Chapter 13 Tonifying Herbs

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• Tonifying Herbs
  – Section 1 Tonifying Qi herbs (13 types)
    • Ren Shen; Xi Yang Shen; Dang Shen; Tai Zi Shen; Huang Qi;
      Bai Zhu; Shan Yao; Ci Wi Jia; Da Zao; Gan Cao; Yi Tang; Feng
      Mi; Huang Jing
  – Section 2 Tonifying Yang herbs (18 types)
    • Lu Rong; Lu Jiao Jiao; Ba Ji Tian; Yin Yang Huo; Xian Mao; Bu
      Gu Zhi; Yi Zhi Ren; Tu Si Zi; Sha Yuan Ji Li; Rou Cong Rong;
      Suo Yang; Du Zhong; Xu Duan; Ge Jie; Dong Chong Xia Cao;
      Zi He Che; Hu Lu Ba; Hu Tao Ren / He Tao Ren;
  – Section 3 Tonifying blood herbs (6 types)
    • Dang Gui; Shu Di Huang; Bai Shao; He Shou Wu; E Jiao; Long
      Yan Rou
  – Section 4 Tonifying Yin herbs (15 types)
    • Nan Sha Shen; Bei Sha Shen; Yu Zhu; Tian (Men) Dong; Mai
      (Men) Dong; Shi Hu; Bai He; Han Lian Cao/ Mo Han Lian; Nu
      Zhen Zi; Hei Zhi Ma; Gui Ban; Bie Jia; Gou Qi Zi; Sang Shen;
      Yin Er
Section 3 Tonifying Blood herbs

Concept

• **Tonifying Blood herbs**
  – The herbs that have the function of nourishing the blood and mainly treating blood deficiency syndrome are called tonifying blood herbs. Some herbs may also have the function of *nourishing yin* and for *yin deficiency*. 
Symptoms

• The primary manifestations of blood deficiency are pallid face and lips, dizziness, vertigo, diminished vision, lethargy, palpitations, dry skin, menstrual irregularities, pale tongue, and a fine pulse.
• In TCM, two organs most affected by this disorder are Heart and Liver, which direct and store the blood respectively.

Biomedical perspective

• From a modern biomedical perspective, patterns of blood deficiency are not always associated with anemia, but may arise from a variety of problems including psychosomatic disorders, heart failure, or chronic hepatitis.
• Only a few of the herbs in this section actually stimulate production of blood cells directly.
• Most of them strengthen the body and improve its nutrition, thereby indirectly increasing the number of circulating blood cells.
Caution

• These herbs are usually not very effective when used alone, to potentiate their actions, they should be prescribed with other herbs that tonify the Yin.
• Moreover, because Qi and blood deficiency often occur at the same time, these herbs are often combined with others that tonify the Qi.
• It is important to remember that because these herbs are cloying in nature, overuse causes indigestion. To counteract this effect, herbs that strengthen the Stomach are often added to prescriptions for tonifying the blood.

Section 3 Tonifying Blood herbs

– 1. Dang Gui 当归 (Radix Angelicae Sinensis)
– 2. Shu Di Huang 熟地黄 (Radix Rehmanniae Praeparata)
– 3. Bai Shao 白芍 (Radix Paeoniae Alba)
– 4. He Shou Wu 何首乌 (Radix Polygoni Multiflori)
– 5. E Jiao 阿胶 (Gelatinum Corri Asini)
– 6. Long Yan Rou 龙眼肉 (Arillus Longan)
Study Objective

• 1. Understand the general information on herbs that tonify Blood.
  – a. Concept, common function and indication.
  – b. Characters.
  – c. Compatibility.
  – d. Caution and contraindications

• 2. Get acquainted with the following individual information on herbs in this category.
  – a. Pinyin name, common English name and pharmaceutical name.
  – b. Characters.
  – c. Functions and indications.
  – d. Dosage and administration.
  – e. Cautions and contraindication.

Dang Gui (当归)  
(Radix Angelicae Sinensis)

• English name: Chinese angelica root, tang-kuei
• Literal English translation: “state of return”
• Alternate name: 全当归 (quan dang gui)
• Latin name: Angelica sinensis (Oliv.) Diels
• Pharmaceutical name: Radix Angelicae Sinensis
• Where grown: Gansu (best), Sichuan, Shaanxi, Hubei
• When harvested: End of autumn
• Used part: root
• Flavor and properties: Sweet, pungent, bitter, warm
• Channel entered: Heart, liver, spleen
Dang Gui (當归) 
(Radix Angelicae Sinensis)

• **Functions and Indication**
  
  1. **Nourishes blood**: for blood deficiency as in Dang Gui Bu Xue Tang and Si Wu Tang. It is one of the important herbs to tonify blood, with Bai Shao, Chuan Xiong (as Si Wu Tang).
  
