

News Spring 2018



Dear Practitioner,



We hope that the Year of The Earth Dog has gotten off to a good start for you.

There are a number of informative articles in this newsletter, including: *The Treatment of Headaches by Acupuncture and Chinese Herbs*, by John Scott; *Classical Strategies for Sinusitis*, by Blake Gafford, DOM; *Using Essential Oils for Healthy Sleep* by Alchemica Botanica creator, Evelyn Robert; and an article on *The Cook as Herbalist* by our popular food and nutrition contributor, Andrew Sterman.

Acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine are truly wonderful as resources for transforming lives. This is a mid-term election year. We believe that each of us as practitioners, no matter our political orientation, has a responsibility for promoting and educating legislators and office seekers about our medicine. Support your state professional AOM association and encourage your colleagues to be members.

The mission of the **American Society of Acupuncturists** is to promote the highest standards of professional practice for Acupuncture and East Asian Medicine in the United States, thereby benefitting public health. Through strengthening the profession at the state level while promoting collaboration nationally and internationally, the ASA provides its members, the public, legislators, and regulators resources for ensuring the best expression of this ancient and modern medicine. You can contact the ASA for information suitable to educate people involved in creating public policy.

We recommend that you look into the **Acupuncture Now Foundation** as an organization worthy of your support and another resource for important and relevant information.

It is critical that we are engaged on all levels in order to help create a better future for our profession as an integral part of 21st century medicine in our country.

We greatly appreciate your business and support. We appreciate all of your communication, comments, and feedback. We are committed to supporting the growth and acceptance of acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine.

Sincerely,

John Scott, DOM and Lorena Monda, DOM

An Alternative Use For General Tonic Formula That You May Not Know About

General Tonic Formula (*Shi Quan Da Bu Wan*) is a classical formula that we all learned in school. We were taught to use this formula to tonify and support qi and blood while warming yang; pretty basic—anytime you see a patient that has a qi and blood deficiency with cold, this will be an excellent choice. To expand on this, let's look at some modern research that has been going on in China over the past couple of decades, much of which has been focusing on using **General Tonic Formula** (*Shi Quan Da Bu Wan*) as an adjuvant therapy for many types of cancers.

Shi Quan Da Bu Wan is often translated as “All Inclusive Great Tonifying Decoction.” The name signifies the broad, supplementing action of the formula and the importance of strengthening and restoring vital energy. Scientific evaluation has shown this formula to have immunomodulatory and immunopotentiating effects, as well as displaying antineoplastic effects, making this formula an excellent choice to support the body during chemotherapy or radiation therapy.

The idea behind why we use **General Tonic Formula** (*Shi Quan Da Bu Wan*) as adjuvant cancer therapy is to strengthen the body's natural ability to fight disease. Many chemotherapeutic drugs damage the qi, blood, and yang, leaving the antipathogenic qi depleted. This

is why patients will often complain of feeling cold in their core with no ability to warm up. **General Tonic Formula** (*Shi Quan Da Bu Wan*), is based on the classical formula for nourishing blood and supplementing qi, Tang Kuei and Ginseng Eight Combination (*Ba Zhen Tang*). It adds astragalus (*huang qi*) to the base formula to strengthen the *wei* qi (immunity) and dried ginger (*gan jiang*) plus cinnamon bark (*rou gui*) to warm the yang. This formula even helps the body to build and protect blood while undergoing chemotherapy.

Another benefit of using **General Tonic Formula** (*Shi Quan Da Bu Wan*) while undergoing conventional cancer therapy is that it helps to ameliorate adverse toxicities of the chemotherapeutic agents, which result in symptoms like nausea, vomiting, and lack of appetite. And when chemotherapy or radiotherapy treatments are over, the formula helps to quicken recovery time and effectively restores immunity. It is best to start the formula soon after a chemotherapy plan has been decided upon, but try to start it at least 2 weeks prior to beginning chemo treatment.

Peony and Atractylodes Formula—A Go-to Formula for Damp-Cold Diarrhea

Peony and Atractylodes Formula (*Tong Xie Yao Fang*) doesn't contain astringing herbs like lotus seed (*lian zi*) or myristica (*rou dou kou*), as is commonly seen in other formulas indicated for damp or damp-cold diarrhea. Its strategy focuses instead on strengthening the spleen and expelling dampness in order to arrest diarrhea and restore spleen function.

Often used for conditions like diarrhea-type IBS and senile diarrhea, this formula can manage or even correct chronic diarrheal conditions (when the pattern is dampness or damp-cold) usually within 2-4 weeks. **Peony and Atractylodes Formula** (*Tong Xie Yao Fang*) is even effective for difficult conditions like chronic colitis wherein the patient is experiencing anywhere from 3-15 bowel movements a day. This condition typically involves frequent, urgent loose bowel movements, often accompanied by abdominal pain, gas, or borborygmus.

Recently, I saw one such patient in my clinic. The patient was officially diagnosed with colitis two years ago, but had been dealing with the condition for much longer. He was currently in a sub-acute stage where he was having 3-4 bowel movements a day, characterized as loose diarrhea. He stated that when his condition is acute/severe he would have up to 15 bowel movements a day with blood. His pulse was slippery in the liver position and his tongue had a pale-dusky appearance with a white coat. He was diagnosed with spleen qi deficiency with internal damp accumulation in the lower burner. Though the patient had been dealing with his colitis for over 2 years, within 3 weeks using **Peony**

and Atractylodes Formula (*Tong Xie Yao Fang*), his bowel movements became regulated: formed stools, with a frequency of once a day.

