, Treatment of Jin Na Luo Injury to Sinew and Bone, and Ten Thousand Respondings plaster.

Ma Qian Zi is also found in a few internal formulas, sometimes even in large dosage. This is *not* a suggested use because of the toxicity of this herb. However, these formulas are listed in an effort to be thorough, as well as for their historical significance: Injured Sinew Remove the Bone pill, Extend the Sinew elixir, and Soothing the Sinew elixir.



Ma Qian Zi that has been processed to reduce toxicity

Pinyin Name: She Chuang Zi

English Name: Cnidium Seed

Pharmaceutical name: Fructus Cnidii

Properties: spicy, bitter and warm

Meridians: Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Cold, Wind, and Damp

She Chuang Zi is a warm herb with a penetrating and dispersing nature that effectively dries Dampness and scatters Wind. It is often employed for various skin disorders, ranging from basic itching and eczema to issues with ringworm, scabies, and hemorrhoids. The function of this herb is augmented towards

Wind-Cold or Wind-Damp based on other herbs it is combined with.

2. Tonify Kidney Yang

She Chuang Zi warms the Kidney meridian and strengthens Kidney Yang. It is commonly found in formulas for lower back pain, as well as impotence and infertility.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

She Chuang Zi is an interesting herb in the sense that while it tends to act as a tonic through its ability to help warm Kidney Yang, it has good dispersing properties as well. Interestingly, compounds such as pinene, camphene, and bornyl acetate are part of its makeup. Likely for these reasons, it has been chosen for use in some iron palm formulas.

She Chuang Zi is found in the following external formulas: Shaolin Iron Sand Palm hot soak, Leen Goang Jau, Chan Ning Tong iron palm jow, Black Hand, Ancient Way/Monks Fist dit da jow, and Golden Lotus dit da jow.

She Chuang Zi is also used in the occasional internal formula for its effect on the Kidney meridian; a couple examples being the Shaolin Temple Tiger Fighting elixir and Seven Seeds.

She Chuang Zi should be differentiated from the root portions of similar plants. Chuan Xiong, Gao Ben, and Tie Da Yin Chen are all various species of Ligusticum root—She Chuang Zi is the seed of Ligusticum Monneiri and is used for significantly different purposes.

Pinyin Name: Zhang Nao

English Name: Camphor

Pharmaceutical name: Camphora

Properties: spicy and hot

Meridians: Heart, Spleen

TOXIC

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Wind-Damp and Cold

Zhang Nao is strongly penetrating and dispersing and dispels Wind-Damp and Cold, particularly in the case of dermatological disorders and injuries where dampness causes pain and swelling, and obstructs proper flow. Zhang Nao frees these blockages through its strong aromatic nature.

2. Open Sensory Orifices

Chinese medicine generally refers to this term for treating fainting, loss of consciousness, and coma. However, Zhang Nao is also strongly aromatic and aids in opening the pores when used externally.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Zhang Nao is a strong substance with some interesting properties. It is very hot and provides a degree of superficial heat which is perceivable shortly after application; it acts as a CNS stimulant and is strongly dispersing, making it good for blockages of all kinds; some sources claim that it also is very moving, making it useful for strongly breaking Blood stagnation. However, this action is not mentioned in all sources, and some even claim that in some circumstances, the herb may have an inhibiting effect on the cardiovascular system unless the heart is weak, in which case it appears to stimulate the heart.

Zhang Nao appears in the following dit da formulas: Ancient Way/Monks Fist dit da jow, Tendon lotion, Balur, Hilot, and other types of injury oils used in the Philippines, Hua Tuo Eight Immortal Bruise liniment, Bob Flaws Dragon Blood liniment, Gua's Imperial Fire, Immortal Monk hot soak, Li Family iron palm jow, Return Spring plaster, and Shaolin Gentleman's plaster. It is also used in Fang Sou Yi and Du Fang Sou Er, the first 2 formulas of the basic ministerial training system as well as a few obscure formulas where it has been added over the years for its strongly penetrating and heating nature.

