



Dear Practitioner,

It has been a long hot summer for a great many of us in the Northern Hemisphere, the hottest in memory. Autumn is the pivot between the heat and yang of summer and the cold and yin of winter. Ideally, it is our time to prepare for what we know is coming. We can do this by strengthening our root qi and avoiding stressors. You are likely familiar with commonly used moxa treatments to prepare for winter. Avoiding stressors may be more challenging in our tumultuous times, but Chinese herbs can be a great support for helping us meet the challenge.

From John Heuertz, DOM, you will find the second part of his series, *Endocrinology and Chinese Medicine*, this article focusing on the gonads. John Scott has contributed a paper on *Wei Qi and Immune Support*.

It is our pleasure to share with you a case study by Jeanne Dixon, DOM. Jeanne is an experienced practitioner here in New Mexico. We sincerely hope that you will follow her lead and consider sharing a case study with our readers. We have much that we can learn from each other. A basic guideline for writing up your case studies is included on page 3 of this newsletter.

We are excited to be able to share another food-as-medicine article by Andrew Sterman. Andrew has been a long-time student of Jeffery Yuen and brings that perspective, as well as his many years of experience with the healing power of food, to his writing and teaching. Andrew's topic for this newsletter is *Travel for the Diet-Conscious*.

If you are a user of **KPC Herbs** —or would like to acquaint yourself with their great offerings—and have not yet received a copy of *Essential Herbal Formulas* by Christine Chang, DAOM, LAc, DIPLOM, please contact us so that we can send you a **free copy**.

Golden Flower Chinese Herbs offers over 130 Chinese herbal formulas that meet the vast majority of your patients' needs. We also offer about 300 formulas from **KPC Herbs** for pattern presentations that may not be covered by one of our Golden Flower formulas. The KPC formulas are available in granule, tablet, or capsule form. We also carry around 400 single herbs as granules from KPC.

We hope that you are continuing to advocate for H.R. 4803, the Acupuncture For Seniors Act. Allowing licensed acupuncturists to be Medicare providers would open access to tens of millions of US senior citizens who do not now have access. Remember that you personally would not be required to participate in Medicare. Be aware that other medical professionals who are Medicare providers are performing acupuncture with a fraction of the same training that you received.

Our newsletters past and present, and the many papers that we have published, are posted on our website **www.gfcherbs.com** under **Resources**. We offer them as a resource to you in gratitude for your business, feedback, and support.

Sincerely,

John Scott, DOM and Lorena Monda, DOM

Endocrinology and Chinese Medicine

By John Heuertz, DOM

PART 2: THE GONADS

In the last edition of this newsletter (Spring 2023), we began our exploration of how to approach endocrinological issues through the lens of classical Chinese medicine by looking at the thyroid. In this installment, we are going to look at the gonadal systems. [Note: The "General Introduction" here is virtually identical to the one in the last issue that introduced the thyroid. If you remember the gist of the last intro, you may wish to skip ahead to the next section.]

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Endocrinology can be an elusive and confusing specialty for practitioners of Chinese medicine. The major glands and other tissues that produce and release hormones into the bloodstream are not classified in our medicine under any of the familiar categories. They are neither *zang* nor *fu* nor a Curious Organ. We won't find a reference for "thyroid" or "pituitary" in an index of any modern edition of the *Neijing* or the *Shang Han Lun*. Nevertheless, patients seek out acupuncture and herbal medicine treatment for conditions that Western medicine categorizes as "endocrine," and we need to be prepared to help them.

Our medicine is always stronger when we work within the paradigms developed throughout its long history. Something tends to get “lost in translation” when we force an adaptation of a modern medical diagnosis like “hyperparathyroidism” upon our classical medicine, contorting it until we find some way of making it fit. We are more effective practitioners when we diagnose and treat based on traditional pattern identification.

In Chinese medicine, all the functions of the body and every substance that the body produces, including hormones, falls under the governance of one or more *zang/fu*. An important key to working with endocrine disorders is to understand which *zang/fu* govern which endocrine structures.

It is important to understand at the outset that hormones are either steroidal or nonsteroidal. Steroidal hormones are fat-soluble and non-steroidal hormones are water-soluble. Steroidal hormones belong to the *yuan/jing/ye* (thick fluids) level while non-steroidal hormones belong to the *wei/jin* (thin fluids) level. Non-steroidal hormones include thyroid hormones, insulin, adrenaline/epinephrin, prolactin, and growth hormone. Steroidal hormones include sexual hormones such as testosterone, estrogen, progesterone, and most adrenal hormones, such as DHEA, aldosterone, and cortisol. Steroidal hormones are supplemented with yin tonics and dietary fats, while non-steroidal hormones are supplemented with herbs and diet that generate fluid production by the stomach, such as soups and congees.

This is Part 2 of a series of brief discussions on pattern identification and the associate strategies of various endocrine disorders. In it will we discuss the gonads.

THE GONADS

In menstrual issues, we are frequently looking first at the blood, and by default, the liver. Blood disorders are not the same thing as hormonal disorders, even when it comes to menstruation. As we stated above, the majority of what modern medicine classifies as an endocrine structure does not correlate in Chinese medicine with any *zang* or *fu* or Curious Organ. The uterus is a Curious Organ with its primary influence coming from the liver, owing to that organ's governance of the blood. Therefore, this discussion is not going to be about menstrual disorders. In Chinese medicine, the literature on this topic is voluminous. We will therefore restrict the present discussion to the basics of treating the gonadal systems of men and women insofar as their endocrine regulation are involved. When we talk about gonads, we specifically mean testicles and ovaries. We are not talking about the uterus or the prostate.

The Hypothalamus-Pituitary-Gonadal axis is one of the four main loop systems among the neuroendocrine axes. Gonadal hormones are steroidal, and therefore belong to the realm of *yuan/jing/ye*. Steroidal hormones are supplemented in our diets with foods that resonate with the *yuan* level, *jing*, or *ye*. These are going to be seeds, nuts, oils/fats, seafood, and white shellfish. Fatty seafoods, such as fatty tuna, salmon, mackerel, sardines, herring, and striped bass are especially nourishing to the yin, and therefore can be converted into steroidal hormones as the body requires.

