

Course:	Chinese Herbology 3	Date:	April 14, 2009
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My presentation week: week 9 with Maya and German.

## Chapter 12 Herbs that Tonify

This includes Qi, Blood, Yang and Yin tonification. What you use depends upon what needs to be tonified (if anything) for your patient. Be sure to tonify cautiously and only when needed or you could cause an imbalance.

Bear in mind deficiencies can often be combined with excesses, so determine what you want to focus on and build formulas in order to address these issues.

Excesses don't need tonification! Many of the herbs we've studied to date are for excesses.

Qi Tonics	Yang Tonics	Yin Tonics	Blood Tonics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☯ Tend to be sweet</li> <li>☯ Excessive use can cause fullness in MJ. Use them with Qi regulating herbs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☯ Are warm and drying, can easily damage Yin. Avoid them with Yin xu heat.</li> <li>☯ Yin herbs are often added when tonifying Yang</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☯ Cloying – can cause digestive problems</li> <li>☯ Use with caution when patient has SP damp + fullness, poor appetite, diarrhea Combine them with SP strengthening herbs and/or relieve food stagnation herbs.</li> </ul>	
Qi and Yang are often tonified together		Yin and Blood are often tonified together	

## Chapter 12 A

### Herbs that Tonify Qi

These herbs are predominantly about LU and SP. You'll see some Heart and Kidney tonification actions in here as well, but look in Chapter 14 for the best Heart tonics and in Chapter 13 for better Kidney tonics.

General symptoms of Spleen and Lung Qi deficiencies. Clicking on the links below will open a new window with the notes from Diagnostics with a fuller range of symptoms for each of the deficiencies.

<a href="#">Spleen Qi Xu</a>	<a href="#">Lung Qi Xu</a>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☯ Lethargy</li> <li>☯ Weakness of limbs and muscles</li> <li>☯ Lack of appetite</li> <li>☯ Abdominal distention/pain</li> <li>☯ Loose stools</li> <li>☯ Diarrhea</li> <li>☯ Gas/bloating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☯ SOB</li> <li>☯ Shallow breathing</li> <li>☯ Dyspnea on exertion</li> <li>☯ Weak voice</li> <li>☯ Pallid complexion</li> <li>☯ Spontaneous sweating</li> </ul>

To decide on herbal formulas to tonify Qi deficiencies:

1. One way to dx a deficiency syndrome define what is deficient and in what combinations.
2. After determining what is deficient, determine the location of the deficiency. What organ(s) is/are involved. Mostly we deal with Zang organs, occasionally with Fu, but mostly the syndromes are defined by the Zang organ. Organs tonified are mostly Spleen and Lung. Kidney and Heart have other special requirements so you can't put them into a simple tonify Qi category. Here's an explanation...
  - a. Spleen  
Spleen is the centerpiece and the source of water in the body...and thus water metabolism. Even if the Lung needs tonification, you tonify the mother...the Spleen.
  - b. Lung  
Tonify the Lung Qi and you also tonify the Wei/defensive Qi.
  - c. Heart  
Heart houses the mind and dominates the vessels. If the Heart Qi is deficient you probably have to do more than just tonify this Qi. In the case of extreme deficiency for example you must also warm the interior (with something such as fu zi).
  - d. Kidney  
This is the fire *and* water organ. There's no herb just for KI Qi; instead you balance Yin and Yang in order to restore Qi. If you look at the Kidney tonification herbs in Chapter 13 you will see this reflected.

Make life easier: know the organs the herbs enter. Mostly they apply to the actions.

## Ren Shen

Not used clinically all that much due to the expense. Is often used in smaller amounts in formulas. Ren means 'human.' Shen means 'root.'



In the Note section, add “yi shan shen” which is the transplanted version of the “ye shan shen” (the wild mountain ginseng). Yi shan shen is more often used and less expensive. The production is still limited however by availability. Yuan shen is the most commonly prescribed...this is the cultivated kind.



Ginseng must grow a very long time - a minimum of 3 years to be effective. The older and thus larger the root the more powerful it is. Ginseng can be so old it is considered to be immortal.

- ☉ Sheng shai shen  
is fresh dried – kind of a yellow white. Qi and Yin xu.
- ☉ **Hong shen is red ginseng** (shown above and left).  
This is steamed with wind and is used for **Qi and Yang xu**. You have to use a bigger ginseng root for this pao zhi: 3 – 5 years old or older. Use w/ caution – strong and warm!
- ☉ Bai Shen is white and cured with rock candy. Used for Qi and Yin xu.

**Actions** all refer to the fresh form: sheng shai shen, white/offwhite colored. This stuff is slightly warm. Hong shen is warmer. This is the strongest Qi tonic!

