

# Herbal Formulas II

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## Chapter 16 Formulas that reduce food stagnation

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### Formulas that reduce food stagnation

- Food stagnation refers to the accumulation and stagnation of food in the digestive system, primarily the middle Jiao.
- This is characterized by epigastric and abdominal focal distention and fullness, an aversion to food, rotten-smelling belching, abdominal pain, and sometimes diarrhea.
- It also refers specifically to acute disorders that result from episodes of gross overeating.
- By contrast, food accumulation is a more chronic condition that results from long-term overindulgence in food and drink and causes Qi, dampness, phlegm, and even blood to accumulate.
- It, too, is characterized predominantly by abdominal distention and pain.

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## Formulas that reduce food stagnation

- Food stagnation is often subdivided into hot and cold types.
  - The principal manifestations of the hot type are severe bad severe breath, a feeling of distention in the abdomen, a preference for cold food and beverages and an aversion to hot ones, a yellow, greasy tongue coating, and a forceful, slippery pulse. This condition usually arises with either externally-contracted disease or heat from constraint.
  - The cold type of food stagnation is due to SP or ST deficiency, or ingesting too much cold food. Major symptoms include a brackish feeling in the throat, nausea, spitting up clear fluids, a feeling of distention in the abdomen, preference for hot food and beverages and an aversion to cold ones, a white, greasy tongue coating, and a weak, thin pulse.

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## Formulas that reduce food stagnation

- Food stagnation is a condition of excess, even though it can occur against a background of ST and SP deficiency.
- No matter what the cause and precise constellation of excess and deficiency, food stagnation itself is treated by reducing.
- The main herbs such as Shen Qu, Mai Ya, Lai Fu Zi, and Ji Nei Jin.
- However, because food stagnation is often a symptom rather than a cause, these herbs are not necessarily the chief ingredients of the formulas discussed in this section.
- These may be drawn from many different categories, including those that move the Qi and break up stagnation, drive the Qi downward, promote the draining of damp-heat, or tonify the SP and ST.

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### Formulas that reduce food stagnation

- Although less harsh than purgatives, formulas that reduce food stagnation are nonetheless dispersing in nature.
- For patients with constitutional SP deficiency, or in whom a long-term conditional SP deficiency, or in whom a long-term condition of food stagnation has injured the normal Qi, formulas that emphasize the functions of supporting the normal Qi, and strengthening the SP are used.
- For more severe disorders, purgatives should be added.

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### Formulas that reduce food stagnation

- Formulas that reduce food stagnation (4 type)
  - **Bao He Wan** (Preserve Harmony Pill)
  - Jian Pi Wan (Strengthens the Spleen Pill)
  - Zhi Zhu Wan (Immature Bitter Orange and Atractylodes Macrocephali Pill)
  - Mu Xiang Bin Lang Wan (Aucklandia and Betel Nut Pill)

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Bao He Wan (Preserve Harmony Pill)  
保和丸

- **Source:** Essential Teaching of Zhu Dan-Xi (1481)
- **Actions:** Reduces food stagnation and harmonizes the ST;
- **Indications:**
  - Typical presentation of food stagnation that occurs from eating contaminated food or from gross overeating and drinking manifested by focal distention and fullness in the chest and epigastrium, abdominal distention with occasional pain, rotten-smelling belching, acid regurgitation, nausea and vomiting, aversion to food, a yellow, greasy tongue coating, and a slippery pulse. There may also be diarrhea.

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Bao He Wan (Preserve Harmony Pill)  
保和丸

- **Pathological analysis**
  - Excessive consumption of alcohol, meat, and fatty foods in particular may inhibit the ability of the SP and ST to properly receive, transform, and transport food.
  - This results in stagnation and accumulation of undigested food that obstructs the Qi mechanisms of the middle Jiao, leading to focal distention and fullness in the chest and epigastrium and abdominal distention.
  - When it is severe, pain ensues.
  - Food stagnation also disrupts the ascending and descending functions of the SP and ST.
  - When the turbid-Yin products of digestion do not properly descend, there is foul-smelling belching, acid regurgitation, nausea, and vomiting.