  2. **Moves blood and regulates menstruation**: for dysmenorrhea, irregular menstruation and amenorrhea with both blood deficiency and blood stasis.
    * A. Due to blood deficiency, with Shu Di, Bai Shao, E Jiao.
    * B. Due to blood stasis, with Chuan Xiong, Chi Shao, Tao Ren (as Tao Hong Si Wu Tang).
Dang Gui (当归)
(Radix Angelicae Sinensis)

- **3. Moves blood and stops pain:** for pain due to blood deficiency, blood stasis, cold, injury, and wind-cold-dampness.
  - A. Abdominal pain, with Bai Shao, Gan Cao.
  - B. Traumatic injury pain, with Da Huang, Tao Ren, Hong Hua (as Fu Yuan Huo Xue Tang).
  - C. Bi syndrome (painful obstruction) due to wind damp, with Gui Zhi, Du Huo, Ji Sheng, Qin Jiao (as Du Huo Ji Sheng Tang)

- **4. Nourishes blood and generates flesh:** for carbuncles and boils.
  - A. Early stage, with Ji Yin Hua, Chi Shao, Bai Zhi, Bei Mu (as Xian Fang Huo Ming Yin).
  - B. Middle stage, with Chuan Shan Jia, Zao Jiao Ci, Huang Qi (as Tou Nong San).
  - C. Slow-healing after rupture due to Qi and blood deficiency, with Huang Qi, Shu Di, Bai Shao, Ren Shen, Bai Zhu (as Shi Quan Da Bu Tang).

- **5. Moistens intestine:** for constipation due to blood deficiency leading to large intestine dryness. with Rou Cong Rong, Shou Wu, Huo Ma Ren.

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Dang Gui (当归)
(Radix Angelicae Sinensis)

- **Dosage and administration**
  - 5-15g decocted in water for an oral dose.
  - Known as "Women's Ren Shen".
  - It is also moving Qi.
  - Vinegar-frying or wine-frying strengthen its blood-moving properties.

- **Cautions and contraindications**
  - 1. Caution in cases of diarrhea or abdominal distention due to damp obstruction
  - 2. Caution in cases of yin deficiency with heat signs.
Dang Gui (当归)
(Radix Angelicae Sinensis)
• Modern study
  – 1. Effect on the uterus: contractile effect
  – 2. Effect on the liver: increased the oxygen consumption of the liver without affecting the amount of nucleic acids present.
  – 3. Cardiovascular effect: inhibitory effect on frog heart specimens.
  – 4. Antibiotic effect: inhibitory effect in vitro against many bacteria
  – 5. Treatment of pain: good for various types of pain including neuralgias, ischemic pain, and arthritis.
  – 6. Effect on smooth muscle: inhibit the motility of rabbits' intestines specimens.

Shu Di Huang (熟地黄)
(Radix Rehmanniae Praeparata)
• **English name:** Chinese foxglove root cooked in wine, rehmannia (cooked)
• **Literal English translation:** “cooked earth yellow”
• **Alternate name:** 熟地(shu di)
• **Latin name:** Rehmannia glutinosa (gaertn.)
• **Pharmaceutical name:** Radix rehmanniae Glutinosae Conquitae
• **Where grown:** Hennan, Liaoning, Hebei, Shandong, Zhejiang
• **When harvested:** Autumn
• **Used part:** root
• **Flavor and properties:** sweet, slightly warm
• **Channel entered:** Heart, kidney, liver
Shu Di Huang (熟地黄)  
(Radix Rehmanniae Praeparata)

• **Functions**
  - 1. Nourishes blood
  - 2. Nourishes Yin
  - 3. Nourishes essence

• **Indications**
  - 1. For dizziness, palpitation, insomnia, menstruation disorders due to blood deficiency. It is one of the important herbs to tonify blood. with Bai Shao, Dang Gui, Chuan Xiong (as Si Wu Tang).
  - 2. For hot flush, steaming bone symptom, lower back soreness, tinnitus, hearing loss, spermatorrhea, Xiao Ke (diabetes) due to kidney Yin or essence deficiency. with Shan Yao, Shan Zhu Yu, Ze Xie (as Liu Wei Di Huang Wan).
  - 3. For lower back and knee soreness, dizziness, tinnitus, gray hair due to KD yin deficiency. with Gui Ban, Bie Jia.
Shu Di Huang (熟地黄)  
(Radix Rehmanniae Praeparata)

• Dosage and administration  
  – 10-30g decocted in water for an oral dose. Up to 60g.