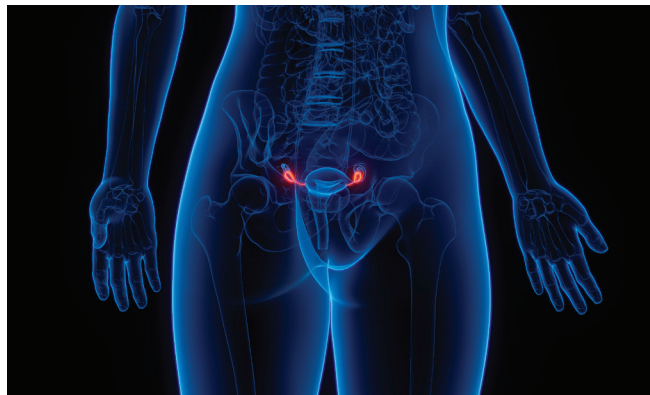
In the first part of our endocrine discussion, we identified the thyroid as being governed by the lung and stomach. It may come as little surprise that the gonadal structures are governed primarily by the kidneys. The reader is reminded that all endocrine issues have a secondary influence from the triple heater and the hormones are distributed through the bloodstream. So, issues such as blood stasis and

blood deficiency will need to be weighed in your analysis.

When approaching an endocrine disorder using the entire axis (in this case, the hypothalamus-pituitary-gonadal axis), the hypothalamus and pituitary can both be brought into the treatment simply by including the triple heater. In hormone treatments for the gonads, this means that every acupuncture

treatment should include points from both the kidney and the triple heater. Window of the Sky (W.O.S.) points also can help connect the hypothalamus and pituitary glands to the rest of a treatment. I therefore recommend including TH-16 as one of your point choices, since it is both a triple heater point and a W.O.S. point. Another important point to consider is BL-1. BL-1, more than any other point on the body, has a special connection to the pituitary gland. Always add BL-1 if there is an issue in the axis system of a hormonal disorder. This is especially relevant when treating thyroid issues, since the most common blood test is actually looking for a hormone produced by the pituitary, not the actual thyroid. But in gonadal disorders too there can be an axial problem. When there is, needling BL-1 will add a great deal of power to your treatment.

An example of a front/face-up treatment to support and regulate the gonads is to needle TH-16, GB-25 (the front *mu* of the kidney), and one of the ankle kidney points: Ki-2 to support yang, Ki-6 to support yin, or Ki-3 to connect to the source. Ki-27 can be added to virtually any front treatment for endocrine issues. It is the apex of the kidney channel, the master point of the kidney *shu* points; it connects to the Yin Qiao Mai and the 2nd trajectory of the Chong Mai. The source point and the *he*-sea point on the Triple Heater (TH-4 and TH-10) can also amplify an endocrine treatment.



If you are performing a back treatment, you can needle both BL-23 and BL-22. These are the back *shu* points for the kidney and triple heater, respectively. You can double down on bringing in the endocrine structures of the brain without venturing off the bladder channel simply by adding BL-10. TH-16 can be added to a back treatment as easily as it can a front treatment. The same goes for GB-25. Add moxa to Du-4 or BL-23, if you wish to augment the kidney yang.

If the issue is hereditary, congenital or includes blood stasis, the Chong vessel can be a very effective treatment. When needling an extraordinary vessel, it is usually unwise to add points that are not part of that vessel's trajectory, unless you are following some specific classical prescription. Simply needle the opening point, Sp-4 (left on men, right on women) and select appropriate points along the kidney channel on the lower abdomen. The most effective needling technique will be to aim the needle at a 45-degree angle toward the Ren channel from the insertion in the kidney channel. When you needle with a vibrating technique you reinforce the clear intention to the body that you are engaging the *yuan* level.

For women, St-28 is located directly over the ovaries. This point can be added to a treatment, but with the caution to always bear in mind the warning from the *Ling Shu* to never needle more than 3 channels in a single treatment.

Note that these examples are for *regulating* gonadal hormones. If the primary issue is phlegm obstruction, if the hormones are out of balance because of cysts or hyperplasia, a different approach would be used.

As for herbal treatments, usually we will be thinking about kidney yin and kidney yang tonics. For hormone support and regulation it is a good idea to include a little yin in a yang tonic and a little yang in a yin tonic.

Two Immortals Formula (*Jia Jian Er Xian Tang*) is one of the best all-purpose gonadal formulas. It supplements kidney yin and yang, as well as regulates liver blood.

Essential Yang Formula (*Jia Jian Jin Gui Shen Qi Wan*) supplements kidney yang through the yin. It starts with a base of Rehmannia Six Formula (*Liu Wei Di Huang Wan*) and adds four yang tonics and a little lycium fruit (*gou qi zi*).

Nourish Essence Formula (*Zi Jing Di Huang Wan*) is a modification and augmentation of Rehmannia Six Formula (*Liu Wei Di Huang Wan*). Added to the base formula are yang tonics and substances that help to nourish and secure the essence (*jing*).

Vital Treasure Formula (*Zhen Bao Fang*) is a strong kidney yang tonic, often used to stimulate male sexual function. It invigorates blood flow while supplementing and stimulating yang. It has a mild yin-nourishing and essence-securing action.

Call For Case Studies

To showcase the effectiveness of our Golden Flower and KPC formulas, we are currently seeking case studies from practitioners like you who have successfully incorporated our products into their treatment plans.

We know that you're busy, but we truly believe that sharing your success with Chinese herbs will help others and contribute to the growth of Chinese medicine as a whole.

As an incentive, we are offering 20% off one future order of Golden Flower Formulas to anyone who provides a case study that we can feature on our website, newsletters, and social media channels.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING YOUR CASE STUDY

1. Please use a format that will allow our staff to make needed editorial changes. You can use MS WORD and attach the file to your email or simply write in the body of the email itself.
2. Give a title to your case study.
3. Use a fictitious first name (or first initial) only for your patient in order to be HIPAA compliant.
4. Write the age and gender of the patient.
5. In 2-4 sentences, describe the case history.
6. Include the TCM Pattern Diagnosis (with medical diagnosis, if applicable).
7. As briefly or as detailed as you wish, please give an account of your treatment plan for both acupuncture and herbs.
8. What was the outcome of your treatment?
9. Add any comments you wish (optional).