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## Bao He Wan (Preserve Harmony Pill)

保和丸

- When the SP Qi is unable to rise, there is diarrhea.
- When the ST takes in more food than it can digest, there is an aversion to food.
- Stagnation in the digestive system is reflected in the greasy tongue and slippery pulse.
- The yellow coating reflects the presence of heat in the interior caused by the constraint from food stagnation.

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## Bao He Wan (Preserve Harmony Pill)

保和丸

- **Composition**

- **Chief**

- Shan Zha (Crataegi Fructus) 180g (9-15g)

- **Deputy**

- Shen Qu (Massa medicata fermentata) 60g (9-12g)
    - Lai Fu Zi (Raphani Semen) 30g (6-9g)

- **Assistant**

- Chen Pi (Citri reticulatae Pericarpium) 30g (6-9g)
    - Zhi Ban Xia (Pinelliae Rhizoma preparatum) 90g (9-12g)
    - Fu Ling (Poria) 90g (9-12g)
    - Lian Qiao (Forsythiae Fructus) 30g (3-6g)
    - Mai Ya (Hordei Fructus germinatus)

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## Bao He Wan (Preserve Harmony Pill)

保和丸

- **Analysis of Formula**

- Food accumulating and tarrying in the ST is treated by reducing stagnation and transforming accumulation.
- The chief
  - Shan Zha, sour, sweet, and slightly warm, awakens the SP, unbinds the ST, promotes food intake, and assists digestion. It is particularly useful for problems due to overindulgence in meat and greasy foods.
- The deputy
  - Shen Qu, acrid, sweet and warm, is especially useful in reducing the stagnant accumulation of alcohol and food. It directs Qi downward to transform phlegm, warms the ST to transform thin mucus, and strengthens the SP to alleviate diarrhea and distention.
  - Lai Fu Zi, sweet and neutral, excels at reducing the accumulation of phlegm from stagnant grains and at facilitating the flow of Qi.
  - Together, the chief and deputy ingredients thus reduce the stagnation and accumulation caused by overindulgence in food or drink of all types.

## Bao He Wan (Preserve Harmony Pill)

保和丸

- **The assistant**

- Zhi Ban Xia and Chen Pi are both acrid and warming, promote the movement of Qi and transform stagnation, thereby harmonizing the ST to stop the nausea and vomiting.
- Fu Ling strengthens the SP and leaches out dampness, thereby harmonizing the middle Jiao to stop the diarrhea.
- The accumulation of food readily gives rise to heat from constraint; Lian Qiao, bitter, slightly acrid, and slightly cold, is added to address this problem, but also because of its ability to disperse and penetrate, which makes it a valuable herb for treating phlegm-heat.
- Mai Ya, sweet and neutral, raises and stimulates the ST Qi in order to digest food stagnation, particularly that associated with starches and all types of fruit.
- When the formula is taken with a decoction made from this herb, its reducing action is strengthened.

Bao He Wan (Preserve Harmony Pill)

保和丸

- **Key Point of diagnosis**
  - Focal distention and fullness in the chest and epigastrium, abdominal distention with occasional pain, rotten-smelling belching, acid regurgitation, nausea and vomiting, aversion to food, a yellow, greasy tongue coating, and a slippery pulse.
- **Caution and contraindication**
  - Unless modified, this formula is contraindicated in cases with SP deficiency.
- **Modifications**
  - For more severe abdominal distention: + Zhi Shi; Hou Po;
  - For sweating from the head due to accumulation of food that has transformed into heat: + Jiang Huang Lian;
  - For constipation: + Da Huang; Bing Lang;
  - For early-stage dysenteric disorder with concurrent food stagnation: — Fu Ling; Lian Qiao; + Huang Lian; Zhi Shi; Bing Lang;
- **Clinic use**
  - Acute gastroenteritis, acute exacerbation of chronic gastritis, hepatitis, acute pancreatitis, and acute or chronic cholecystitis.<sup>17</sup>