• Cautions and contraindications  
  – 1. Caution in cases of spleen and stomach deficiency and stagnant of Qi or phlegm.  
  – 2. Overuse can lead to abdominal distention and loose stools.

• Modern study  
  – Treatment of hypertension

Bai Shao (白芍)  
(Radix Paeoniae Alba)

• English name: white peony root, peony  
• Literal English translation: “white peony”  
• Alternate names: 白芍药(bai shao yao)  
• Botanical name: Paeonia lactiflora Pall.  
• Pharmaceutical name: Radix Paeoniae Lactiflorae  
• Where grown: Zhejiang (best), Anhui, Sichuan, Guizhou, Shandong  
• When harvested: Summer or autumn  
• Used part: root  
• Flavor and properties: Bitter, sour, cool  
• Channel entered: Liver, spleen
**Bai Shao (白芍)  
(Radix Paeoniae Alba)**

- **Functions**
  1. Nourishes blood and regulates menses
  2. Subdues liver Yang
  3. Stops pain
  4. Preserves Yin and stops sweating

- **Indications**
  1. For menstruation disorders. With Di Huang, Chuan Xiong, Dang Gui (as Si Wu Tang).
  2. For headache, dizziness due to LV yang rising. With Tian Men Tong, Xuan Shen.
  3. Hypochondriac pain, abdominal pain with spasm.
     - A. Chest or hypochondriac pain, with Chai Hu, Xiang Fu (as Chai Hu Shu Gan San).
     - B. Abdominal pain and diarrhea, with Bai Zhu, Chen Pi, Fang Feng (as Tong Xie Yao Fang).
     - C. Spasm of the abdomen or extremities, with Gan Cao (as Shao Yao Gan Cao Tang).
  4. For spontaneous and night sweating.
     - A. Due to Yin deficiency, with Long Gu, Mu Li.
     - B. Disharmony of nutritive and protective levels, with Gui Zhi, Sheng Jiang, Da Zao.
Bai Shao (白芍)  
(Radix Paeoniae Alba)

- **Dosage and administration**
  - 10-15g decocted in water for an oral dose. Up to 30g.
  - It is weak to nourish blood. It is commonly used to subdue liver Yang.
  - Dry-fry to nourish the blood and harmonize the Ying and Wei.

- **Cautions and contraindications**
  - Caution in cases of diarrhea due to **deficient cold**.
  - Incompatible with Li lu.

- **Difference between Chi Shao and Bai Shao**
  - Chi Shao is better for cooling blood and moving blood.
  - Bai Shao is better for nourishing blood and Yin.

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He Shou Wu (何首乌)  
(Radix Polygoni Multiflori)

- **English name:** fleeceflower root, ho-shou-wu, polygonum
- **Literal English translation:** “black-haired Mr. He”
- **Alternate name:** 首乌 (shou wu)
- **Botanical name:** Polygonum multiflorum Thunb
- **Pharmaceutical name:** Radix Polygoni Multiflori
- **Where grown:** Henan, Hubei, Guangxi, Guangdong, Guizhou, Sichuan
- **When harvested:** summer
- **Used part:** root
- **Flavor and properties:** Bitter, sweet, astringent, slightly warm
- **Channel entered:** Liver, kidney
He Shou Wu (何首乌)  
(Radix Polygoni Multiflori)

- **Functions:**
  - 1. Nourishes blood and essence
  - 2. Blackens hairs
  - 3. Resolves toxicity
  - 4. Moistens intestine
  - 5. Treats malaria

- **Indications**
  - 1. For dizziness, palpitation, insomnia, fatigue, tinnitus, lower back and knee soreness. with Gang Gui, Gou Qi Zi, Bai Shao, Nu Zhen Zi, Han Lian Cao.
  - 2. For gray hair.
  - 3. For carbuncles, boils.
    - A. Sores, carbuncles, with Ku Shen, Pu Gong Ying.
    - B. Scrofula, with Xia Ku Cao, Bei Mu, Xuan Shen.
    - C. Goiter, neck lumps, with Hai Zao, Kun Bu.
  - 4. For constipation. with Dang Gui, Huo Ma Ren.
  - 5. For malaria. with Ren Shen, Dang Gui, Chen Pi (as He Ren Yin).
He Shou Wu (何首乌)  
(Radix Polygoni Multiflori)

- **Dosage and administration**
  - 10-30g decocted in water for an oral dose.
  - Raw He Shou Wu for resolving toxicity, moistening the intestines and treating malaria.
  - Prepared He Shou Wu for tonifying.

- **Cautions and contraindications**
  - Contraindicated in cases of spleen deficiency, and with phlegm.