Zhang Nao is also used in nearly immeasurable small dosage in the internal formula, Nine Dragon decoction.

Several other herbs (Wu Yao for example) contain traces of camphor, but are very weak in comparison to this pure extracted substance.

Pinyin Name: Er Cha

English Name: Catechu Resin

Pharmaceutical name: Catechu

Properties: bitter and cool

Meridians: Lung

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Dispel Heat, Dampness, and Phlegm

Er Cha has a bitter, cooling and dispersing nature which clears heat, dampness, and manifestations of phlegm, although usually in the form of expectorated phlegm from cough.

2. Generate Flesh, Stop Bleeding

Er Cha has an astringent and binding effect which affords it the action of stopping bleeding and promoting the generation of

flesh. It is one of the best herbs for generating flesh in conditioning liniments.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Er Cha has also been used to treat burns and is used in children to promote digestion from food stagnation and relieve coughing. In fact, the translation of this herb literally means, ‘Children’s Tea’. Catechim, one of the main compounds in this herb, is also a hepatoprotective agent.

Er Cha is an inexpensive herb and easy to procure. It is potentially underutilized in current dit da formulations due to its efficiency at promoting the generation of new flesh, and is an important herb to promote the thickening of skin in conditioning regimens. As other resinous stop-bleeding herbs such as Xue Jie continue to grow in cost, many herbalists will look to Er Cha as a replacement. While the actions are slightly different, Er Cha offers some favorable differences and is drastically less expensive. Ongoing research and development on this herb is taking place at PlumDragon and by the time this work is released, it will likely have been integrated into several of the premade formulas.

Er Cha is sometimes added to formulas to meet a desired effect. It is also part of the following list of dit da formulas, mostly for use in plasters: Classical and modified version of Qi Li San, Ten Thousand Abilities to Stop Bleeding powder, Extract Toxins and Engender Flesh powder, Shaolin Medicinal thread, Toad Skin plaster, Shaolin Temple Music plaster, White-Coated Bodhisattva plaster, Medical Ulcer plaster, Ten Thousand Respondings plaster, and PlumDragon basic bruise dit da jow.

Er Cha is a very safe herb and is also used in the following internal formulas: Yang Family Spear Wound powder, Nine Dragon Decoction, Shaolin Attack Toxins powder, Quicken the Blood elixir, Extend the Sinews elixir, Shaolin Spirit Connecting powder, and other more obscure recipes.

Good quality Er Cha is thick with a glue-like composition and a characteristic dark red hue. When ground and dissolved in alcohol, it produces a nearly purple luster that is obvious to differentiate from the deep red stain of Xue Jie.

Pinyin Name: Wu Ming Yi

English Name: Pyrolusite

Pharmaceutical name: Pyrolusitum

Properties: sweet and neutral

Meridians: Liver, Kidney

RELEVANT HERBAL ACTIONS

1. Promote Healing of External Injury

Wu Ming Yi can aid in stopping bleeding and promoting the generation of new flesh from traumatic injury. It is also useful for reducing pain, swelling and inflammation and can be used for cuts, scrapes, bruising, broken bones, and damage to tendons.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Wu Ming Yi is Manganese Dioxide. This substance enters the Kidney and Liver meridians and can help heal bone and sinew from injury. It acts as a general “injury” herb, having utility with dispersing swelling, reducing pain, and stopping bleeding.

Wu Ming Yi is used fairly rarely in formulas and shows up in very few Materia Medicas or other sources. It is listed here primarily because some formulas it has been used in have some historical importance and popularity. These formulas include: Shaolin Die Da Shen Lian Fan/Ho Family dit da jow, Mew Hing

Level 2 iron palm jow, and various formulas for bleeding, bruising, and the treatment of pain or swelling due to injury in the upper parts of the body.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Accumulation: General term referring to a state of excess, either within an organ or in other parts of the body.