What is the pathogenesis? Internal dampness gradually accumulates because the spleen is too deficient to transform dampness. Dampness tends to sink downwards into the lower burner, resulting in diarrhea. The spleen's weakness is often the result of the liver chronically overacting on the middle burner. **Peony and Atractylodes Formula** (*Tong Xie Yao Fang*) uses atractylodes (*bai zhu*) and tangerine peel (*chen pi*) to support and revive the spleen. Together, these two herbs supplement spleen qi and dry dampness. White peony root (*bai shao*) is included to soothe the liver and prevent it from overacting on the spleen. Tangerine peel (*chen pi*) regulates qi without exacerbating the diarrhea. The fourth and last herb in the formula is siler root (*fang feng*), which plays an interesting role in diarrheal conditions. Siler root (*fang feng*) has the ability to expel wind from anywhere in the body and is known for its ability to eliminate wind-dampness and alleviate diarrhea. It expels wind from the flesh where the *wei* qi travels; this includes not only the skeletal muscles, but also the bowels, since *wei* qi is responsible for the movement of peristalsis. Siler root (*fang feng*) can help to alleviate intestinal spasm and smooth peristaltic movement. Its acrid nature helps to disperse liver qi stagnation, while its slightly warm nature and sweetness supplements the spleen and drains dampness. The majority of the herbs in this formula have been charred to further increase their effectiveness for arresting diarrhea.

Note: This formula is for damp or damp-cold diarrhea. For damp-heat diarrhea, with a foul and offensive odor, often with yellow mucus/pus, take a look at **Pulsatilla Intestinal Formula** (*Bai Tou Weng Li Chang Fang*) or **Wu Hua Formula** (*Wu Hua Tang*).

The Treatment of Headaches with Acupuncture and Chinese Herbs

BY JOHN SCOTT, DOM

Headaches are among the top ten reasons patients seek medical care in the United States.¹ Chinese medicine is very effective in the treatment of headaches, but the correct pattern differentiation is essential for effective treatment.

All the yang channels originate or terminate on the head, so blockages in any of these are common causes of headaches. Imbalances in the yin channels can also cause headaches. There are other (critical) conditions that are associated with headaches of which the practitioner must be aware such as meningitis, cerebral hemorrhage, cerebral tumor, hypertension, glaucoma, trigeminal neuralgia, and numerous dental problems. These conditions may need additional treatment other than Chinese medicine, so do not hesitate to refer your patient to the appropriate specialist if you suspect there may be something that needs

such attention. The most difficult to treat headaches I have found occur in patients who are taking narcotics or other types of strong chemical medications. These kinds of drugs complicate our attempts to rebalance the patient and sometimes we find ourselves having to deal with the effects of the drugs and/or the withdrawal from the drugs in addition to the headache.

We will differentiate headaches by their location and associated channel. I personally prefer to utilize distal points when treating headaches. In my experience it is desirable to draw the qi and the attention away from the head and the location of the symptoms of pain. I also like to help the patient direct the attention away from the head by suggesting breathing techniques. We know qi and breath can be synonymous and that the qi follows mind, so I try to get the patient to breath into their lower *dan tian*. I will have them place a stone or their hands around CV 4 and send their breath down to that area. I will also use this technique with trapezius pain.

OCCIPITAL HEADACHE

This area is where the *taiyang* channel of the Urinary Bladder and the *shaoyang* channel of the Gall Bladder pass though. The most common cause of headaches at this region is invasion of exogenous wind. Treatment must be oriented towards releasing the wind.

Herbal Formulas to Consider

Include: Yin Chiao Formula or Neck Formula. Ligusticum and Green Tea Formula (*Chuan Xiong Cha Tiao San*) is also a commonly-used formula.

Ear Acupuncture Points: occiput, lung, apex of the ear

Acupuncture Points to Select from: Hegu (LI 4), Lieque (Lu 7), Waiguan (TB 5), Houxi (SI 3), Fengchi (GB 20), Kunlun (UB 60)

Another cause of occipital headaches is blood or yin deficiency. This is the typical cause when these types of headaches are chronic. The wind-type of headache will generally respond very quickly to treatment. The chronic headache will respond more slowly. It is very important to inform the patient what is reasonable to expect from treatment, so that they will not be discouraged. They most probably sought treatment from other types of practitioners without satisfactory results, so be sure to prepare them for what to expect. You, then of course, will center your treatment on nourishing blood and/or yin.

Herbal Formulas to Consider Include: Tang Kuei & Salvia, Women's Precious Formula, General Tonic Formula, He Shou Wu Tablets, Tang Kuei & Peony Formula, Ginseng Nourishing Formula.

Ear Acupuncture Points: occiput, *shenmen*, kidney, heart, spleen and/or liver

Acupuncture Points to Select from: Sanyinjiao (Sp 6), Zusanli (St 36), Shangjuxu (St 37), Xiajuxu (St 39), Ququan (Liv 8), Geshu (UB 17), Ganshu (UB 18), Pishu (UB 20), (local points Fengchi (GB 20), Kunlun (UB 60))

I have found many patients that have occipital headaches may also have pain and tension in their hips and/or sacrum. Acupuncture, manipulation and/or massage centered in that local area may be necessary to resolve the headache.

FRONTAL HEADACHES

This is a *yangming* headache. The meridians of the Large Intestine and the Stomach are the channels that most influence this type of headache. The main causes that I see in practice are allergic headaches (wind), tension headaches, "toxic" headaches, and or constipation headaches. Of course, differentiating is important.

Herbal Formulas to Consider Include: When the

headache is caused by allergies, prescribe **Jade Screen & Xanthium Formula**, **Xanthium & Magnolia Formula** or **Xanthium Nasal Formula**. For "toxic" headaches use: **Coptis Relieve Toxicity Formula**, or **Free & Easy Wanderer Plus**. For tension headaches, **Bupleurum D Formula** or **Free & Easy Wanderer Plus** are good choices. For headaches caused by constipation, **Persica & Cistanches Formula** or **Bupleurum D Formula** are appropriate choices.

Acupuncture Points to Select from: Hegu (LI 4), Neiting (St 44), Yintang (extra point), Shangxing (GV 23), Touwei (St 8), Taichong (Liv3), Zusanli (St 36)

WHOLE HEAD HEADACHE

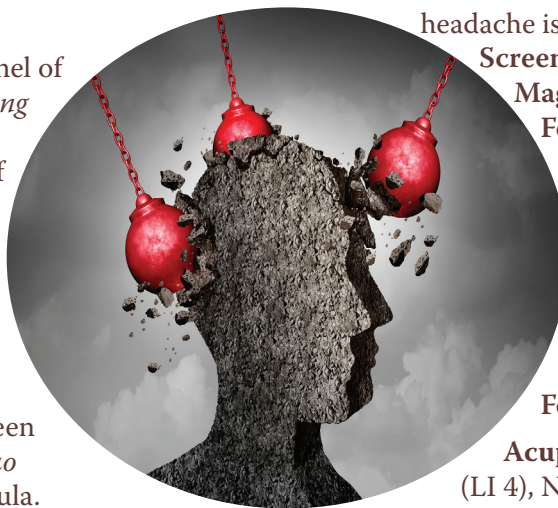
Headaches of this kind are chronic in nature, (unless it is a "wind" type of headache). They generally feel dull with a feeling of emptiness in the head. Patients will often describe feeling like there is a helmet on their head. This type of headache is due to deficiency of kidney essence. The treatment strategy would, therefore, be to tonify kidney essence.