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He Shou Wu (何首乌)  
(Radix Polygoni Multiflori)

- **Modern study**
  - 1. Effect on lipid metabolism: reduce the levels of cholesterol
  - 2. Use for hypercholesterolemia
  - 3. Effect on glucose metabolism: raise the hepatic levels of glycogen sixfold.
  - 5. Treatment of malaria
E Jiao (阿胶)
(Gelatinum Corri Asini)

- **English name**: ass-hide glue, donkey-hide gelatin, gelatin
- **Alternate name**: 驴皮胶(lv pi jiao); 盆覆胶(pen fu jiao)
- **Latin name**: Equus asinus L.
- **Pharmaceutical name**: Gelatinum Corii Asini
- **Used part**: Gelatin
- **Flavor and properties**: Sweet, neutral
- **Channel entered**: Kidney, liver, lung
E Jiao (阿胶)
(Gelatinum Corri Asini)

• **Functions**
  – 1. Nourishes blood.
  – 2. Stops bleeding.

• **Indications**
  – 1. For pale complexion, dizziness, palpitation due to blood deficiency. with Dang Shen, Dang Gui, Shu Di, Huang Qi
  – 2. For bleeding especially with blood and yin deficiency. use alone or with Sheng Di, Bai Shao, Ai Ye (as Jiao Ai Tang ).
  – 3. For dry cough, spasmodic contraction of voluntary muscles due to heat injured yin. with Xing Ren, Niu Bang Zi, Ma Dou Ling (as Bu Fei E Jiao Tang).

• **Dosage and administration**
  – 5-15g dissolved into the strained decoction or in small amount of water for an oral dose (Yang Hua 烊化)

• **Cautions and contraindications**
  – 1. Contraindicated in cases with exterior disorders.
  – 2. Caution in cases of spleen and stomach deficiency.

• **Modern study**
  – 1. Hematological effect: increase in red blood cell count and hemoglobin
  – 2. Effect on calcium metabolism: increase the absorption and utilization of calcium carbonate.
  – 3. Effect on muscle metabolism: delayed myotonia atrophica
Long Yan Rou (龙眼肉)  (Arillus Longan)

- **English name:** flesh of the longan fruit, longan
- **Literal English translation:** “dragon eye flesh”
- **Alternate name:** 桂圆肉 (gui yuan rou)
- **Latin Name:** Euphoria Longan (lour.) Steud.
- **Pharmaceutical name:** Arillus Euphoriae Longanae
- **Where grown:** Guangxi, Guangdong, Fujian, Taiwan, Sichuan
- **When harvested:** July to October when fruit has ripened
- **Used part:** fruit
- **Flavor and properties:** Sweet, warm
- **Channel entered:** Heart, spleen
Long Yan Rou (龙眼肉)  
(Arillus Longan)

• **Function**
  – Nourishes blood and calms spirit (Shen)

• **Indication**
  – For palpitation, insomnia, poor memory due to heart and spleen blood deficiency. With Ren Shen, Bai Zhu, Huang Qi, Dang Gui.

• **Dosage and administration**
  – 10-15g decocted in water for an oral dose

• **Cautions and contraindications**
  – Contraindicated in cases of phlegm-fire or dampness in the middle-jiao.

• **Modern study**
  – Antifungal effect: inhibitory effect in vitro against major pathogenic fungi.
Practice questions

1. The herb that tonifies blood and promotes blood circulation, relieve pain, and moistens bowel as well is:
   - A. E Jiao
   - B. Shu Di Huang
   - C. He Shou Wu
   - D. Dang Gui

2. The menstruation pain due to blood deficiency or blood stagnation should be treated by:
   - A. Shu Di Huang
   - B. Bai Shao Yao
   - C. Dang Gui
   - D. Huang Qi

3. Which of the following blood tonifying herbs also has the function of astringing Yin to stop sweating?
   - A. Da Zao
   - B. Bai Shao Yao
   - C. Long Yan Rou
   - D. E Jiao

4. The herb that tonifies HT and SP, and calms spirit is:
   - A. Long Yan Rou
   - B. Sang Shen
   - C. Dang Gui
   - D. Shu Di Huang
Practice questions

5. Which of following is NOT He Shou Wu’s functions?
   – A. Tonify blood and body essence.
   – B. Improve Qi circulation
   – C. Moisten bowel.
   – D. Tonify essence

6. The herb that tonifies blood and nourishes Yin, and stops bleeding as well is:
   – A. Bai Shou yao
   – B. Chuan Xiong
   – C. E Jiao
   – D. Sang Shen

7. Bai Shao Yao treats diarrhea due to:
   – A. Spleen deficiency
   – B. Food stagnation
   – C. Kidney Yang deficiency
   – D. Damp-heat retention.