Aromatic: Containing volatile essential oils which act to penetrate and disperse dampness. Aromatic refers to this action as well as the aroma. Stomachic is the term used in Western herbalism.

Bi Syndrome: Condition in which stagnation produces pain and lack of proper function. In the context of this book, Bi Syndrome generally refers to musculoskeletal pain in the form of pain in the joints or arthritic types of pain.

Blood: Physical bodily fluid which circulates constantly through to body moistening tissue and nourishing cells and organs. In TCM, Blood and Qi are somewhat inseparably bound substances.

Blood Deficiency: State in which the body lacks the necessary Blood required to circulate and nourish properly, causing pale complexion, numbness in the extremities and other clinical symptoms such as anemia.

Blood Stagnation: Condition in which the flow of Blood is impaired, causing fixed stabbing pain. In the context of this book, Blood stagnation generally refers to the lack of proper flow as a result of injury.

Blood Stasis: A more serious or severe form of Blood stagnation.

Body Fluids: The sum of all fluids in the body including Blood, interstitial fluids, saliva, sweat, tears, and urine. Some texts

include Blood and semen in this definition and others do not since

Channels: Comprehensive circulatory network in which Qi and Blood flow to provide nourishment and harmonize the organs and their bodily functions.

Clear: See Dispel.

Cold: A yin phenomena which manifests internally or externally, causing stagnation and reduction of action, creating cold extremities, paleness, poor circulation and digestion. Cold can attack areas of the body that have been injured in the past where circulation is still depleted.

Dampness: A yin phenomena which manifests internally or externally, causing stagnation through this heavy, highly viscous quality. Dampness may attack the joints and create stagnation that turns into arthritic pain.

Deficiency: A state of reduced function or substance. Deficiency can exist as an insufficient level of Qi, Blood, Yin, and Yang, or also as insufficient operation of the organs. Clinically, deficiency often occurs due to chronic illness or lack of nourishment.

Dispel: The act of removing, reducing, or clearing an excessive condition with the body. Dispelling (clearing) is most often performed on excess Heat, Cold, Damp, Wind, or a combination of these and may address the channels, organs, or tissues in the body.

Dryness: A yang phenomena which manifests internally or externally, causing a consumption of yin and fluids. Dryness is as one would expect, including dryness of the mouth, cracked skin, or constipation.

Essence: See Jing.

Excess: A state of overabundance, accumulation, or surplus of Yin, Yang, Heat, Cold, Qi, Blood, or other fluids which creates some type of undesirable condition in the body. Excess can exist within an organ, in a general state throughout the body, or locally such as excess in reference to a state of stagnation or stasis.

Exterior: Relating to the outer portions of the body such as the skin and mouth, and tissue just below the skin. External pathogens are said to first attack the exterior, causing chills, muscle aches, and sinus problems. External injuries are those which are visible and affect the skin and muscles. The Lung and Spleen meridians are linked to the exterior.

Fire: A yang phenomena which manifests internally as an extreme form of heat, generally in relation to the Heart meridian. In some sources, fire may also refer to Five element or Five Phase Theory.

Heart: Organ meridian responsible for controlling and regulating the Blood, Blood vessels, and the Shen, being an important part of the mental state of awareness. The Heart is said to open into the tongue.

Heat: A yang phenomenon which manifests internally or externally, causing the consumption and dispersal of fluids, and thus yin. Heat can cause inflammation (in an injury or otherwise), dryness, sweating, thirst, red skin and hypertensive conditions. Local heat conditions from injury generally only produce redness and inflammation.

Heat in the Blood: A phenomena which causes nosebleeds and other types of hemorrhages. Heat in the Blood is generally a clinical term and is not often encountered with external trauma. From one perspective, any inflamed injury that causes bruising may be called Heat in the Blood although this is not technically accurate.