To submit your case study, send it to:
info@gfcherbs.com

Depression and Suicidal Thinking: A Case Study

By Jeanne Dixon, DOM

CASE HISTORY

Steve (not his real name) is a 14 year old male who came to the clinic with his mother. He was depressed and anxious, voicing suicidal thoughts for 2 years. He had a dry cough with phlegm stuck in his throat. He was overweight and his skin was moist. He did not make eye contact and was reluctant to speak. The Dai channel was very tight and tender on palpation. He has been receiving counseling for over a year, and briefly took antidepressants which only made him more depressed and withdrawn.

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

Laying on the table, he held his arms tightly across his chest. His pulses were almost absent and very hard to feel. There was obvious disruption in the proper flow of qi so the treatment strategy was to follow the pulses and palpation to determine how to rectify the proper movement of qi.

Since the Dai holds pathogens, including emotional, his first treatment was to clear the Dai channel using points on the left: GB-41, 28, 26, Liv-14. To relax the chest, he was encouraged to uncross his arms and breath slowly, being aware of his whole ribcage moving. During the treatment his pulses started to fill the *jing* and *wei* levels. I gave a standard

dose of **Salvia 10 Formula** along with a half dose of **Pinellia and Magnolia Formula** in order to circulate the qi, calm *shen*, transform and dissipate phlegm and stop the cough.

At the 2nd treatment, not much had changed for Steve except his cough was better. His Dai channel was still tender on palpation. A repeat of the first treatment was given and the herbs continued.

The 3rd treatment showed Steve coming into the clinic with a smile on his face. His cough had stopped and his mother said he was not as negative as he had been. Steve agreed. Pulses filled all 3 levels and had a clear Liver Divergent pulse. A Liver Divergent treatment was given using Ren-2, GB-1, Liv-14, Liv -5 and Liv-1. At the end of the treatment Steve said he felt great. **Salvia 10 Formula** was continued and **Pinellia and Magnolia Formula** stopped, with instructions to start it again if his cough should return.

His 4th treatment showed him smiling and engaged with the treatment. His mother reported he was engaging with family with no suicidal thoughts or depressive talking. The cough had not returned. Steve said he was feeling a lot better and was finally optimistic about life. His pulses were felt on all levels with the *cun* and *guan* not communicating bilaterally, and with a Yin Qiao Mai pulse on the right side. Psychological indications for Yin Qiao Mai include low self esteem, depression, and suicidal tendencies. It seemed once qi began to flow smoothly, Steve's pulses showed the basis of the problem with Yin Qiao Mai out of balance. GB-22 was reduced and removed in order to open the chest resulting in the *guan* and *cun* pulses connecting. The Yin Qiao was treated on the right using Ki-9, Sp-13 and Ren-23. **Salvia 10 Formula** was continued.

He continued treatment every 2 to 3 weeks for 2 more months. Yin Qiao Mai pulses were present at the beginning of each treatment. No suicidal thoughts have returned and he is engaged in his life. He is scheduled to return in the fall, or if symptoms should worsen. **Salvia 10 Formula** will be continued.



Wei Qi & Immune Support

By John Scott, DOM

The outbreak of the SARS-Co-V2 virus has sparked interest in the general public for immune support. This interest has brought a dramatic increase in the sales of all supplements and botanicals that are known to improve immune function. To many in the West, there seems to be a perception of immune function being something extra or special from other normal body functions. There certainly are things

that challenge our immune system, like stress, refined sugars, alcohol, and lack of healthy sleep. In TCM, the relationship between *wei* qi, yang qi, and yin essence is one of interdependency. We cannot separate immune function from good overall health. Let us review some fundamentals of qi and how it relates to immune function.

First there is the original or *yuan* qi. Each organ has its own qi which expresses itself through the basic constitution of the organs. Digestive or *gu* qi, is produced from the transformative power and function of the spleen. It is part of our acquired, or postnatal qi. Our transformative powers are essential for good health. Cosmic or heavenly qi, which belongs to yang, enters our bodies from the air drawn into the lungs. *Gu* qi is from the earth, which is yin. It is this merging of earthly yin and heavenly yang that forms the qi that circulates in the channels and collaterals.

We also know the three treasures in Chinese medicine are *jing*, qi, and *shen*. *Jing* refers to the essence that is stored in the lower *dantian* originating from the kidney. The qi that circulates through our bodies is the product of the earthly food combining with heavenly qi from air brought into the lungs. *Shen* is considered the spirit that animates us coming from the area of Ren-17 (*Danzhong*) and shining from the eyes. The optimal function and support of these three treasures grants us a long and healthy life while helping us to resist disease from external pathogens.

The well-known scholar, George Soulie de Morant, drawing from the *Neijing*, describes how the *wei* qi/defensive qi flows outside the vessels and meridians to keep the body warm and regulate the opening and closing of the pores. On the exterior it flows between the skin and the flesh to protect from invasion of exogenous pathogens. Insofar as this function is “defensive,” it can be thought to be part of our immune system. However, it is more interconnected than that.

The Systemic Classic of Acupuncture & Moxibustion:
(English translation by Yang and Chase)

Chapter Eleven

The Yellow Emperor asked:

- *How do humans receive qi?*
- *How do yin and yang meet?*
- *What qi is the constructive?*
- *What qi is the defensive?*
- *Where does the defensive meet (the constructive)?*

Qi Bo answered:

- *Humans receive qi from grains.*
- *Grains enter the stomach and qi is transported to the lung.*
- *All five viscera and the six bowels receive the qi.*
- *The clear part is constructive and the turbid is defensive.*
- *The constructive circulates within the vessels, and the defensive circulates outside the vessels.*

According to traditions beginning in the *Nei Jing*:

- The stomach provides the initial separation of pure and turbid; the small intestine further separates and refines the process. *Gu qi* provides the power for this action.
- The fluids are separated into *jin*/thin and *ye*/thick fluids; each has a pure and impure or turbid aspect.
- The pure *jin*/thin fluids ascend to support and moisten the sensory orifices, while the impure or turbid *jin*/thin fluids are moved to the skin and sinews to support the movement of *wei qi*.
- The pure *ye*/thick fluids, being heavier, descend and gather in the kidney to support *jing* (but do not create *jing*). The triple heater mechanism draws the pure *ye* fluids up with the *jing* through the *jia ji* line and distributes the *jing* and pure *ye* directly into the organs via the back *shu* points.
- The impure *ye*/thick fluids are distributed to the curious organs, because these have a role in holding things and maintaining latency.