Herbal Formulas to Consider Include: Nourish Essence Formula, Jing Qi Formula, Essential Yang Formula, Rehmannia Six Formula, General Tonic Formula, Sea of Qi Formula, and True Yin Formula.

Acupuncture Points to Select from: Qihai (CV 6), Zusanli (St 36), Taixi (Kid3), Fuli (Kid 7), Shenshu (UB 23)

TEMPORAL HEADACHES

This is a *shaoyang* headache. The Triple Burner and the Gall Bladder meridians are the channels that are involved in this type of headache. Temporal headaches can be on both sides



of the head or just on one side of the head. It is said that if it is on the left side, it is from a liver yin deficiency and if it is the right side, it is from an excess. But this aphorism is not entirely reliable.

Herbal Formulas to Consider Include: Gentiana Drain Fire Formula or Gastrodia & Uncaria Formula.

Acupuncture Points to Select from: One-sided headache: Taiyang (extra point), Shuaigu (GB 8), Waiguan (TB 5), Linqi (GB 41), Ququan (Liv 8), Xiashi (GB 43)

Ocular Headaches: This type of headache and other headaches on the side of the head are often considered cluster headaches or migraines. This headache is generally caused by liver-blood deficiency, when the pain is dull. If the pain is sharp and severe it is due to liver-yang rising.

Acupuncture Points to Select from: Hegu (LI 4), Fengchi (GB 20), Waiguan (TB 5), Taichong (Liv 3), Xiashi (GB 43), Taixi (Kid 3), Xingjian (Liv 2), Ququan (Liv 8).

Herbal Formulas to Consider Include: Tang Kuei & Salvia Formula or Bupleurum D Formula

VERTEX HEADACHES

The path of the liver channel terminates at the top of the head and is indicated for headaches at this location. If the headache is dull in nature and improves when the patient lies down, then the cause is liver blood not being able to reach the top of the head. If the headache is sharp, then the headache is due to liver yang rising. There is also the possibility that this type of headache may be caused by deficient qi and blood not being able to reach the top of the head.

Herbal Formulas to Consider Include: Bupleurum D Formula, Bupleurum & Tang Kuei Formula, Tang Kuei & Salvia Formula. Ginseng & Astragalus Formula is an appropriate choice when qi is unable to reach the top of the head.

Acupuncture Points to Select from: Hegu (LI 4), Taichong (Liv 3), Ququan (Liv 8), Xingjian (Liv 2), Baihui (GV 20)

¹Jennifer L St. Sauver, David O Warner, Barbara P Yawn, et al, "Why Patients Visit Their Doctors: Assessing the Most Prevalent Conditions in a Defined American Population," *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*, Vol. 88, No. 1, 2013.

Classically Inspired Strategies for Sinusitis

BY BLAKE GAFFORD, DOM

How often have we seen patients walk into our office after being treated with antibiotics for their sinusitis, only for them to experience their infection recurring over and over again? Sadly, these patients are usually also dealing with dysbiosis as a side-effect of the antibiotics. The problem with this approach is that sinus infections often begin as a viral invasion; the bacterial infection is only secondary. The underlying viral wind-cold pathology isn't dealt with,

nor is the inflammatory response specific to the viral component. Without resolving the body's clogged and inflamed pathways, antibiotics all too often merely create dampness as a means of combatting a heat pathology (bacterial infection) resulting in a "damp-heat" pattern (fungal infection). Classical *shang han* remedies work because we are warm-blooded human beings, teeming with life and yang, and the effects of cold contraction damages our dynamic functionality. The key to how these formulas work is not to be found in a laboratory test of *in vitro* antibiotic or antiviral effects, but in their directional nature and how they stimulate or affect the dynamic yang forces inherent in all human beings. Restoring proper function in the stomach or gallbladder organs, for instance, allows previously back-flowed pressure along their channel pathways (into the ears, nose, or throat) to release. With no pressure or inflammation, and ample yang circulating to the area, infection cannot exist, and our patients can experience deeper, and hopefully, permanent resolution of their sinusitis.



As the theory goes, cold damage usually begins in the initial *taiyang* wind-cold stage, and here, plenty of solutions are available, for example, **Cinnamon Twig Formula** (*Gui Zhi Tang*), Pueraria Combination (*Ge Gen Tang*, KPC 3690), Cinnamon and Pueraria Combination (*Gui Zhi Jia Ge Gen Tang*), or even Minor Blue-Green Dragon Formula (*Xiao Qing Long Tang*). The primary symptoms will be chills and thin, clear, dripping nasal fluid. In these cases, a patient is cold on their exterior, meaning they need their body's yang to reach the periphery; cinnamon twig (*gui zhi*) is often the primary medicinal for this. However, from my experience, only the most sensitive and trusting patients come in during this stage. What I most often see are patients in *shaoyang*, and these will often have a combination of other stages with it. It has been my experience that these compound stages are where classical solutions have been most helpful. Two formula strategies stand out for resolution of these compound stages: the *chai hu* and the *ban xia* strategies.