Jian Pi Wan (Strengthens the Spleen Pill)

健脾丸

- **Source:** Indispensable Tools for Pattern Treatment (1602)
- **Actions:** Strengthens the Spleen, reduces food stagnation, and stops diarrhea;
- **Indications:**
  - Spleen and Stomach deficiency is complicated by food accumulation that has begun to transform into heat. Manifested by reduced appetite with difficulty in digestion, bloating and focal distention of the epigastrium and abdomen, loose and watery diarrhea, a greasy, slightly yellow tongue coating, and a deficient, frail pulse.

### Jian Pi Wan (Strengthens the Spleen Pill)

健脾丸

- **Pathological analysis**

- When the Spleen and Stomach are weak and their transforming and transporting functions lose strength, there will be a loss of appetite and difficulty in digesting food.
- Bloating and focal distention in the epigastrium and abdomen are caused by food stagnation obstructing the Qi mechanisms of the middle Jiao.
- The deficient Spleen is unable to send its Qi upward and also gives rise to dampness, manifested as loose and watery diarrhea and a deficient, frail pulse.
- Because the accumulation of food has begun to transform into heat, the tongue coating is greasy and slightly yellow.

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### Jian Pi Wan (Strengthens the Spleen Pill)

健脾丸

- **Composition**

- **Chief**
  - Chao Bai Zhu (Dry-fried Atractylodis macrocephalae Rhizoma) 75g
  - Fu Ling (Poria) 60g
- **Deputy**
  - Shan Zha (Cratae Fructus) 30g
  - Chao Shen Qu (Dry-fried Massa medicata fermentata) 30g
  - Chao Mai Ya (Dry-fried Hordei Fructus germinatus) 30g
- **Assistant**
  - Ren Shen (Ginseng Radix) 45g
  - Shan Yao (Dioscoreae Rhizoma) 30g
  - Wei Rou Dou Kou (Roasted Myristicae Semen) 30g
  - Mu Xiang (Aucklandiae Radix) 22.5g
  - Chen Pi (Citri reticulatae Pericarpium) 30g
  - Sha Ren (Amomi Fructus) 30g
  - Jiu Chao Huang Lian (Wine-fried Coptidis Rhizoma) 22.5g
- **Envoy**
  - Gan Cao (Glycyrrhizae Radix) 22.5g

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### Jian Pi Wan (Strengthens the Spleen Pill)

健脾丸

- **Analysis of Formula**

- In this pattern, the deficient aspects are more significant than those of excess. The primary focus of the formula is therefore on tonifying the Spleen, while reducing food stagnation is the secondary strategy.
- The chief
  - Bai Zhu and Fu Ling strengthen the Spleen, leach out dampness, and stop the diarrhea.
- The deputy
  - Shan Zha, Chao Shen Qu, Chao Mai Ya reduce food stagnation and harmonize the Stomach.
- The assistant
  - Ren Shen and Shan Yao tonify the Spleen and Stomach and help the chief herbs in stopping the diarrhea.
  - Rou Dou Kou, Mu Xiang, Chen Pi, and Sha Ren are acrid and aromatic herbs that regulate the Qi and open the Stomach, awaken the Spleen, and transform dampness. Eliminating bloating and focal distention, they also ensure that the tonifying ingredients do not further obstruct the Qi dynamic. In combination, Rou Dou Kou and Shan Yao also warm the middle Jiao and bind up the Intestines.
  - Jiu Chao Huang Lian drains heat and dries dampness.
- The envoy
  - Gan Cao harmonizes the actions of the other herbs and helps the chief herbs tonify the middle Jiao.

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### Jian Pi Wan (Strengthens the Spleen Pill)

健脾丸

- **Key Point of diagnosis**

- Reduced appetite with difficulty in digestion, bloating and focal distention of the epigastrium and abdomen, loose and watery diarrhea, a greasy, slightly yellow tongue coating, and a deficient, frail pulse.