Essential functions contribute to the transformation of food in the various aspects of qi, with the spleen and stomach being central in transformation. The small and large intestines are central in sorting the pure and the impure. The spleen is considered a yin organ in the *taiyin* level. The stomach and the large intestine are yang organs instrumental in the yang function of transformation. They represent the *yangming* level. The small intestine is the fire element of the *taiyang*.



Clearly, we see that what we call immune function in the west is dependent on various essential qi functions. Those of us that have original qi that is inherently inadequate or weak are starting off at a disadvantage. This disadvantage may adversely affect digestive power and respiratory function. Supporting healthy digestive function will also assist the kidney by relieving some stress, because when an organ is weak, the kidney, as the “mother” of the organs, will pitch in to support. But this support will eventually tax the kidney. Having poor digestive function or poor dietary habits can be a bit like running on our original battery when our added fuel is low or exhausted. Acupuncture is important for regulating the flow of qi and blood and supporting healthy circulation and function, but it is diet and herbal medicine that support and supplement qi and blood. Let us now consider popular Chinese herbal formulas used to support healthy immune function.

[**Note:** For the ingredient percentages of the formulas mentioned in this article, consult the *Clinical Guide to Commonly Used Chinese Herbal Formulas*, available under

Resources on our website or call us for a free hard copy.]

Jade Windscreen Formula (*Yu Ping Feng San*)

The name of this elegant classical formula implies a screen inside a room used to protect against wind.

Ingredients:

Astragalus Root (*Huang Qi*)

Siler, Saposhnikovia Root (*Fang Feng*)

White Atractylodes Rhizome (*Bai Zhu*)

Siler (*fang feng*) is a botanical that releases the exterior and expels wind. It also stabilizes the exterior while not drying the lungs, which need to remain moist in order to govern the qi. It is combined with astragalus (*huang qi*) and white atractylodes (*bai zhu*). Astragalus (*huang qi*) is special for firming up the *wei qi* on the **exterior**. White atractylodes (*bai zhu*) serves to strengthen the spleen qi and rescue it from dampness so that the transformation and transportation functions can be optimized and qi can be produced efficiently from what we eat and drink.

Jade Windscreen is used when there is a deficiency of the exterior with weak *wei*/defensive qi. It is designed to

prevent pathogenic qi from entering the body. However, it will not disperse pathogenic qi that has already penetrated.

This is the most commonly used Chinese herbal formula for strengthening *wei qi*. It is usually taken in the fall before the cold/flu season arrives or in the late summer before fall allergies begin. It can be combined with other herbs when the *wei qi* requires support in conjunction with a more targeted attack.

Astragalus & Ligustrum Formula (*Huang Qi Dong Qing Pian*)

This formula evolved from *fu zheng* therapy research done in modern China. “Fu zheng” means “support the normal or righteous” qi, which helps protect the body from adverse influences. *Fu zheng* therapy originally used tonic or adaptogenic herbs to protect the immune systems of cancer patients from the toxic effects of radiation or chemotherapy. This therapy is used in the treatment of patients who are HIV+ or have AIDS-Related Complex (ARC), AIDS, Chronic Epstein-Barr Virus (CEBV), and patients with other immune deficiency syndromes. The focus of **Astragalus & Ligustrum Formula** is on supplementing the “upright” or “righteous” qi by supporting the spleen and kidney. In addition to the tonic herbs, this formula employs poria (*fu ling*) to drain dampness, and tangerine peel (*chen pi*) to regulate the qi. Tangerine peel (*chen pi*) also helps prevent the bloating and stagnation that can develop when taking tonic herbs. This formula is working on a deeper level than the *wei qi*. In addition to strengthening the *wei qi*, the herbs

in this formula supplement the central qi, nourish blood and kidneys, and support the spleen and stomach. By supporting digestive function, **Astragalus & Ligustrum Formula** allows the body to effectively assimilate substances that support yin, yang, and blood. It can be used long term, but the course should be suspended during periods of acute external invasion. This formula is appropriate to be prescribed in combination with anti-toxin herbs for chronic viral syndromes and long-term microbial challenges. It is balanced to avoid introducing excessive heat, and by supporting spleen function, prevents loose stools. It is especially appropriate for immune compromised patients.

Ingredients:

Astragalus Root (*Huang Qi*)
 Ligustrum, Privet Fruit (*Nu Zhen Zi*)
 Codonopsis (*Dang Shen*)
 White Chinese Peony (*Bai Shao*)
 White Atractylodes Rhizome (*Bai Zhu*)
 Poria, Hoelen, Tuckahoe (*Fu Ling*)
 Scrophularia, Figwort Root (*Xuan Shen*)
 Acanthopanax, Eleuthero Root (*Wu Jia Shen*)
 Northern Schisandra Fruit (*Wu Wei Zi*)
 Tangerine Peel (*Chen Pi*)
 Chinese Licorice Root (*Gan Cao*)
 Ganoderma, Reishi (*Ling Zhi*)
 Epimedium (*Yin Yang Huo*)
 Cassia Bark, Chinese Cinnamon (*Rou Gui*)



Five Mushroom Formula (*Wu Gu Fang*)

Mushrooms are a special life form: fungi—neither animal nor plant. Mushrooms have been used for their healing properties in Asia for thousands of years. In recent

years, scientists in Japan and China have conducted extensive research on the medicinal properties of mushrooms. Western scientists are particularly focused on the polysaccharides (high-molecular-weight complex sugars), more specifically, the beta-glucans and their immune-enhancing qualities. For this formula, five mushrooms were chosen that contain high levels of beta-glucans, and because of two specific properties that are common to all of them. All five of these mushrooms provide hepatic support in cases of hepatitis (chronic or acute), as well as supporting the immune system by helping the body to produce more NK (Natural Killer) cells, which play a major role in the rejection of tumors. The extraction method using both water and alcohol allows for the broadest bioavailable constituent compounds. In addition to the properties mentioned above, these mushrooms have other beneficial functions:

Ingredients and Functions:

Agaricus subrufescens/ Himematsutake (*ji song rong*): eases and promotes digestion, fortifies bones, regulates blood pressure and blood glucose levels.