Why else do most sinusitis patients need a *shaoyang* medicinal? It's because, three-dimensionally, the sinus

cavity is in the *shaoyang* depth, since the sinuses are neither interior nor exterior. However, I usually find that most sinus patients exhibit issues in a combination of all three yang: *shaoyang*, *taiyang*, and *yangming*. Sinusitis is in *shaoyang* because it's in the sinus depth, symptom expression alternates, people feel hot, then cold, often have lowered appetites, and often have ear or throat inflammation along with their sinusitis. All of this can certainly be *shaoyang*. *Taiyang* shows chills and body aches; the initial stages of a cold or flu express this way. In the nose/sinuses, *taiyang* expresses itself as a thin nasal drip. *Yangming* can express as a fever, but it can also show up as a frontal headache. The base formula for this combined triple-yang pathology is Bupleurum, Cinnamon and Ginger Combination (*Chai Hu Gui Zhi Gan Jiang Tang*, KPC 1890). In *shaoyang-yangming* (i.e., no *taiyang* symptomology) we often will use Pinellia Combination (*Ban Xia Xie Xin Tang*, KPC 1140). To determine which strategy is best (CHGZGJT or BXXXT), pulse or abdominal palpation are most helpful.ⁱ However, one method to decide the ideal approach comes from Zhang Zhong-jing in *Shang Han Lun* 149: “(If) *chai hu* signs are still present, one can still give *Chai Hu Tang*ⁱⁱ . . . and there will be steaming and quivering by which the disease resolves, . . . (but if there is) fullness only, without pain, this indicates glomus and one should not give *Chai Hu Tang*. *Ban Xia Xie Xin Tang* is appropriate.”

CHAI HU GUI ZHI GAN JIANG TANG (BUPLEURUM, CINNAMON AND GINGER COMBINATION)

chai hu (bupleurum) 24g
gui zhi (cinnamon twig) 9g
gan jiang (dried ginger) 6g
huang qin (scutellaria) 9g
tian hua fen (trichosanthes root) 12g
mu li (oyster shell) 10-15g
zhi gan cao (honey-fried licorice root) 6g

Modification for Phlegm Cough: add *ban xia* (pinellia) 12g and substitute the 12g of *tian hua fen* (trichosanthes root) for 18g of *gua lou shi* (trichosanthes fruit).

Therefore, when the surface is closed, opening the surface with bupleurum (*chai hu*) resolves the issue. My patients often report the sensation that their sinuses and head “open up” and that they sweat lightly. The formula’s action isn’t exclusive to the head either: surface congestion all over the body opens up, and systemic inflammation festering deep inside is allowed to vent and release. The combined bupleurum (*chai hu*)/ scutellaria (*huang qin*) approach allows for bupleurum (*chai hu*) to vent and open the surface while bitter scutellaria (*huang qin*) descends in the interior. Both herbs have shown antibiotic and antiviral effects,ⁱⁱⁱ but the most important action is in their physiologic effects. Notably, they are potent cholagogues, strongly stimulating bile flow, which, in turn release *shaoyang* stage congestion. Cinnamon twig (*gui zhi*) brings needed yang to the surface and, if a dripping nose is present, helps to

resolve it. Trichosanthes root (*tian hua fen*) is helpful in acute cases of fever, dry sinuses, and/or thirst, but in my experience it often needs to be substituted for the other end of the trichosanthes plant: trichosanthes fruit (*gua lou shi*). Zhang Zhong-jing never uses trichosanthes root (*tian hua fen*) in the same formula as pinellia (*ban xia*); if pinellia (*ban xia*) is used, trichosanthes fruit (*gua lou shi*) is inevitably substituted and will greatly assist the pinellia (*ban xia*) to resolve the thick phlegm. Zhang’s use of oyster shell (*mu li*) in the formula is interesting. Jeffrey Yuen teaches that to understand the mysteries of the *Shang Han Lun*, one must understand flavors. According to Dr. Arnaud Versluys, oyster shell (*mu li*) is used in the formula because of its salty nature, which helps to break up the phlegm by entering into the congested mucosal layer as an envoy, breaking it up like a nasal saline rinse, allowing the strong medicinals to go to work.

BAN XIA XIE XIN TANG (PINELLIA COMBINATION)

ban xia (pinellia) 12g
huang qin (scutellaria) 9g
gan jiang (dried ginger) 9g
ren shen (ginseng) 9g
da zao (jujube date) 6g
zhi gan cao (honey-fried licorice root) 9g
huang lian (coptis) 3g

Often, we will find the presence of a glomus, and if no exterior symptoms are present (i.e., alternating chills and fever), opening the blockage through the stomach and encouraging descent will take pressure out of the *yangming* channel in the sinuses and allows them to clear. As Zhang said, Pinellia Combination (*Ban Xia Xie Xin Tang*) is appropriate in these cases, and the addition of coptis (*huang lian*) helps to achieve this descent. Obviously, coptis (*huang lian*) has potent antibacterial action, but here it is used for its bitter descending nature, which helps to restore function. Furthermore, ginseng (*ren shen*), dried ginger (*gan jiang*), jujube (*da zao*) and honey-fried licorice root (*zhi gan cao*) protect the stomach from the effects of bitter, cold medicinals. A well-known side-effect to our modern pharmaceutical treatment of sinusitis is digestive upset, and here is where Zhang’s strategy shines. Since sinus infections often move into the chest, the simple addition of trichosanthes fruit (*gua lou shi*) creates Minor Trichosanthes Combination (*Xiao Xian Xiong Tang*, KPC 0490) as part of Pinellia Combination (*Ban Xia Xie Xin Tang*, KPC 1140), which is a great formula for respiratory infections.^{iv}

XIAO XIAN XIONG TANG (MINOR TRICHOSANTHES COMBINATION)

gua lou shi (trichosanthes fruit)
ban xia (pinellia)
huang lian (coptis)

Are there more commonly used TCM formulas that follow this strategy? When I graduated school and moved to my practice in Texas, one of my mentors told me that Pinellia and Scute Formula (*Qing Qi Hua Tan Wan*, KPC 2840), a cough formula, had proven to be incredibly successful for treating many cases of sinusitis. While being more of a heat-clearing version of **Citrus and Pinella Formula** (*Er Chen Tang*), *Qing Qi Hua Tan Wan* not only shares several ingredients with the modified classical formulas in this discussion, but strategy as well. Arisaema (*dan nan xing*)—botanically similar to pinellia (*ban xia*)—is treated with bile, thus treating hot phlegm, but also initiating descent, much like coptis (*huang lian*). Instead of using salty oyster shell (*mu li*) to break up the congealed phlegm, Pinellia and Scute Formula (*Qing Qi Hua Tan Wan*) decongests qi and, along with it, phlegm, by using herbs such as tangerine peel (*chen pi*) and aurantium (*zhi shi*). Since sinus and respiratory infections coincide, these formulas can treat and even prevent phlegm from blocking the lungs or congealing in the sinuses. While definitely colder and less targeted than these classical approaches, I have seen Pinellia and Scute Formula (*Qing Qi Hua Tan Wan*) be helpful in the clinic, especially in cases where a patient has a history of sinusitis that easily transforms into a respiratory infection. And while not as protective of the stomach as *Ban Xia Xie Xin Tang*, the *Er Chen Tang*-base of Pinellia and Scute Formula (*Qing Qi Hua Tan Wan*) does help moderate the harshness of the cold substances.