Interior: Relating to the inner portions of the body such as the organs (physical or meridian-based), bone and sinew, Blood and other fluids. While many imbalances can begin in the interior, exterior pathogens that penetrate the exterior layers of the body then manifest on the interior and often become more serious.

Jing (essence): Refined substance which supports and sustains functionality of the organs, specifically reproduction and conception, development, and sexual prowess. Jing is stored in the Kidney and as it is used up, the body decays. While one physical manifestation of jing is semen, jing covers a much broader concept.

Kidney: Organ meridian responsible for reproduction, development and maturation. The Kidney stores the essence (jing), maintains the strength of the bones and marrow, received Qi from air via the Lung, and is responsible for individual will power.

Large Intestine: Organ meridian responsible for absorbing water and extracting nutrients from partially digested food. Physically, the Large Intestine is fed by the Small Intestine.

Liver: Organ meridian responsible for storing of the Blood and its smooth regulation of flow. The Liver rules the tendons and is responsible for a great deal of a person's emotional patterns and feelings.

Lung: Organ meridian responsible for controlling the flow of air through respiration and are in direct link to the exterior parts of the body, namely the skin. The Lung is said to open to the nose.

Meridians: See Channels.

Organs: In the context of this book and in TCM, organs refer to energetic sets of functions as opposed to physical structures or functions. Each organ in Chinese medicine has a correlated list

of energetic functions it carries out and not meant to be treated as physical Western organs.

Pericardium: Organ meridian responsible for protecting the Heart from pathological attack. The Pericardium also exists physically as a double-walled sac that contains the physical Heart and the roots of the adjoining blood vessels.

Phlegm: Manifestation of dampness brought about by the accumulation and condensation of dampness or stasis of fluids. Phlegm can affect proper flow in the body and in the channels, and can produce physical lumps and nodules. Phlegm is more “damp” and cloying than dampness.

Post-decoction: Referring to the cooking process of adding certain types of herbs at or near the end of the cooking process. Some herbs are said to be post-decocted by adding 5-10 minutes before removing from heat while other herbs should be post-decocted by adding at the very end and only allowed to steep. Formulas may have herbs that should be both pre- and post-decocted.

Pre-decoction: Referring to the cooking process of adding certain types of herbs prior to the bulk of the formula. Heavy, dense bark and minerals as well as toxic herbs are often pre-decocted for 30-60 minutes before adding the bulk of the herbs. Formulas may have herbs that should be both pre- and post-decocted.

Qi: Clinical and cultural term for the energy within a body that allows proper function and homeostasis. Qi is a somewhat nebulous and general terms that can be used to explain anything from dull aching pain (Qi stasis) to vomiting (rebellious Qi rising upwards). In TCM, Blood and Qi are somewhat inseparably bound substances.

Qi deficiency: A state in which the body lacks the necessary Qi required to perform basic bodily functions such as properly digest foods or regulate water in the body.

Qi Stagnation: A blockage of the flow of Qi through the organs or channels characterized primarily by non-fixed dull pain. This can take place due to a number of factors including external injury.

Qi Stasis: A more serious or severe form of Qi stagnation.

Shen: The “spirit” of a human being, comprised in terms of TCM primarily of an individual's state of being, mental faculties and emotional awareness. In TCM, the Shen is what separates humans from animals.

Small Intestine: Organ meridian responsible for absorbing water and extracting nutrients from partially digested food. Physically, the Small Intestine connects the Large Intestine and the Stomach together.

Spleen: Organ meridian responsible for transformation of food and liquids into substances the body can use, and transporting these substances to the proper organ for use. The Spleen also governs the creation of Blood and keeps it in its vessels, and rules the muscles and flesh.

Stomach: Organ meridian responsible for beginning the process of separating usable components from food. The “pure” components then go to the Spleen and the “turbid” are sent to the Intestines. The Stomach is paired very closely with the Spleen.