Trametes versicolor/ Turkey Tail (*yun zhi*): treats infection and/or inflammation of the upper respiratory, urinary, and digestive tracts, clears dampness, reduces phlegm.

Ganoderma lucidum/ Reishi (*ling zhi*): calms the spirit, nourishes qi and blood, stops cough, alleviates wheezing, dispels phlegm, helps to regulate blood glucose levels; It is antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, and anti-hypertensive.

Grifola frondose/ Maitake (*hui shu hua*): antiviral and antibacterial, supports the immune system specifically by preventing helper T-cells from being destroyed, promotes weight loss, regulates blood glucose levels, reduces hyperlipidemia, aids in the treatment of hypertension.

Cordyceps sinensis (*dong chong xia cao*): supports the kidneys and *jing*, supplements yang, augments lung yin, transforms phlegm, stops bleeding, regulates blood glucose levels.

Five Mushroom Formula works on a deeper level than the *wei* qi, by supporting immune function on the blood level.

Zheng Qi Support Formula (*Zheng Qi Fang*)

This is an essential formula for any immune support formula. The ancient statement that “*Zheng* (upright/ righteous) qi stands in opposition to pathogenic qi” clearly indicates that proper care of one’s *zheng* qi is the very definition of health. *Zheng* qi is not identical to *wei* (defensive) qi. *Wei* qi is only one part of *zheng* qi. There are three components that make up our *zheng* qi: yang, *wei* qi, and *jin*/thin fluids. When these three “substances” are in sufficient supply and working harmoniously, pathogenic qi cannot penetrate deeply into our body. In order to produce, maintain and balance these three components, the middle burner needs to be able to efficiently transform our food and drink into qi, we must have adequate yang which can be smoothly transformed into *wei* qi, and our *jin*/thin fluids must be sufficient enough to convey the *wei* qi. This formula effectively and elegantly addresses all these actions while also astringing qi to prevent loss and gently regulating the qi to prevent stagnation or accumulation. **Zheng Qi Support Formula** can be taken as a preventative or for recovery. It provides focused support for *zheng* qi. It does not support digestive function as strongly as **Astragalus & Ligustrum Formula**, but is easily digested and otherwise tolerated.

Ingredients:

Astragalus (*Huang Qi*)
 Chinese Yam (*Shan Yao*)
 Kudzu, Pueraria (*Ge Gen*)
 Chinese Licorice Root (*Gan Cao*)
 Gallnut of Chinese Sumac (*Wu Bei Zi*)
 American Ginseng Root (*Xi Yang Shen*)
 Cordyceps Mycelium (*Dong Chong Xia Cao*)
 Bitter Orange, Aurantium Fruit (*Zhi Ke*)

Chinese Medical Actions

Supports *zheng* qi by supporting yang qi, central qi, *wei* qi and *jin*/thin fluids. Astringes lung qi and regulates qi in chest.

Jade Defense Plus (*Jia Wei Yu Ping Feng San*)

This is an important herbal strategy for immune defense. It is inspired by a Chinese herbal formula used in Hong Kong hospitals during the SARS epidemic and used in China during the SARS-COV-2 pandemic. It is especially useful when little is known about the nature of the pathogen other than it causes heat signs to develop in the areas governed by the lung. The foundation is Jade Windscreen (*Yu Ping Feng San*), which is here augmented with another popular formula, *Yin Qiao San*. *Yu Ping Feng San* provides a base protection from exterior invasion, while the ingredients from the *Yin Qiao San* strategy clear heat and eliminate toxin in order to prevent their transformation into a more severe presentation. This combination has a dual function of boosting *wei qi* defense on the one hand and eliminating warm pathogens and resolving toxin on the other. Because of this, it can be used as a preventative, as a treatment for early-stage onset, or as a strategy for carriers who may be asymptomatic.

Houttuynia (*yu xing cao*) replaces lonicera flower (*jin yin hua*) in this version for several reasons. Besides being more readily available, houttuynia (*yu xing cao*) is not as cold as lonicera flower (*jin yin hua*), yet it still has a strong action to clear heat and resolve toxin. Houttuynia (*yu xing cao*) is particularly indicated in cases of phlegm-heat in the lungs. The action of lonicera flower (*jin yin hua*) is spread out through the lung, stomach, large intestine and skin while houttuynia (*yu xing cao*) focuses its action on the lung. Additionally, houttuynia (*yu xing cao*) strongly disperses phlegm-heat that blocks the lung and prevents swellings in the lung tissue. This formula can be used during early onset of wind-heat viral symptoms, during the full-blown stages when the pattern is “toxic heat attacking the lungs,” or during the recovery phase of wind-heat when the individual no longer feels ill, but there are lingering heat signs in the respiratory tract.

Ingredients:

Astragalus (*Huang Qi*)
 White Atractylodes Rhizome (*Bai Zhu*)
 Siler, Saposhnikovia Root (*Fang Feng*)
 Tangerine Peel (*Chen Pi*)
 Houttuynia (*Yu Xing Cao*)
 Forsythia Fruit (*Lian Qiao*)
 Platycodon Root (*Jie Geng*)
 Phragmites Rhizome (*Lu Gen*)
 Chinese Licorice Root (*Gan Cao*)

Chinese Medical Actions:

Supplements qi to reinforce and stabilize the exterior. Expels wind-heat, resolves toxin and swellings, cools the lung.