Few conditions frustrated me more when I began my clinic as did sinus infections. While other formulas like Magnolia Flower Formula (*Xin Yi San*, KPC 1550), Xanthium Formula (*Cang Er San*, KPC 3850), or the patent *Pe Min Kan Wan* are all outstanding formulas with wonderful effects, I began wondering if, like Western medicine, they missed out on an opportunity to treat deeper and more systemic pathology at the expense of targeting the sinuses. I have seen the clinical effects in my own practice and I believe that classically inspired formulas—whose emphasis is on restoring wide ranging functionality—have an important place in the treatment of the sinus cavity.

There are several wonderful teachers of these diagnostic methods. I personally learned these diagnostic techniques from Arnaud Versluis's ICEAM and have found them invaluable in clinical practice.

ⁱⁱ While there is no formula known as *Chai Hu Tang*, modern interpretations believe that Zhang Zhong-jing is referring to the “*Chai Hu Family*” of formulas in general. His context usually recommends modifications based on the presentation under discussion.

ⁱⁱⁱ Zhong Yao Xue, 1998, 103:106

^{iv} When speaking about *Xiao Chai Hu Tang*, Zhang Zhong-jing said that, for coughing, *ren shen* and *da zao* should be omitted and substituted with *gan jiang* and *wu wei zi*. Many practitioners find that this substitution is also most helpful throughout, as in the case of *Ban Xia Xie Xin Tang*.

BLAKE GAFFORD, DOM has a practice in Lubbock, TX and is a dedicated student of classical Chinese medicine.

Essential Oil Blends for Healthy Sleep

BY EVELYN ROBERT, LAC

Helping to initiate and remain in a deep sleep state with essential oils, I find, is best accomplished with a combination of aromatherapy along with the application of a blend of essential oils to acupuncture points. That is, diffusing one or more appropriate essential oils into the air of the bedroom, plus dabbing a miniscule amount of oil/blend on acupoints that correspond to the patient's pattern. An effective blend of oils to induce and maintain a good quality sleep should include at least one oil that calms, stabilizes or descends. Here are some ideas you can try or use to inspire your own effective blends.

According to Jeffrey Yuen's method, essential oils and blends are diluted in a carrier oil as a 1% to 6% dilution, on average, depending on age and sensitivity (always test a small area for sensitivity). The basic math is: in one ounce of carrier oil, a 1% dilution is 10 to 12 drops of essential oil, a 2% dilution is 20 to 24 drops, 3% dilution is 30 to 36 drops, etc. The following blends are intended to be formulated according to this method.

METAL / LUNG

Welcoming the wei qi inside

At the beginning stage of sleep, the *wei qi*, which has been busy with the outside world—protecting and keeping us active and responsive—needs to return to the lungs, slowing the breath, and allowing passage to our inner world for rest and repair of body and mind. Healthy lung qi aids this process. On an emotional level, we might think of this as freeing the lung qi to let go of guilt or loss.

LUNG QI DEFICIENCY

Blend and apply to points that tonify lung qi: *wu wei zi* (fructus schisandrae), *hu po* (amber), *song zhen* (white pine). **Carrier Oil:** *bai zi ren* (semen biotae).

Diffuse: sandalwood.

KIDNEY NOT GRASPING LUNG QI

Blend and apply to points that represent the lung-kidney connection: *wu wei zi* (fructus schisandrae), *bai zi ren* (semen biotae), *yun shan* (black spruce).

Carrier Oil: sesame. **Diffuse:** *hu po* (amber) or *jiang xiang* (lignum dalbergiae).

LUNG CONGESTION AND CONSTRAINT

Blend and apply to points that regulate qi and open the chest: Eucalyptus, *hou po* (cortex magnolia), *bo he* (peppermint). **Carrier Oil:** almond or grape seed.

Diffuse: sandalwood or *song zhen* (black spruce).

WATER / KIDNEY

Immersing in the yin/nourishing the source for stability and security

Water is the most yin element and sleep is a yin state through which we transition from the bright, active yang of the day to the dark, quiet, still yin of the night. If yin is

insufficient, yang will not be able to rest within it. On an emotional level, fear or insecurity will make it difficult to find comfort and quietude within the dark mystery of yin.

YIN DEFICIENCY WITH HEAT

Blend and apply to points that represent support of kidney yin: *wu wei zi* (fructus schisandrae), *bai zi ren* (semen biotae), *qing hao* (herba artemisiae annuae).

Carrier Oil: sesame. **Diffuse:** jasmine.

HEART BLOOD DEFICIENCY

Blend and apply to points that represent a heart-kidney connection: *dang gui* (radix angelicae sinensis), carrot seed, *bai zi ren* (semen biotae), *wu wei zi* (fructus schisandrae). **Carrier Oil:** olive. **Diffuse:** rose.

WOOD / LIVER

Coursing the qi and blood: free and easy, cool and calm, letting go

If wood is not flexible and free, there will be tension, pain and disregulation. The liver needs to be relaxed at night in order to receive and store the blood that, during our waking hours, is circulating outward to the sinews. Dry, brittle wood will easily “catch fire.” On an emotional level, constraint of the free flow of liver qi and blood may cause mood swings, holding on to anger, resentment or memories that prevent or disrupt sleep.