Tonify: The act of strengthening, nourishing, promoting, or improving the condition of substances in the body or the actions associated with any of the organs. Tonification generally acts up Qi, Blood, Yin, or Yang and may be in reference to a specific organ or the body in general.

Toxin: Any substance or pathogenic influence (internal or external) that may cause damage to the body or its organs and tissues. Toxins are often seen as infections, and can create

fever, swelling and inflammation, ulcerations, and other types of problems.

Wind: A yang phenomena which manifests externally but develops externally causing dispersion. Wind can produce spasms, cramps, tremors, and other types of tension including hypertension when it becomes very serious.

Yang: As the dipole-opposite to Yin, represents upper and outer parts of the body and the function within the body. Yang is often regarded as the body's ability to produce heat, maintain basal metabolic rate and circulation. It may represent drive and motivation, action and function.

Yin: As the dipole-opposite to Yang, represents the lower and more fragile interior parts of the body. Yin refers to the more material substances of the body including Blood, saliva, and sweat. It takes on a more material nature and is often seen as the physical manifestation.

RESOURCES/BUSINESSES OF INTEREST

PlumDragon Herbs

Production/sale of dit da products, tonics, retail sale of whole herbs and related products

<http://www.PlumDragonHerbs.com>

<http://www.TabiminaBalintawakSE.com>

pd@plumdragon.org

nuHerbs

Wholesale of TCM related products to businesses and healthcare professionals

<http://www.nuHerbs.com>

Tabimina Balintawak

Advanced Reflexive Response martial arts training system

<http://www.TabiminaBalintawak.com>

Northern Brewer

Supplier of brewing products, including gallon and half gallon jars, and various sized carboys

<http://www.NorthernBrewer.com>

SKS Bottle

Bottle company selling glass and plastic jars, bottles, and jugs of all sizes

<http://www.sks-bottle.com/>

Alchemical Solutions

Pharmaceutical-grade organic alcohol, can be diluted with water to proper proof for producing dit da jow and tonics

<http://organicalcohol.com/store/>

INDEX OF CHINESE HERB NAMES

Ai Ye (Mugwort Leaf)	212
Ba Dou (Croton Seed)	95
Ba Ji Tian (Morinda root)	360
Bai Bu (Stemona Root)	292
Bai Dou Kou (White Cardamom)	140
Bai Fu Zi (Tymphonium)	281
Bai Hua She (Elaphe)	115
Bai Hi She She Cao (Hedyotis)	80
Bai Ji (Bletilla)	202
Bai Ji Li (Tribulus)	321
Bai Jie Zi (Mustard Seed)	283
Bai Shao (Peony, White)	385
Bai Zhi (Angelica, White)	44
Bai Zhu (Atractylodes, White)	344
Ban Xia (Pinellia Fruit)	275
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Bing Pian (Borneol)	328
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Che Qian Zi (Plantain Seed)	149
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About The Author



Josh Walker has been involved in martial arts and herbalism for many years, having studied a variety of Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino systems as well as MMA, before finally feeling most impressed and at home with the Tabimina Balintawak system. Josh is fortunate enough to participate in ongoing training in Tabimina Balintawak directly with the Tabimina family both in the USA and abroad in Manila, Philippines, and teaches both martial arts and herbalism in Destin, FL.

Josh has a serious passion for martial arts and herbalism, and finds the intersection of these two fields very interesting. He has spent a number of

years researching, developing, and refining modern herbal practices from which numerous public articles have been published and small-group classes taught.

Prior to college, Josh spent 6 years in the military and has trained with Navy SEALs candidates; he is an ACE-certified professional personal trainer; he is a herbalist/founder of PlumDragon Herbs where he produces injury (dit da jow) and conditioning (iron palm) liniments, and other herbal products geared for the peak performance, health, and injury management of martial artists and athletes.

In September of 2010, Josh resigned from a promising career as an upper-level engineer for the Army, to pursue passions in martial arts, herbalism, and health...and to spend time at the beach!