- **Caution and contraindication**

- Contraindicated in acute cases of food stagnation from contaminated food or from overconsumption of food and drink. This is because the tonifying strategy underlying the formula may increase the stagnation and thereby aggravate such conditions.

- **Modifications**

- For cases with no symptoms of heat: remove Jiu Chao Huang Lian; if there are signs of cold: + Gan Jiang;
- For nausea and vomiting: + Zhi Ban Xia; Sheng Jiang;
- For cases without diarrhea: replace Rou Dou Kou with Ban Xia;
- For diarrhea as the main symptom: + Yi Yi Ren; Bian Dou; Ze Xie;

- **Clinic use**

- Chronic gastritis, chronic colitis, and indigestion.

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Jian Pi Wan (Strengthens the Spleen Pill)

健脾丸

- Vs. Bao He Wan (Preserve Harmony Pill)
  - Both formulas treat food stagnation with abdominal distention and diarrhea, often with undigested food particles.
  - Bao He Wan is primarily for **food accumulating in the middle Jiao and focuses on reducing food stagnation and harmonizing the Stomach, without any significant tonification**. There is usually epigastric distention, nausea, an aversion to food, rotten-smelling belching, acid regurgitation, a slippery pulse, and a greasy tongue coating.
  - Jian Pi Wan **treats both food stagnation and Spleen deficiency, with stagnant dampness that has transformed to heat**. There is usually a generalized sense of fullness and distention, throughout the abdomen, reduced appetite, generalized fatigue, a deficient pulse, and a greasy, slightly yellow tongue coating.

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Zhi Zhu Wan (Immature Bitter Orange and Atractylodes Macrocephali Pill)

枳术丸

- **Source:** Clarifying Doubts about Damage from Internal and External Cause (1247)
- **Actions:** Tonifies the Spleen and reduces focal distention;
- **Indications:**
  - **Spleen and Stomach are deficient, the transforming and transporting functions of these organs are diminished, and food is more likely to stagnate in the digestive system. Manifested by loss of appetite, focal distention in the epigastrium and abdomen, a white tongue coating, and a deficient pulse.**

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Zhi Zhu Wan (Immature Bitter Orange and Atractylodes Macrocephali Pill)  
枳术丸

- **Pathological analysis**

- The combination of Spleen and Stomach deficiency and food stagnation leads to a loss of appetite.
- It also obstructs the Qi mechanism of the middle Jiao and causes focal distention in the epigastrium.
- The white tongue coating and deficient pulse reflect the underlying deficiency of the Spleen.

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Zhi Zhu Wan (Immature Bitter Orange and Atractylodes Macrocephali Pill)  
枳术丸

- **Composition**

- **Chief**
  - Bai Zhu (Atractylodis macrocephalae Rhizoma) 60g (12-18g)
- **Deputy**
  - Chao Zhi Shi (Dry-fried Aurantii Fructus immaturus) 30g (6-9g)
  - He Ye (Nelumbinis Folium) 6-9g

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Zhi Zhu Wan (Immature Bitter Orange and Atractylodes Macrocephali Pill)  
枳术丸

• **Analysis of Formula**

- Tonification is required to treat the deficient Spleen, and promotion of the movement of Qi is required to treat the stagnation.
- The chief
  - Bai Zhu strengthens the Spleen and eliminates dampness to help the transforming and transporting functions of the Spleen.
- The deputy
  - Zhi Shi effectively reduces epigastric focal distention by transforming stagnation and directing the Qi downward.
  - He Ye raises the clear Yang of the Spleen and helps the chief herb strengthen the Spleen. When matched with the deputy, which causes the turbid to descend, it makes an effective combination for harmonizing the directional tendencies of the Spleen and Stomach.

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Zhi Zhu Wan (Immature Bitter Orange and Atractylodes Macrocephali Pill)  
枳术丸

• **Key Point of diagnosis**

- Loss of appetite, focal distention in the epigastrium and abdomen, a white tongue coating, and a deficient pulse.

