

Course:	Chinese Herbology 2	Date:	February 3, 2009
Class #:	5 – Food Stagnation		

Food stagnation shows as:

- ❖ Epigastric and abdominal distention and fullness
- ❖ Bloating
- ❖ Acid reflux
- ❖ Belching
- ❖ Nausea/vomiting
- ❖ Loss of appetite
- ❖ Abnormal bowel movements
- ❖ Tongue with a greasy coating
- ❖ Pulse that is slippery

Occurs with overeating. Especially bad with chronic habit of overeating. This gives you a Spleen Qi Xu. How constant over eating hits you depends upon your body's type. For that matter, how any food works or doesn't work for you is dependent upon your body constitution.

Depending upon conditions, these herbs are often used in combination with other herbs such as those that regulate Qi, strengthen the Spleen, tonify the Qi, warm the Spleen yang, aromatically transform damp, and/or purge the food through the system.

The phrase “strengthens Stomach” in the 2nd herb is not a Stomach tonic. This helps the stomach pass the food downward and help the stomach empty more quickly.

All herbs here enter the Spleen and Stomach. These are the standard channels, but some enter more than that.

Shan Zha

This is hawthorn fruit. This is a common western herb for hypertension, cholesterol control, some women's issues. In china this is often grown for the fruit and is a food source – it's even candied and available in White Crane.



Sheng form is better for food stagnation. Chao jiao or chao is better for diarrhea and dysentery.

Reduces and guides out food yu, stops diarrhea.

Most effective for meat and greasy foods. This is kind of related to the next two actions too.

Good herb to have in the standard household herbal cabinet as it is so useful.

Invigorates blood, transforms blood yu.

Related to the Liver, which this herb also enters. Menstrual cramps for instance, as well as post partum ab pain. Not really for trauma kind of blood stagnation.

Treats high cholesterol

Modern use – CAD, high serum cholesterol, HTN. As a matter of fact, this is a major Chinese herb for cholesterol. Extremely effective. Works best when due to dietary factors, not so well if high cholesterol is due to genetic predisposition.

Add the italicized text below to the cautions for this herb:

- ❖ SP and ST xu *without food stagnation*, acid reflux

Shen Qu

Medicated leaven. Like dan dou chi, is fermented. This has a lot of herbs in it and there are several different recipes for it. Jian qu and shen qu are often treated as the same herb, as the functions are extremely similar. Bear in mind that for gluten intolerant patients and clients with celiac disease - this herb is made with wheat. Probably not so good for them.



Reduce food stagnation, strengthen Stomach

This is food yu for starchy foods and alcohol consumption.

Aids assimilation of minerals

Chinese mineral prescriptions can be hard to digest and absorb. This assists in this process.

Cautions: 1) delete the pregrgers caution, but 2) add a bullet point under cautions for gluten intolerance (due to wheat content).

Mai Ya

You actually use the whole barley plant plus the seed tip.

Reduce food stagnation, strengthen Stomach

Starchy food, milk in infants.



Inhibits lactation

Very useful action, used internally. As a matter of fact, this is the *only* herb that will do this. Can be used alone. Up the dose, though: 60-120 grams for 5 days. Make a decoction and drink.

Facilitates smooth flow of Liver Qi

Stifling sensation due to distended epigastrium and hypochondriac areas. Comes along with belching and loss of appetite (Liver Qi Stagnation with Liver/Stomach disharmony). Not really a Liver regulating herb – Chai Hu for instance is a lot heftier in action.

Cautions/Dose:

Add “gluten intolerance and celiac disease” to the cautions. Change dose to 9 – 15 grams.

Gu Ya

Reduce food stagnation, strengthen Stomach

This is the only action. Weaker than mai ya. No issue with gluten intolerance, though. ☺



Ji Nei Jin

Strongly reduces food stagnation, strengthens the Stomach

Various types of food – meat, milk products, but not alcohol. Can be used alone in mild cases. Most commonly (and more effectively) you take a powder at 1.5 – 3 grams daily. Good for childhood malnutritional impairment.



Transforms hardness, dissolves stones

More practical use in clinic. Useful for urinary or biliary stones.

Stabilizes essence, stops enuresis

Mild action.

Lai Fu Zi

Radish seeds of various kinds. Delete the “(daikon)” since it’s more than just that radish seed.

In the caution there is a notation about not using it with ren shen – this is because it reduces the effectiveness of ren shen which is an expensive herb.