Ginseng Endurance Formula (*Ren Shen Pian*)

This formula is designed to enhance athletic performance and improve stamina. This formula is included because the use of botanicals considered “adaptogens” can help the body cope with stress, which will assist in resisting

exogenous pathogens. Most of the herbs in this formula, in addition to their Chinese medical actions, are also classified by modern pharmacology as “adaptogens.” Adaptogens can decrease the pathophysiological effects that physical and emotional stress can have upon the body, thus facilitating the body’s return to homeostasis. Collectively, the substances in this formula increase blood-oxygen availability, increase breathing capacity, increase stamina, reduce the volume of toxic metabolic by-product from the stress to the muscles, and more. Because of the “adaptogenic” property this is an appropriate recovery formula, as long as exogenous pathogenic influences have been resolved.

Ingredients:

Astragalus (*Huang Qi*)
 Eleuthero Root, Acanthopanax (*Wu Jia Shen*)
 Rhodiola (*Hong Jing Tian*)
 Asian Ginseng Root (*Ren Shen*)
 Angelica Root, Dong, Tang Kuei (*Dang Gui*)
 Northern Schisandra Fruit (*Wu Wei Zi*)
 White Atractylodes Rhizome (*Bai Zhu*)
 Ganoderma, Reishi (*Ling Zhi*)
 Poria, Hoelen, Tuckahoe (*Fu Ling*)
 Chinese Licorice Root (*Gan Cao*)
 Cordyceps (*Dong Chong Xia Cao*)

Discussion of Ingredients:

Eleuthero root (*wu jia shen*) is one of the most thoroughly studied of all adaptogenic substances. It can sharpen mental focus, invigorate blood flow and tonify the qi of the spleen and stomach.

Ginseng (*ren shen*), atracylodes (*bai zhu*), and licorice root (*gan cao*) supplement the qi and increase the production of body fluids to help compensate for electrolyte loss.

Schisandra (*wu wei zi*) supports the lung and heart functions and retains the essence.

Rhodiola (*hong jing tian*) invigorates the blood and has been shown to increase arterial oxygen.

Angelica root (*dang gui*) supplements and invigorates the blood.

Reishi (*ling zhi*) is used to nourish and protect the heart.

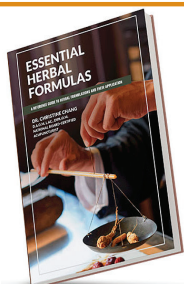
Cordyceps (*dong chong xia cao*) is a famous yang tonic that has been used by Olympic athletes to enhance performance.

Chinese Medical Actions:

Supplements qi, blood, and yang, invigorates blood

In summation, there are a number of considerations when advising your patients and your family on immune support options. In order to use immune support formulas most effectively, it is important to evaluate the constitution and present health needs of the patient and determine which level of support would bring the most benefit.

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THE DELIGHTS AND PERILS OF TRAVEL FOR THE DIET CONSCIOUS (PART I)

By Andrew Stermán

For those who eat with care at home, traveling can pose some interesting questions. “Can I stray from my diet?” “I’m going to Paris, should I really not taste the cheese, the wine, or any desserts?” “At home I avoid wheat, but for heaven’s sake do I need to avoid pasta while in Italy for a week?” “I’m going somewhere where the foods are aggressively spiced, what should I do?” Knowledge of food energetics from the Chinese medicine dietary therapy traditions can help us make sense of all this, whether cooking at a campsite or visiting chef-driven restaurants halfway around the world.

We travel today with a faint yet discernible instinct to move with the seasons, like a magnetic force from ancient memory, to trace our wonder to places unknown, or visit members of tribe and family, in a word, to move from here to there to see what grows. Within our all-too-civilized hearts glow the faintest coals from humanity’s nomadic past. The idea gradually percolates upward, turning our gaze to the morning horizon, until it is loud enough for us to hear: it might be a good time to travel, let’s pack a bag and set out, if only to the crowded local airport and eventually a comfy hotel in a place packed with tourists and easy living.

And, of course, when we do travel, we step away from our own kitchens and polished routines. If we are mainly healthy we can stretch our normal diets without lasting distress, catching up when we return home. That’s the focus of this article (how to travel on restricted diet will be addressed in a future piece.) Chinese medicine’s dietary theory tells us that if we wish to be healthy we must spend at least two hours each day in our kitchen, taking responsibility for our health through real care with our food. Okay, let’s be flexible and reduce that to just one hour daily. That is a good minimum guide. If we make our breakfast in, let’s say, 10-15 minutes that leaves about 45 minutes in the kitchen for one of our other two meals. This truly is the minimum needed to take care of ourselves, with focus but without fuss. This leaves either lunch or dinner for restaurant eating, which should be plenty for entertainment and convenience. Perhaps this is unusual, but my travel preference is to secure a small kitchen in a hotel or BnB, to make a health-supportive breakfast or late meal, as needed. I’ve spent memorable time in Paris, London, Tokyo, Melbourne, Istanbul, around Italy, Spain, Mexico, and many other food capitals with a kitchen, small or large. At first it sounds anti-climactic to miss any opportunity for another

special meal, but having a corner kitchen in your lodging allows us to explore the local food markets with more than just our eyes. Bring things home, taste what’s on offer to those who live there. And for health, my preference is to prepare a basic breakfast and one simple meal from local market ingredients, then have one, more elaborate meal each day in a restaurant. Traveling this way brings us more deeply into the culture, saves on budget, and strongly supports our health.

Travel has a way of opening the mind, clearing cobwebs of calcified assumptions that we didn’t know we suffered with. We walk the streets of a distant place, encounter people inhabiting other ways of being, and we raise our eyebrows and admit with delight that, “This is truly different!”

And this is a healing in itself. Despite the stresses of the travel process, many people notice certain foods that may have been tricky at home no longer cause any problem at all. This “travel bump” offers two principal insights. Those of us traveling from America often find that we feel noticeably better, even right away, with foods that are grown with a much lighter load of modern farm chemicals. As powerful as that is, equally important is to notice that when our minds feel fresh, our digestion improves. We’re in a new place and we have a fresh take on things, inside and out. Chinese medicine has always spoken of the interweaving of digestion and mind. We can feel this truth as we travel.