1. Strongly tonifies Yuan Qi and treats collapse  
Mountain ginseng can really rescue life, but others aren't so strong. Remember back to [Fu Zi](#) – it too rescues collapse, but is very hot.
2. Tonifies LU and augments Qi  
This is where it enters the Lung.
3. Tonifies SP and strengthens ST  
Important herb to tonify MJ and for SP Qi sinking. Si Jun Zi Tang has this as the chief herb.
4. Generates fluids, stops thirst  
Used in Xiao Ke formulas + Qi and Yin xu with summer heat, etc. Look on Pg 118 – chart on herb from other char to tonify yin...the \*'d herbs also generate fluids. Ren shen is in this chart. These herbs are mostly cold/cool. Do you think it's weird that this slightly warm herb generates fluids? So does Dr. Zhou. The explanation is not direct...it helps with this because it tonifies the Spleen....a water metabolism organ. You combine ren shen with other herbs for this purpose!
5. Benefits HT Qi, calms spirit  
anx, insom, forgetfulness, restlessness due to Qi/blood/yin xu. Calms the sleep...but if you look

at the caution/contra section you'll see that overdose causes insomnia, palpitations, hypertension! Note that ginseng isn't really a sleep inducer! But if there are the deficiencies mentioned above, then it could help. The important thing with this herb is the diagnosis. You have to look at *why* your patient has insomnia. You always use calm mind, tonify and other herbs to balance this out.

Can even use this for arrhythmias.

6. Supports the antipathogenic Qi to expel pathogens  
Treats both the root and the branch – acute *and* chronic. If one was getting a cold and had a basic body constitution deficiency, this herb would help – would strengthen the body, but also attack the invader!

CC:

Ginseng is the strongest Qi tonic...the stronger the herb is the more caution you should use!  
Add to old book: avoid caffeine and other stimulants when taking ginseng.

Dosage: cook separately or in double boiler!

## Xi Yang Shen



American Ginseng. Xi Yang means “west ocean.” This is how you refer to Europe and America if you live in China. Dong Yang is “east ocean,” or Japan. In the Chen book it is in the Yin tonification category, however Zhou puts it in the Qi tonics category...so guess how we're learning it!

Difference between this and Ren Shen is temperature: xi yang shen is *cold*. Note that it tonifies *both Qi and Yin*. Look back at Hong shen under ren shen above. This is for Qi and Yang.

Though this herb enters HT, LU, KI, there is really no Kidney action and no Kidney problems addressed. Ok then. This herb was introduced recently – within 200 years – so there are few classic formulas for xi yang shen.

Actions

1. Benefits Qi and generates fluids
2. Nourishes LU yin and clears LU fire

## Dang Shen



Often used as a substitute for Ren Shen. Temp and taste is sweet/neutral. Does not enter the heart, unlike ren shen. Ren shen has 6 actions, Dang shen has 4. What's missing is 1) strongly tonify yuan qi...doesn't work for a qi collapse, 2) calm the spirit because it doesn't enter the heart. Use a larger dose – 9 to 15 grams. Also note fewer cautions because isn't as strong.

## Actions

1. Tonifies SP and augments Qi
2. Tonifies LU Qi
3. Tonifies Qi; generates fluids and blood
4. Supports anti-pathogenic Qi to expel pathogens

## Tai Zi Shen (aka Hai Er Shen)

This means ‘prince root.’ The other name for Tai Zi Shen, Hai Er Shen, means “child root.” Remember that ren shen means “human root.” Ren shen is considered to be the king of the family while this one is the prince or child. Tells you that this is a weaker member of the family ...the weakest as a matter of fact. You can see this in the large dosage of 10-30 grams. Zhou says he hasn’t used more than 15 grams or so. The idea is if you are looking something stronger to tonify, just use a stronger herb and use less of it.



Often used for *very* deficient patients who cannot be tonified strongly ... it takes energy to get tonified. Some people are too weak even for this. This herb also used for patients with very mild Qi xu. Another case: malnutrition due to SP Qi xu. You would think you should give the patient red meat, but that causes food stagnation since the Spleen is too weak to process it. Whatdaya do? Give ‘em tai zi shen.

## Actions:

1. Tonifies SP, nourishes ST
2. Generates fluids, moistens dryness

## Huang Qi

Very common herb for tonification. Huang qi works better and is stronger than dang shen. About as strong as ren shen and cheaper. Often called “poor man’s ginseng.” Not necessarily a substitute though – too much difference in actions. Only goes to SP and LU.



## Actions

1. Tonifies SP Qi, **raises Yang Qi** of the MJ  
Unique: *raises* the Yang Qi. So did [chai hu and sheng ma](#). But even though it competes with ren shen it is not in si jun zi tang. Why? Because it’s not a gentleman! Too aggressive.
2. Tonifies LU Qi, augments defensive/Wei Qi, stabilizes exterior  
Not just the organ, but also the Wei Qi and reaches the exterior. This is why it is used in Jade Screen formula. Remember that you stabilize the exterior (build the defenses) *before* you get sick. Don’t use this herb in the middle of *having* a cold or allergies but before it hits you. No sense locking the door once the thief is in the living room....you want him to be able to get the hell out afterall! By the same token, once you are ill and have been invaded by a pathogen, you want to open the doors and push the monster out. Don’t use this herb or it will seal the pathogen

inside. Ooooh, dat's bad.

