

Course:	Chinese Herbology 1	Date:	November 18, 2008
Class #:	Class 9 - Downward Draining Herbs		

Next class, post Thanksgiving, is in the old Classroom A

**Summer heat** herbs *will not be on the tests*, but we should be familiar with them because we live in Texas and are candidates for summer heat. If you're reading this and aren't from this area, summer in Texas lasts something like 7 months, most of which are hotter'n'hell.

## Summer Heat Herbs

### Lu Dou

This is mung bean. It's good stuff and easy to cook. Mung bean clears summer heat including irritability, fever with thirst, and also promotes urination. Lu Dou also relieves toxicity on the skin and can be used as an antidote for fu zi, arsenic, ba dou and for food poisoning.

### Xi Gua

Watermelon. This is a natural form of White Tiger Decoction. If you look back at Shi Gai the first herb listed is White Tiger Decoction for the four bigs. Watermelon does those same type things. If you work outside in the summer here you get a mild form of heat stroke sometimes and watermelon will reverse this.

Caution: watermelon is high on the glycemic index. Not a good idea for diabetics.

Xi Gua cui yi is the green rind and will clear heat from the yangming ST channel.

Xi gua shuang is commonly used to treat dampness related to obesity.

### He Ye

Common to see in weight loss tea. Tastes ok too.

# Downward Draining Herbs

Broken into 3 tiny groups. The first 2 are most commonly used but the 3<sup>rd</sup> is pretty rare to see due to possible dangers...and law suits!

## 1. Purgatives

Often used for constipation as well as heat toxins in the system causing all kinds of problems. Some of these herbs work to detoxify the system in advance of problems. There is probably more need for this now with the toxicity of our general environment than there has been in centuries past.

Getting a regular bowel movement is more than just a daily experience. Also purges dampness, heat and toxins.

## 2. Laxatives

## 3. Harsh expellants

### Purgatives

#### Da Huang

This means “big yellow.” When you cook it into a tea it shows quite bright too. Relate this herb to the 3 yellows in the actions and indications:

- ❖ Da huang is bitter and cold like the 3 yellows
- ❖ Enters SP/ST, LI (GI tract), and to LV and HT.  
Add a note to this herb: similar to Zhi Zi, Huang Qin, and Huang Lian in that it treats the 4 excess heats and all 3 are also bitter and cold.
- ❖ Like Huang Qin is 4 + 2.

Da Huang is used in a lot of combinations, so much so that you *know* it's an **important herb**.



#### Action Notes:

### 1. Strongly purges accumulations

Shi gao is for yangming *meridian* syndrome, referring to the 4 bigs. This is the representative herb for yangming meridian syndrome. Da Huang, however, refers to the yangming *organ* syndrome and is the representative herb for this syndrome.

### 2. Drains damp-heat

Jaundice, dysentery disorder, PUD.

Treating dysentery seems odd in light of the fact that da huang is a purgative... this is a principle called Tong Yin Tong Yong – kind of a fight fire with fire philosophy. The idea is that there is a toxin inside that isn't coming out in spite of the diarrhea. This purges the toxins.

Under huang qin and huang lian we talked about xie xin tang formula for babies to clear fetal toxins and for both child and adult jaundice with damp heat. Da huang is a major ingredient in

this formula.

3. Clears heat, drains fire and stops bleeding  
This is actually 2 actions in one. Some of these indications are just fire, not bleeding while some are bleeding and no swelling. Probably wise to split it up when you study this herb.
4. Invigorates blood and dispels stasis.  
Remember to look back at Chi Shao and Mu Dan Pi – both stops bleeding and invigorates bleeding. Compare this action to the 3<sup>rd</sup> action above.

**Very good/important herb to treat trauma both topically and internal.** Can use the wine fried version for this too.

5. Clears heat and reduces toxicity  
Note topical and internal uses.

#### Cautions:

Da Huang is a very strong herb. Note pregnancy contraindication and the nursing mothers caution. It's also worth knowing that patients with gout (excessive uric acids in the blood that deposit in the cool extremities) could have troubles with this herb.

Cook it less than 10 minutes to keep the purgative function intact. As a matter of fact, if you cook it longer than 2 hours it has the reverse action – makes one MORE constipated!

## Mang Xiao



Sodium sulfate. Can be used as a stool softener, but one shouldn't be on it too long.

#### Action Notes:

1. Purges accumulations and softens hardness.  
The last time we mentioned this was Xuan Shen, but then it was for nodules. This is not for nodules, but for hard stools.

Look at the notes for how this works. Draws the fluids into the intestines to soften the stools and to more easily draw the feces downward. Da Huang increases peristalsis action of the intestines, but this is a different way to encourage the all important poop. Mang Xiao draws fluids from elsewhere in the body – this is why it's not great to use it long term. Not used as often as Da Huang as a result.

2. Clears heat and reduces swelling.  
Topical or internal usage. Used topically for dermatological conditions in the pure form of xuan ming fen or yuan ming fen.

Look back at the Xi Gua herb in the notes section. "Watermelon frost" is prepared by cutting watermelon flesh, adding 500 grams of mang xiao. After curing, the frost forms and is good for

sore throat.

3. Add in this action:

Also for warm febrile diseases, excess heat in the Lung and Stomach with high fever, thirst, delirium, and constipation.

- a. Liang ge san formula
- b. Zi Xue Dan formula

**Dosage notes:**

Look at the dosage notes for the different types.

## Fan Xie Ye



This was not originally Chinese, but came from other cultures. This is a senna leaf used for purgatives and is used commonly in western Herbology. Short history of use, no classic formulas Dr. Zhou is aware of. Often used as a hot tea alone rather than in formula.

**Action Notes:**

1. Drains downward and guides out stagnation

Don't use it long term for constipation as your body gets kind of "addicted" to it and doesn't poop without it.

Cook it a short time. Kinda harsh. Look at the notes. When the patient uses it start small and test tolerance. If doesn't work, go up from there.

**Dosage has been tested on board exams!** 3 – 9 in formula, 1.5 – 3 when used standalone.

## Laxatives

## Huo Ma Ren



Cannabis seed. Irradiated so they won't grow .... Dude. Bummer.

**Action Notes:**

1. Moistens intestines and nourishes yin

Most common usage. Mild nourishing yin effect, but if one had yin xu without constipation, this is not the good choice. There are a lot of herbs that are better. Useful as a laxative, however.

2. Treats hair loss.  
Not so often used.

Look at the cautions, especially the 2<sup>nd</sup> one. This is a caution from a real patient rather than from the Chen book or from Bensky. Warn patients about this in the event that they are on probation or get regularly tested for jobs or job apps. Caution for athletes too.

## Yu Li Ren



Fruit of this plant, Bush Cherry, is edible, though the pit is the part you use. Is cautioned for preppers since it is stronger than hu ma ren.

See the actions in the study guide. No special notes.