Returning home, no matter how beautiful the eating has been, I’m always happy to be back in my home kitchen. Good kitchens don’t need to be large or fancy. All we need is a focused place for a cutting board, a pair of good knives (I use a French chef knife and a Chinese cleaver for everything), a refrigerator, sink, and a source of heat. And then, although our skills may trail behind the great chefs whose food we enjoyed while away, we can set about cooking for our personal health.

Once home, ask yourself what dietary health strategy you need for your next 3-5 days of eating. Start with the first meal. Returning from Australia recently, I skipped the last airplane food, knowing that I would more enjoy the first meal back in my own kitchen. Feeling well, deeply tired, and a bit hungry, I cooked a simple settle-the-tummy dinner while the family showered and began to relax. It’s done front to finish in fifteen minutes, uses pantry ingredients, and is as good as it is simple.

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STEAMED WHITE RICE WITH FROZEN PEAS AND DRIED PORCINI

Medium-Grain White Rice	1 cup
Organic Frozen Peas	1 cup
Dried Porcini Mushrooms	½ cup
EV Olive Oil	splash to cook, generous drizzle to serve
Flake Salt	to taste
Fresh-Cracked Black Pepper	to taste

Rinse the rice until the water runs clear. Strain, then steam in 1½ cups water. To steam rice, bring it to a boil, immediately cover and reduce to a simmer. Cook for 12 minutes, turn off heat, do not open lid, do not fluff, do not disturb. Rice, like so much else, requires trust.

While the rice cooks and rests for a few minutes, boil some water in the tea kettle. Cover the dried porcini mushrooms with boiled water in a cook's bowl. They will rehydrate and release wonderfully aromatic liquid.

In a wide pan, heat the frozen peas (a useful “pantry” item for super-quick cooking). Do not add water. Move the peas around the pan as they defrost. In a minute, add just enough of the porcini liquid to half-cover the peas. Use high heat.

If necessary, chop the softened porcini into bites. Dried porcini come in different grades, mostly based on slice sizes. Smaller pieces are much cheaper, and in this case, if the pieces are smaller, you won't even need to use a knife and cutting board, simplifying cleanup.

Add the mushroom pieces to the peas, splash with a nice-enough olive oil, a pinch of salt and a crack of pepper. Serve in bowls over a generous scoop of rice. Eat until only two-thirds full to avoid food stagnation.

Jet lag occurs as the natural rhythms of digestion and sleep become misaligned with the rhythms of day and night due to modern, rapid travel. Dehydration, food stagnation, and exhaustion are common after any long flight, for example, flying from New York to Santiago, Chile, which share one time zone. Assess your status without preconceived ideas. Sometimes we arrive fresh, other times we have repair to do with strategic eating.

Although much maligned in today's trendy diet advice, grains are the foods that nurture the often-overtaxed organs of digestion (stomach, pancreas, spleen, small intestine), and **steamed rice** is the most harmonious of the grains. It nourishes fluids and soothes the belly. **Peas** are uplifting for gallbladder and liver, good to eat and almost as easy to digest. They bring protein and fiber to balance

to the supreme ease of digestion that steamed white rice provides. **Mushrooms** nourish kidney yin and have a gentle clearing energy. Choose any mushroom you like, or omit them. Dried porcini are a wonderful pantry item that make even the simplest meal beautiful eating. **Olive oil** also works with liver and gallbladder energetics, enriching a meal while clearing stagnation (and helping to clear throat obstruction as well). Here's how to use olive oil: always use extra virgin oil, buy a good one for cooking, and a freshly pressed excellent oil for finishing taste. Then, use them generously, offering abundance, just shy of being wasteful. **Salt** is a necessary nutrient and energetically anchors a meal. Too much can be a problem, but too much comes not from home cooking but from consuming industry foods. Use good, flaky salt to bring rhythm into appetite. A crack of **black pepper** stimulates digestion, if not overly used. This simple meal addresses jet lag or fatigue from long travel.

Perhaps you've returned from travel and feel sluggish in the bowels. In that case, your food strategy is to hydrate, moisten with oils, and to restore lung and stomach qi descension. Return to the whole grains and vegetables that you may not have found in restaurant eating. For three to five days, focus on **steamed brown rice, small beans, steamed kale or broccoli**, with **carrots** to accentuate the descension aspect—**olive oil, sea salt**.

Whole grain rice includes more protein, oils, and fiber. It's a better choice if bowels are sluggish, while white rice is a better choice if digestion is tired or “frayed”. Black or red rice are also whole grains. If you don't like brown rice, it's very likely you haven't yet purchased good quality grain and that you haven't yet cooked it well. It is amazingly good eating when fresh and well-cooked. **Small beans** are the easiest of the beans to digest and include lentils, mung varieties, adzuki beans, and any other that can be cooked without pre-soaking (soaking is optional, and always makes beans even easier to digest). **Medium-size beans** are next easiest, including chickpeas, black beans, and black-eyed peas.

For **snacks**, a half-handful of **almonds** and **figs** will support the clearing downward strategy. Breakfast can be **steel-cut oats** with **sliced almonds** or **chopped walnuts, cinnamon**, and a small spoon of **honey**.

Or, maybe you have over-indulged in wine, beer, or spirits and would benefit from meals that support liver/gallbladder restoration. Small strategic shifts will do the job and keep cooking simple. Have steamed **Brussels sprouts** with sprouted rice and germinated small beans.

Sprouts clear damp-heat in gallbladder/liver, a common scenario for those who consume alcoholic drinks (trim the tail of the sprouts, cut them in half, steam in shallow water until just tender, do not overcook.) Include bean sprouts such as the widely available mung bean sprouts (warm the sprouts in a pan or in soup to prevent their cold energetics from damaging digestive warmth.) Germinated brown rice has been allowed to begin sprouting before being dried and bagged. This rice cooks quickly and is delicious as well as uplifting during digestion. Germinated rice, lentils, and azuki beans are also available in good markets. Dried and packaged, germinated rice and beans keep very well in the pantry or cupboard, ready for quick and easy meals of real quality and energetic precision.