3. Promotes urination, reduces edema  
Look at the relationship between Qi and fluid/water. See also action #5 – relationship between blood and Qi. Same deal applies: If there is stagnation as a manifestation, it can be because the Qi is too weak to push the fluid or blood.
4. Promotes pus discharge, generates flesh
5. Tonifies Qi to move blood  
See the rhetoric on action #3.

CC: change exterior excess to exterior syndrome.

## Bai Zhu



White atractylodes. Compare to Cang zhu, the black atractylodes.

Bai zhu is not slightly bitter, but truly bitter. Not used in culinary applications, though many other tonics are. This bitterness has something to do with the actions below.

Actions:

1. Tonifies SP, augments Qi  
Similar to dang shen and ren shen. Is one of the 4 gentlemen.
2. Strengthens SP, dries dampness

Here's where that bitter taste and warm nature comes in. Look at [Cang Zhu](#) in the aromatic herbs that dried dampness, the representative herb for dealing with dampness. Cang zhu is about excess dampness where bai zhu is about dampness caused by Spleen qi xu. You could use the 2 of them together. The spleen qi xu is the root and the excess dampness is the manifestation or the branch problem.

3. Stabilizes exterior and stops sweating  
Used in jade screen for this purpose.
4. Strengthens SP, **calms fetus**

Three different forms of bai zhu. Sheng and chao are the most often used. Chao jiao not so much.

## Shan Yao



Often used in cuisine – half herb, half food application. For tonics to be good food, must be somewhat close to the middle on the temperature and taste spectrum. Goes to the LU, SP, and KI which corresponds to all 3 actions below.

### Actions:

1. Tonifies SP Qi and Yin  
More than a Qi tonic, also tonifies the Yin. Note the difference between previous herbs which tonify spleen but dry damp.
2. Tonifies LU Qi and Yin
3. Tonifies KI and stabilizes essence  
Note the “stabilize.” Ki xu with leakage of essence, etc.

Dose: 9 – 30 grams. For xiao ke you can consume up to 250 grams – about ½ pound a day.

## Bai Bian Dou



Also called bian dou. Also edible, even more food than herb. Same taste as shan yao. Gentle and safe to use as a food.

### Actions:

1. Strengthens SP, transforms dampness  
Compare this to bai zhu, which dries the damp and is bitter. This isn't bitter – transforms the damp.
2. Clears summer damp  
First function is damp, this action just adds the “summer” part. Doesn't directly clear heat – use in combination with other herbs.

Can harvest from June to October.

(Didn't quite make it to these in class tonight. More on that in the next class.)

## Gan Cao

The word “gan cao” when used in casual TCM conversations really means “sheng gan cao.” There is much difference between sheng gan cao and zhi gan cao. You need to carry both if you intend to carry herbs in your practice. Enters Ht, Lu, Sp, St.

Actions:

1. Tonifies SP and HT Qi  
palpitations caused by ht/blood xu (not by heart fire, liver yang rising and causing anger, etc.)  
Not really for structural heart disease, but more about rhythm problems.
2. Dispels phlegm, stops cough  
Can be used along with other herbs for cough. Sheng form would be used for phlegm. Zhi would be used for a dry cough.
3. Clears heat, relieves toxicity  
Sheng Gan Cao is neutral in temperature while Zhi Gan Cao is warm. Use the Sheng form. Remember you must use this with a colder herb to really clear off the heat. See the given formulas for an idea of how to use it in combination. Yin Qiao is an example – wind/heat and sore throat.
4. Moderates spasms, alleviates pain  
'abdomen' doesn't refer to abdominal muscle but in internal organs/intestines. Leg however, does refer to the skeletal muscle. In other words, works for both smooth and skeletal muscle. Could also employ this herb for something like restless leg syndrome.

Sidebar: Liver wind to the legs causing tremors and spasms. Often happens at night when the liver stores the blood – not enough blood to nourish/moisten the sinews and thus the spasms.

5. Moderates and harmonizes properties of other herbs  
Probably the most frequent use for gan cao.



## Da Zao

The red version, Hong Zao, is the common form. The black form is smoked. In formulas for Qi tonic, it's the hong zao you use. Not very strong, so you won't see it prescribed by itself – you add it into your diet. You can add it to soups, kanji, etc. There is a formula called Shen Zao Wan – a pill made from ren shen and da zao for tonification of Spleen and Qi.



Actions:

1. Tonifies SP, augments Qi
2. Nourishes blood, calms spirit  
Calms the spirit without entering the heart. Hmmm. Treats emotional instability resulting in crying (stress caused grief, hormonal related stuff such as PMS → crying, sensitivity. Same for menopause, etc. )
3. Moderates and harmonizes properties of other herbs  
Similar to Gan Cao.

Caution=phlegm, damp, etc. There's also a parasite caution – if you're treating something like worms (esp round worms) you use acrid, bitter, and sour. Sweet herbs will draw the worms upward and into the stomach.

## Yi Tang

Actions:

1. Tonifies SP qi, moderates spasms, alleviates pain
2. Moistens LU and stops cough

Add Ci Wu Jia from page 56.