• **Caution and contraindication**

- Contraindicated for pregnancy.

• **Modifications**

- For general debility: + Dang Shen; Fu Ling;
- For prolapse or ptosis: combine with Sheng Xian Tang. For gastric ptosis, also add Sha Ren; Dan Shen; for uterine prolapse, also add Yi Mu Cao; Dang Gui; for rectal prolapse, add Shi Liu Pi;
- For diarrhea: + Fu Ling; Yi Yi Ren;
- For more pronounced food stagnation: + Shen Qu; Shan Zha; Mai Ya;

• **Clinic use**

- Chronic gastritis, chronic colitis, and peptic ulcers.

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Zhi Zhu Wan (Immature Bitter Orange and Atractylodes Macrocephali Pill)  
枳术丸

- Vs. Jian Pi Wan (Strengthen the Spleen Pill)
  - Both formulas are frequently used for patterns characterized by food stagnation in the context of deficiency and digestive weakness, with deficiency being more prominent than stagnation.
  - Zhi Zhu Wan is very simple in its composition, **focusing mainly on middle Jiao deficiency accompanied by distention**. This provides it with a wide range of applications, especially if it is further modified in accordance with the presenting signs and symptoms. Although Zhi Shi is somewhat cooling, the formula is not indicated for patterns with significant heat, and a white tongue coating is a distinguishing sign.
  - Jian Pi Wan is **more complex, encompassing herbs that tonify deficiency, disperse food stagnation, drain heat, resolve dampness, and warm the middle**. While more tonifying in nature than Zhi Zhu Wan, it is nevertheless able to drain heat from stasis. It is thus specifically indicated for patterns characterized by soft or loose stools on the one hand, and a thin, yellow tongue coating on the other.

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Mu Xiang Bin Lang Wan (Aucklandia and Betel Nut Pill)  
木香槟榔丸

- **Source:** Confucians' Duties to Their Parents (1228)
- **Actions:** Promotes the movement of Qi, guides out stagnation, purges accumulation, and drains heat;
- **Indications:**
  - 1. **Accumulation of food obstructing the middle Jiao and dysenteric diarrhea.**
  - 2. **The second pattern is produced when epidemic toxin enters the Stomach and Intestines where it constrains the body's protective Yang, leading to the accumulation of damp-heat.**
  - **Manifestations are focal and generalized distention, fullness, and pain in the epigastrium and abdomen accompanied by constipation; or red-and-white dysenteric diarrhea with tenesmus. In all cases, there will be a yellow, greasy tongue coating, and a submerged and excessive pulse.**

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Mu Xiang Bin Lang Wan (Aucklandia and Betel Nut Pill)

木香檳榔丸

• **Pathological analysis**

- When harbored food accumulates and blocks the Qi dynamic of the digestive organs, the obstruction of Yang Qi transforms into heat from constraint, which, together with the dampness caused by stagnation of food, becomes damp-heat.
- The obstruction of the Qi dynamic produces focal and generalized distention and pain in the epigastrium and abdomen.
- When severe, the patient still experience a feeling of fullness, which is stronger than mere distention.
- The internal accumulation of damp-heat usually combines with the stagnant accumulation of food to obstruct the flow of Qi in the Yang organs. This results in constipation.
- The steaming of damp-heat in the interior leads to the formation of pus that forces its way downward as red-and-white dysenteric diarrhea.
- Tenesmus indicates the stagnation of Qi that accompanies the condition.
- In both cases, the yellow, greasy tongue coating and submerged, excessive pulse reflect the presence of stagnation and damp-heat.