LIVER YIN/BLOOD DEFICIENCY WITH LIVER QI CONSTRAINT

Blend and apply to points like Liv 14 and Liv 3: *xiang fu* (rhizoma cyperi), carrot seed, *dang gui* (radix angelicae sinensis), *bo he* (peppermint). **Carrier Oil:** *bai zi ren* (semen biotae). **Diffuse:** lavender or *qi li xiang* (murraya paniculata).

LIVER QI CONSTRAINT WITH LIVER FIRE AND YANG RISING

Blend and apply to appropriate acupoints: *zhi zi* (fructus gardeniae), *chai hu* (radix bupleurum), *ju hua* (flos chrysanthemi), *bo he* (peppermint). **Carrier Oil:** *bai zi ren* (semen biotae). **Diffuse:** *jiang xiang* (lignum dalbergiae/ rosewood), lavender or jasmine.

FIRE / HEART

Pacifying the spirit, soothing the heart/mind and emotions

Fire is the spark that gives us a sense of awe, wonder, and enthusiasm for life. The heart is the house for the spirit within us, the “little *shen*.” Strong emotions from any element will affect the heart and have a direct impact upon the *shen*, consequently disturbing sleep, often with anxiety and vivid dreams.

HEART FIRE

Blend and apply to appropriate acupoints: *bai zi ren* (semen biotae), *ju hua* (flos chrysanthemi), *hu po* (amber). **Carrier Oil:** *bai zi ren* (semen biotae). **Diffuse:** *jin yin hua* (flos lonicerae/ honeysuckle).

HEART AND KIDNEY NOT COMMUNICATING

Blend and apply to appropriate acupoints: *wu wei zi*

(fructus schisandrae), *bai zi ren* (semen biotae), *rou gui* (cortex cinnamomi). **Carrier Oil:** walnut. **Diffuse:** jasmine.

HEART BLOOD DEFICIENCY

Blend and apply to appropriate acupoints: *bai zi ren* (semen biotae), carrot seed, *dang gui* (radix angelicae sinensis), *hu po* (amber). **Carrier Oil:** olive or jojoba. **Diffuse:** Rose.

HEART BLOOD STASIS

Blend and apply to appropriate acupoints: frankincense (boswellia sacra), *jiang xiang* (lignum dalbergiae), *chuan xiong* (radix ligusticum wallichii). **Carrier Oil:** safflower. **Diffuse:** *qi li xiang* (murraya paniculata).

PHLEGM HARRASSING THE HEART

Blend and apply to appropriate acupoints: *hu po* (amber), *su he xiang* (styrax), *shi chang pu* (rhizoma acori). **Carrier Oil:** safflower. **Diffuse:** *huo xiang* (herba pogostemonis) or sandalwood.

EARTH / SPLEEN AND STOMACH

Creating harmony at home

Earth is our center, our home, our family and relationships. A harmonious earth is a place we can feel settled, with a sense of belonging. During sleep we “rest to digest” not only food but also the thoughts and feelings that arise in reaction to events in our lives. Harmonizing spleen and stomach helps to quiet the mind, transforming obsessive thinking into meditative thought and transporting us to the peace of sleep.

FOOD STASIS WITH STOMACH FIRE

Blend and apply to appropriate acupoints: *zhi zi* (fructus gardeniae), *zi su ye* (folium perillae), *qing pi* (pericarpium citri reticulatae viride), *fo shou* (fructus citri sarcodactylis). **Carrier Oil:** *bai zi ren* (semen biotae). **Diffuse:** *jin yin hua* (flos lonicerae/ honeysuckle).

DAMP ENCUMBERANCE

Blend and apply to appropriate acupoints: *huo xiang* (herba pogostemonis), *bai dou kou* (fructus amomi rotundus), *cang zhu* (rhizoma atractylodis), *qing pi* (pericarpium citri reticulatae viride). **Carrier Oil:** grape seed. **Diffuse:** *bai yu lan ye* (folium magnolia officinalis).

SPLEEN QI DEFICIENCY

Blend and apply to appropriate acupoints: *cang zhu* (rhizoma atractylodis), *ding xiang* (flos caryophyllii/ clove), *rou dou kou* (semen myristicae/ nutmeg), *xiao hui xiang* (fructus foeniculi/ fennel fruit). **Carrier Oil:** *bai zi ren* (semen biotae). **Diffuse:** *huo xiang* (herba pogostemonis).

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Food Formulas: The Cook as Herbalist

By Andrew Sterman

There are many Chinese medicinal herbs that double as foods, and some famous herbs are used in the specialty tradition of herbal broth cooking. But to be fully integrated with a living Chinese medicine, there is nothing more powerful than organizing your daily foods as the herbs of your life. Rather than adding medicinals to dishes or using formulas after meals, the idea is that the formulas you rely upon can be used to create recipes and meals that fully enact their strategies. Foods are your agents, based on herbal principles and a thorough knowledge of the energetics of common foods.

As an example, let's use the strategies of *Bao He Wan* (Preserve Harmony Pill), the most famous formula of Zhu Dan-Xi (1281-1358), the last of the Four Great Masters from the particularly innovative period in Chinese Medicine, the Jin-Yuan Dynasty.

Bao He Wan (Preserve Harmony Pill) is a perfectly crafted formula—nothing duplicated and nothing left out. Each herb represents a strategy, and as the name suggests, they fit together harmoniously. It is very effective after a single eating indiscretion and also very helpful for long-term digestive damage. I often recommend it to patients when they travel.

A quick story. Recently, a patient said, “Andrew, in a couple weeks I'm going to Paris to meet my daughter who is studying there. Am I supposed to stay on this diet and miss out on all the beautiful pleasures my daughter and I could share together?” The answer depends on the status of the patient, of course. Many factors are involved, not least of which are the aspects of family bonding and the interesting way traveling often improves digestion. I recommended that she “Enjoy the cuisine offerings of Paris fully but wisely. Have cheese if you like, but not every day and not too much, it's the first few tastes that are the most enjoyable. Have wine if you like, but not too much, it's the first few sips that are the most enjoyable. Maintain your basic diet: vegetables, fish, some meat, grains like traditional bread, rice, and in Paris, don't miss the couscous. After any large meal that may not sit well, have some *Bao He Wan*.” She returned from a very memorable trip amazed at how well she felt throughout, then returned to her personally appropriate eating.