Or perhaps you are simply exhausted from travel, or just depleted from insufficient rest and repose day to day at home. Your cooking strategy can be *restore and recharge*. First, sleep as much as you need, there is no substitute. Then, hydrate steadily through sipping water and having wet foods including soups, stews, and congee. Most people consume too much animal food when traveling (and perhaps when home). Overdoing animal food has a way of “whipping the kidneys”, of overstimulating us. This is why the recommendations here focus on simple, vegetarian meals. Although each meal contributes, restoration at the kidney level is a long process, classically said to require one hundred days of rest, appropriate diet, and meditation. In today’s world, a better estimation is about nine months. A sample dinner for the process of restoring and recharging is **Black-eyed Peas with organic corn polenta and steamed greens**.

Black-eyed peas survive and grow through drought, flood, or neglect; we internalize some of their toughness when we eat them. Sort and wash, then soak beans overnight. To cook, discard the soaking water, then bring the beans to a gentle boil in unsalted water until medium-tender, about an hour. Salt after desired tenderness is reached. Once cooked, beans are very flexible. They can be added to greens and tossed with simple vinaigrette: whisk together ½ cup EV olive oil, 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar, ½ teaspoon Dijon mustard, and a warm-hearted pinch of sea salt. They can be mashed with thyme, oregano, and olive oil. Or you can make a simple sauce for the black-eyed peas by stirring softened butter with tamari into their warm cooking water.

Polenta supports digestion and kidney essence; it is a deeply restorative food. Serve polenta with a rich supply of butter or good olive oil, pinch of salt and crack of pepper.

And, of course, a simple thing everyone benefits from is having **leafy greens** every day, in each meal. Alternate between kale types, bok choy varieties, broccoli-cauliflower-cabbages, and the green beans. Support good markets, good farmers, and your own health.

If no travels are in your near future, these strategies can be used just as effectively to maintain simple, healthy, and affordable eating. Even when home, we are traveling, evolving, becoming more and more who we really are, and this is best done with conscious cooking and, of course, really delicious eating.

Here is another pantry recipe that can be made without taking time to shop for fresh food. Whenever I do shop, I am covering two bases: what fresh foods do we need for the next meal (or for a few days), and also I’m always thinking what cupboard or pantry supplies do we need, such as rice, noodles, dried beans, dried mushrooms, seaweeds, canned goods, oils, spices, and some frozen vegetables. In between are fresh foods that last longer than meat or broccoli, which are things like butter, sweet potatoes, and cabbage. Cooking for health relies upon the quality of our ingredients, which in turn relies on honest farms and good markets. With a bit of planning for those days when returning from travel or unable to make a fresh food shopping trip, we can eat well without exceeding our budget by keeping cupboards well-stocked and a few things in our freezer.

WAKAME SOUP

Scallions	2, trimmed and thinly sliced
Dried Black Mushrooms	2-3, soaked, thinly sliced
Red Chinese Dates (<i>da zao</i>)	6
Water	3 cups
Soy Sauce	1 teaspoon (traditionally brewed tamari or soy sauce)
Sea Salt	to taste
Fresh Ginger	1 thin slice, slivered
Wakame	2 Tablespoons (dried, ready to use type)
Sesame Seeds	1 Tablespoon
Toasted Sesame Oil	1 teaspoon, more as desired

Soak the dried mushrooms in hot water in a bowl. After they soften (10-20 minutes), remove, trim and discard the stems, then slice the mushrooms into thick or thin pieces. Fresh shiitake mushrooms can be used in place of dried.

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In a pot, bring the water to a boil. Add the mushrooms (with some of their soaking water, leaving any dust in the bottom of the mushroom soaking bowl), add the dried red dates (available in an Asian market or online).

Add the dried wakame directly to the soup pot (some prefer to rehydrate wakame in a bowl of cool water to reduce its ocean influence, but I prefer to retain those notes). Add the splash of true soy sauce (the difference between properly brewed and factory-induced soy sauce is dramatic for taste and health influence). Add the scallions.

The soup is ready as soon as it is hot, only two minutes after the water first boils. Serve in bowls, adding a splash of toasted sesame oil to each bowl and a pinch of sesame seeds (toasting them if desired).

Most of us would benefit from the easy hydration offered by wakame soup. **Ginger** and **scallion** work well together to warm digestion, clear phlegm, and distribute fluids. The **red dates** are wonderful for soothing and energizing our digestive organs. Good **soy sauce** is a fermented product, helpful for gallbladder and more. **Wakame** supplies ocean nutrients, including plenty of iodine which is protective for thyroid, and in turn, supportive for digestion and metabolism. The soup is translucent and slightly salty, perfect for rehydrating and resetting digestion. The **toasted sesame** oil supports kidney qi while providing lipid nutrition, the good oils. **Dried mushrooms**, as mentioned above, also nourish kidney essence, bringing a sense of renewal. We may say, "I'm burnt out, I'm wasted, I need to recoup and renew!" Mushrooms, in their way, represent this, as if saying, "Show us an old log, something fallen, we'll grow on it!" Even in our jet lagged or exhausted state, we are doing noticeably better than the average fallen log, and so, happily, we eat mushrooms in our soup rather than vice versa. We welcome their dietary influence, as they add mysterious support through deep flavors. For the cook, dried mushrooms add color and aroma to an easy broth. All together, this soup is quick to make, beautiful to eat, and deeply restorative.

Andrew Sterman is the author of Welcoming Food, Diet as Medicine for the Home Cook and Other Healers. The two-volume Welcoming Food offers a unique entry into understanding the energetics of food, explains how foods work in common sense language, and provides easy-to-follow recipes for everyday eating. Andrew teaches food energetics classes and sees private clients for dietary therapy and medical qigong in New York City and online. He has studied deeply in holistic cooking, meditation, and qigong, and for over twenty years has been a student of Daoist Master Jeffrey Yuen in herbal medicine, qigong, and dietary therapy from the classical Chinese medicine tradition.

Visit Andrew at andrewsterman.com/food

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