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Mu Xiang Bin Lang Wan (Aucklandia and Betel Nut Pill)

木香檳榔丸

• **Composition**

- **Chief**
  - Mu Xiang (Aucklandiae Radix) 30g
  - Bing Lang (Arecae Semen) 30g
- **Deputy**
  - Da Huang (Rhei Radix et Rhizoma) 90g
  - Qian Niu Zi (Pharbitidis Semen) 120g
  - Qing Pi (Citri reticulatae viride Pericarpium) 30g
  - Chen Pi (Citri reticulatae Pericarpium) 30g
- **Assistant**
  - Chao Xiang Fu (Dry-fried Cyperi Rhizoma) 120g
  - Chao E Zhu (Dry-fried Curcumae Rhizoma) 30g
  - Fu Chao Zhi Ke (Bran-fried Aurantii Fructus) 30g
  - Huang Lian (Coptidis Rhizoma) 30g
  - Huang Bai (Phellodendri Cortex) 90g
- **Envoy**
  - Sheng Jiang (Zingiberis Rhizoma recens)

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### Mu Xiang Bin Lang Wan (Aucklandia and Betel Nut Pill)

木香檳榔丸

- **Analysis of Formula**

- This formula treats patterns where the accumulation of food and stagnation of Qi transforms into damp-heat, which in turn aggravates the stagnation and accumulation. To break this vicious cycle, it is important to focus on unblocking the Qi dynamic while also guiding out accumulation and draining damp-heat.
- The chief
  - Mu Xiang and Bing Lan, bitter, acrid, and warming, and promote the movement of Qi and transform stagnation, thereby unblocking and facilitating the flow of Qi in all the Jiao.
  - Mu Xiang warms the middle to promote transportation, and dries dampness;
  - Bing Lang reduces accumulation and guides out stagnation;
  - This combination is thus not only very effective in treating focal and generalized distention and pain in the epigastrium and abdomen, but also treats tenesmus and facilitates the passage of mucus in dysenteric disorders.
- The deputy
  - Da Huang and Qian Niu Zi, strongly purges accumulation, guides out stagnation, drains heat, and unblocks the bowels.
  - Qing Pi and Chen Pi help the chief herbs to promote the movement of Qi and transform accumulation.
- The assistant
  - Xiang Fu, E Zhu, and Zhi Ke, relieve Liver constraint and disperse stagnation in the Qi aspect of the blood, thereby preventing the progression of this problem into the blood.
  - Huang Lian and Huang Bai clear heat and dry dampness in the digestive system, which stops the diarrhea.
- The envoy
  - Sheng Jiang harmonizes the middle Qi and reviving the Spleen.

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### Mu Xiang Bin Lang Wan (Aucklandia and Betel Nut Pill)

木香檳榔丸

- **Key Point of diagnosis**

- Focal and generalized distention, fullness, and pain in the epigastrium and abdomen accompanied by constipation; or red-and-white dysenteric diarrhea with tenesmus. In all cases, there will be a yellow, greasy tongue coating, and a submerged and excessive pulse.

- **Caution and contraindication**

- Contraindicated in cases with deficiency, since the formula may further injure the normal Qi and thereby aggravate the condition.

- **Modifications**

- For dysenteric disorders: — Chen Pi, E Zhu, and Qian Niu Zi; + Bai Tou Weng, Ku Shen, and Bai Shao;
- For harbored food: + Shen Qu; Shan Zha; Lai Fu Zi;
- For a thick, greasy tongue coating: + Cang Zhu;

- **Clinic use**

- Accumulations and masses such as cysts or fibroids.

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### Formulas that reduce food stagnation

- Formulas that reduce food stagnation (4 type)
  - **Bao He Wan** (Preserve Harmony Pill)
  - Jian Pi Wan (Strengthens the Spleen Pill)
  - Zhi Zhu Wan (Immature Bitter Orange and Atractylodes Macrocephali Pill)
  - Mu Xiang Bin Lang Wan (Aucklandia and Betel Nut Pill)

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### Study guideline

- 1. Bao He Wan's indications;
- 2..Jian Pi Wan's indications;
- 3. The difference between Jian Pi Wan and Bao He Wan;
- 4. Zhi Zhu Wan's indications and ingredients;
- 5. The difference between Zhi Zhu Wan and Jian Pi Wan;
- 6. Mu Xiang Bing Lang Wan's indications;

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