Bao He Wan is a seven (or eight) ingredient formula that is harmonious both in the way its herbs work together and in the harmony it restores after our dietary choices have thrown us a curve. This implies a very important question: What about not getting disharmonious in the first place? Aren't we supposed to know how to eat so that we don't need *Bao He Wan*?

Interestingly, the answer to such an obvious question isn't agreed upon easily. A quick survey of popular diets below shows both the imbalances they are perceived to correct and the imbalances they are likely to create.



LOW FAT DIETS

Low fat diets recommend reducing mostly saturated fats found in meat, chicken, eggs, and dairy. Dairy is encouraged only if artificially manipulated to be 'low' or 'no' fat.

Another way to think of low fat diets is that they benefit those who have not been digesting and clearing fats well. Simply put, if we are not 'handling' fats well, we do better when eating less of them, possibly drastically less. The formula *Bao He Wan* addresses this idea with the herb *lai fu zi* / raphani (radish seed). *Lai fu zi* brings the cutting quality of radish and the descending influence of seeds to cut through stagnation from poorly digested dietary fats.

LOW CARBOHYDRATE DIETS

Low carb diets recommend reducing carbs and grains. There is an interesting theory that humans evolved to eat game and gather root starches, meaning that the advent of grains 10,000 years ago began a period of physical decline made worse by the easy access to refined carbs and sugars today.

Another way to think of low carb diets is that they benefit those who have not been digesting carbs well. If we are not handling carbs well, eating less of them will help, but that is not equivalent to the idea that healthy individuals will benefit from eating little or no grain. *Bao He Wan* addresses poor digestion of carbohydrates with the herb *shen qu* / *masa fermentata* (wheat bran fermented with wormwood and other herbs). *Shen qu* strongly helps resolve food stagnation relating to overconsumption of carbohydrates: pasta, bread, baked goods, sweets, and alcohol. (Problems with grains in modern societies are mostly due to overeating sugar, and do not arise from millet, brown rice, or antique wheats.)

HIGH PROTEIN DIETS

The low-carb diet is often a **High Protein Diet**, with very high amounts of meat, fish, egg and other protein. Saturated fats are restored to the game as sugar and grains are moved to the penalty box. Naturally, eating that much animal food boosts yang qi enough that most people feel invigorated and livelier. Eventually, however, the stimulation will be taxing. That much meat can be difficult to digest, leading to stagnation from meats and their fats. *Bao He Wan* addresses this problem with the herb *shan zha*/crataegus (hawthorn berry). *Shan zha* is a potential superstar herb waiting for its shelf space next to *goji* berries in mainstream markets.

Bao He Wan addresses stagnation resulting from poorly digesting all three categories of macronutrients: proteins, carbohydrates and fats. Functions overlap, but to simplify:

- *Shan zha*/crataegus (hawthorn berry) relieves stagnation from proteins (meats, especially fatty meats and dairy).
- *Shen qu*/massa fermentata (wheat bran fermented with wormwood and other herbs) relieves stagnation from carbs, sugars and alcohol.
- *Lai fu zi*/raphani (radish seed) clears stagnation from fats (again including dairy, cheese, nuts, and also helps with carbohydrates).

It's interesting to notice that most diets recommended today are effective at first because they address an imbalance, but after an initial improvement the diet will cause new imbalances and stagnation will arise from a new excess. *Bao He Wan* says that we should seek to restore harmony rather than bounce from one extreme to another. Since Zhu Dan-Xi doesn't know which macronutrient we are having problems with, he addresses all three. If you know your health and habits, you can leave out what's not needed, but Master Zhu is more interested in giving a complete teaching on digestion than creating a series of formulas for various dietary pitfalls.

Bao He Wan includes four additional therapeutic principles, each represented by a single herb.

Chen pi/mature citrus peel relaxes the diaphragm, allowing breathing to be more full and natural. *Chen pi* helps the organs get along (regulates qi), helps with dampness and aids in handling any phlegm that may arise from poor digestion. (It transforms phlegm).

Zhi ban xia/prepared pinellia is a powerful herb that primarily helps to restore the descent of stomach qi. *Ban xia* treats nausea, hiccups, reflux. It is often used to clear phlegm, but its role in *Bao He Wan* follows its more classical use: to correct rebellious qi and restore the descending action of lung and stomach, effectively harmonizing the stomach with spleen-pancreas. Pinellia is treated with ginger, making ginger an

important agent in *Bao He Wan* despite not being named in the formula.

Fu ling/poria or hoelen is a mushroom that grows like truffles between the roots of large oak (or cinnamon) trees. Unlike the aromatic truffle, *fu ling* is extremely mild; this bland taste has a diuretic influence, making it an important herb for clearing turbid fluids, dampness, and phlegm. *Fu ling* amplifies the effects of *ban xia* for resolving nausea, distention, and problems from phlegm.

Surprising, perhaps, is the inclusion of *lian qiao*/forsythia fruit, an herb that clears heat and toxins. What Zhu Dan-Xi is saying is that, to use modern jargon, meals that don't digest well cause stagnation which in turn causes inflammation. It is prudent to clear inflammation before it takes hold, or treat if it has. Stagnation is like a traffic jam—heat arises when natural flux is held up. It's the body's natural attempt to raise enough energy to move what is stuck. What gets stuck? We've already identified that—any of the macronutrients can lead to stagnation: meats, carbs or fats.

Although not in the original formula, *Bao He Wan* usually includes *mai ya*/sprouted barley. Barley was the first domesticated grain, and there is poetic satisfaction in knowing that when sprouted, barley becomes a potent herb to treat potential problems from all grains. Mai ya reduces stagnation from any grain or carb source. (Barley malt is a sugar substitute—maltose—made from sprouted barley, which can also clear food stagnation. As with any sugar, however, too much is not good).

Having looked at each herb's role in *Bao He Wan*, we can now ask these three questions with informed clarity:

- Can a meal be made that restores harmony?
- Can *Bao He Wan* be a practical blueprint for such meals?
- Can these meals be enjoyable enough that no one would have to know?

To fulfill this challenge let's review the strategy:

1. Assist digestion of all three major components of meals: carbs, proteins, and oils.
2. Relax the middle.
3. Insure descent of stomach qi.
4. Transform or expel dampness or phlegm.
5. Clear heat (inflammation) that may arise.

What we need to know next is what foods help fulfill these roles.

TO IMPROVE DIGESTION OVERALL:

- Eat smaller portions, return for more if truly desired.

- Separate desserts from meals with a pause (desserts should be on occasion, not daily).
- If needed, separate proteins (meats and fish) from carbs (grains).
- Reduce or eliminate dairy, sugar and, if needed, gluten.
- Eat with others whose company you enjoy.

Now let's be more specific.

TO ASSIST CARB DIGESTION:

Use sprouts, fermented foods and seed spices.

Mai ya/sprouted barley is sprouted; including any sprouts or young green vegetables aids carb digestion.

Shen qu/massa fermentata is fermented; adding fermented foods aids digestion.

Bao He Wan doesn't include spices per se, but spices and kitchen herbs strongly add directionality which in turn helps to clear stagnation. For carbs, seed spices are especially helpful. Add seed spices to steamed rice, have them baked into bread, or provide them in a small dish after meals: fennel seed, anise seed, cumin seed, caraway seed, mustard seed, and others.

The addition of sprouts, fermented products, and seed spices will dramatically transform digestion, particularly of carbohydrates. Sprouts can be added to grains, or grains can be soaked before cooking, essentially sprouting the grain (or at least germinating) it.

TO ASSIST PROTEIN DIGESTION:

Add pit fruits or unripe (sour) fruits. Cooking lamb or duck (fatty meats) with dried fruits (apricot, figs, prunes) is a traditional way to aid their digestion. Today, most sweet and sour sauce is artificial and cloying, but the principle still works—add dried fruit for the sweet taste and vinegar for the sour. (Most people don't cook with sour fruits like unripe plums these days).

Citrus peel is in *Bao He Wan*; use citrus zest in your cooking, not just for baked goods but for meat dishes. Citrus peel helps relax the diaphragm so breath can descend, necessary for stoking the furnace of good digestion. Learn to make marmalade with *chen pi*, it's easy and wonderfully useful as a digestive aid.

TO ASSIST FAT DIGESTION:

Citrus peel helps cut through fats too, but something like radish will do even more. My paternal grandfather was born near Kiev; one of his favorite things to eat was a thick slice of rye (with caraway seeds), a slice of hard cheese, coarse-ground mustard, a slice of red onion and a thick slice of black radish. Onion and black radish help cheese digestion. Mus-

tard and caraway are both seed spices, mustard also includes vinegar (fermented). Together, the spices and radish prevented stagnation that would otherwise be expected from heavy cheese with bread. Use spices of all types to cut through fats (including dairy or fried food): radish, onion, ginger, rosemary, oregano, tarragon, mustard, caraway, fennel seed, cumin seed, etc. Remember, ginger is an essential agent in *zhi ban xia*, included in *Bao He Wan*.

RELAXING THE MIDDLE

The next principle is to relax the middle. We've already mentioned that citrus peel relaxes the diaphragm. If food stagnation is present in the morning, marmalade with breakfast can help (not too much—sugar is present in the jam-making process). Root vegetables also relax the middle: carrots, sweet potatoes, beets, etc., as do nuts and seeds due to their descending nature. (Use radish or citrus peel to cut through oil stagnation if you overeat nuts).

DESCENDING THE STOMACH QI

Ban xia represents the next strategy in *Bao He Wan*: insure the descent of stomach qi. In the kitchen, a genuine appetizer has that role, to clear stagnation and open the stomach in order to receive the meal. True appetizers are crunchy, slightly bitter or descending. Olives, artichokes, celery, and carrots are good choices. A real appetizer doesn't soften hunger, rather, it prepares for good digestion of what's to come. Having *ban xia* in the formula means stomach qi must not be descending; we must have eaten when our digestion wasn't prepared for food. Use appetizers wisely.

CLEARING DAMPNES

Fu ling represents the next strategy in the formula: **to clear dampness**. Dampness develops like an internal 'swampiness'. Relieving dampness is like lifting a wet blanket off an athlete; everything is better. Citrus peel, radishes, spices, and skillful appetizers will already prevent, reduce, and begin clearing dampness. *Fu ling* also tells us not to ignore mushrooms. Mushrooms fortify the *jing* level, and since they thrive in damp conditions in nature, they help to clear damp conditions within. In the kitchen we don't typically include medicinal mushrooms (e.g., *ling zhi*/*reishi*/ganoderma or *fu ling*) nor do we eat hallucinatory mushrooms, yet all mushrooms share a hint of these properties. Use mushrooms to clear dampness, strengthen life's foundations, and clarify what is important.

CLEARING HEAT (INFLAMMATION)

Inflammation is a buzzword today. *Lian qiao*/forsythia fruit is known for clearing heat in the upper body, cooling the blood, disinhibiting urination (to vent heat and toxins through the lower center), and dissipating stagnation and internal clumping. In the kitchen we don't use such strong herbs, but citrus

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peel and mushrooms have already started clearing, cooling and disinhibiting. Flowers are *wei qi*/protective qi agents, so think of kitchen herbs that open to the exterior with a cooling effect, for example, parsley and thyme. Even warming herbs such as cilantro and dill will clear inflammation as the pores open and heat vents. Other diuretics can be very important here as well: snow peas, green beans, or barley. Lentils are excellent for clearing toxicity, as are sprouts (dietary sprouts such as mung bean sprouts are very cooling, clear toxin and disinhibit, in this case more strongly than the herbal sprout *mai ya*). And the easiest and most obvious way to clear inflammation (and therefore the most overlooked) is to eat dramatically more leafy green vegetables: kale, collard, chard, broccoli, string beans, cabbage, bok choy, and so forth. Consume dramatically more vegetables, cooked in order to protect the stomach, spleen and intestines from too much cold. We want the cooling effect for the liver and the blood, not in the digestion.

On occasion, imagine inviting Zhu Dan-Xi to dinner along with your family and friends. Share a meal that digests well without seeming to be 'health food,' then relax with tea for an hour or so, with no stagnation arising anywhere in your system. Zhu Dan-Xi may not recognize all the foods we eat in our modern home, but he would certainly recognize his teachings on our table.

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