

HBR Materia Medica Review Class 1

Robert Hayden, MSOM

Herbs that Release the Exterior

- Used for Wind-Cold (Taiyang stage), or Wind-Heat (Wei level) invading Exterior.
- Typically acute, but may also use for Exterior components of chronic disease.
- Primarily act by diaphoresis (promote sweating).
- Acrid tastes scatter and disperse; relatively light herbs "float" to the surface.
- Warm Acrid herbs generally either enter LU & UB, or LU & ST or SP.
 - LU - regulating the WEI Qi, governs Exterior.
 - UB - target head/neck
 - ST/SP - digestive upsets w/ External Evils.
- Cool Acrid herbs enter LU & LR.
 - LR - red, itchy eyes; Wind-Heat + Blood Heat rashes (LR stores Blood).

Herbs that clear Heat

- Function to clear interior heat, so Cool --> very Cold
- Five subcategories:
 1. Drain Fire - Qi-level Heat / Yangming Channel Heat, subcategory of brighten eyes
 - Cold & Sweet - Generate fluids, relieve thirst in fevers, LU, ST
 - Cold & Bitter - Clear fire from HT, LR
 2. Cool Blood -- tx Ying / Blood Heat, Bleeding, skin, mental sx d/t Blood Heat
 - Cold, bitter, sweet, salty; LR, HT (associated w/Blood).
 - Blood Heat -- heat damages Blood, so many nourish Blood/Yin.
 3. Clear Damp Heat - Damp Heat
 - Bitter and cold, antibiotic action
 4. Relieve Toxin - Fire toxin
 - Mostly bitter, anti-viral and anti-bacterial actions
 5. Clear Summer Heat.
 - Lighter quality, food-like, sweet, tx digestive function, fluids

Purging herbs

- All enter LI
- Three categories:

Attacking - generally bitter and cold, strongly stimulate intestinal peristalsis.

Similar to Drain Fire / Clear Damp Heat herbs + LI purge.

Used in Interior-Excess-Heat with abdominal stagnation.

Constipation most common, may also use in Interior-Excess-Heat diarrhea.

Can use for Interior-Excess-Cold if combined with acrid hot herbs.

Moistening - lubricate intestines, relatively mild, high oil content.

Use for constipation due to Intestinal Dryness, Yin- Blood Deficiency

Cathartics - pull water into bowel, like "flushing a toilet", very violent action.

Used for intestinal blockage, severe edema / ascites in chest or abdomen.

Herbs for draining Dampness

- Most have diuretic action.
- Tx impaired fluid metabolism
- SP, LU, KD regulate fluid distribution; UB, SI associated with urination.
- All neutral -> cold
- Sweet/bland - Milder action, seep dampness, safer for deficiency
- Bitter - Clear damp heat, Lin syndrome, HT fire ->SI, stronger action

Herbs for expelling Wind Dampness

- Use for Wind-Cold-Damp Bi pain, acute or chronic
- Acrid/bitter, may be warm, neutral or cold
- Most enter LR (sinews); also K (bones) or SP (flesh); some have tonic properties

HBR Materia Medica Review Class 2

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Herbs to transform Phlegm and relieve cough

- Primarily used for Phlegm collecting in the Lungs (cough), may also include Phlegm in Stomach (nausea, vomiting), Heart (irritability, mania) and channels (lumps).
- Phlegm frequently result of Spleen disharmony, so many Phlegm transforming herbs also enter Spleen.
- Two subcategories of Phlegm: Phlegm-Heat and Phlegm-Cold.
 - Phlegm-Heat: Cold and sweet (moisten), bitter (clear heat) or salty (soften)
 - Phlegm-Cold: Warm and acrid (scatter and disperse)
- A third subcategory specifically focuses on relieving cough; mostly bitter.

Aromatic herbs for transforming Dampness

- Treat turbid dampness accumulated in middle jiao: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea.
- Most enter SP/ST
- Usually symptoms of ST qi stagnation; many herbs in this category also move qi
- Warm, Acrid (treat stagnation), Aromatic (penetrate turbidity and "awaken" SP)
- Tend to be VERY drying, inappropriate for Yin-Blood deficiency

Herbs for relieving Food Stagnation

- Used for Food Stagnation patterns; mild, usually made of food substances
- Neutral or slightly warm or cool; sweet or acrid.

Herbs for regulating Qi

- Primarily treat Stagnant LR (hypochondriac, PMS) or ST (epigastric, digestive) Qi; some also enter LU, SP.
- Mostly warm & acrid, some also bitter; very drying/scattering, caution in deficiency.

Herbs for regulating Blood

- Two major subcategories: Stop Bleeding and Invigorate Blood.
- Most enter LR, many also enter SP, HT
- Stop Bleeding herbs treat three different pathologies:
 - Blood heat or Damp heat: Cold, bitter, enters LR, also SP, LU, LI, ST
 - Deficiency cold: Warm, bitter, acrid, astringent: Enter LR, SP
 - Blood stasis: Warm, acrid, enters LR
- Invigorate Blood:
 - May be warm, cold, or neutral; bitter or acrid; enter LR, HT, SP
 - Strength ranges from harmonizing to invigorating to breaking blood

Herbs for warming the Interior

- Used for interior cold stagnation; can occur with (but is different from) Yang deficiency
- Hot, acrid, scatters cold, acts quickly where Yang deficiency herbs take time
- Most enter SP, ST, KD
- Very warming and drying, some toxic, caution in yin deficiency or pregnancy

HBR Materia Medica Review Class 3

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Tonic herbs

Tend to be sweet, different characteristics depending on type of deficiency present:

Qi tonics

- generally sweet and slightly warm, enter the SP and LU.

Yang tonics

- warm, sweet, some acrid; almost always combined with Qi and/or Yin tonics.

- 3 subtypes:

1) enters KD & SP: diarrhea, fatigue, incontinence.

2) enters KD & LR: sinew & bone weakness / injury, fertility, libido

3) enters KD & LU: KD not grasping Qi

Blood tonics

- tend to be either warm or neutral and sweet; enter LR (stores Blood)

Yin tonics

- tend to be cool or cold; sweet and/or bitter tastes.

- 2 subtypes:

1) enters LU & ST; post-febrile Yin damage; cough, nausea.

2) enters LR & KD; deeper Yin damage; flushing, night sweats, 5-heart, etc.

Astringent herbs

- includes sour (mostly warm-moistening) and astringent (mostly cooling-drying) herbs

- LU, LI, SP, KD most frequently require astringing.

Spirit-calming herbs

This category is further subdivided into herbs that

1) settle and calm the Spirit

- primarily cool/cold, salty or sweet minerals and sea shells; potent sedative effect.
- includes toxic heavy metals.

2) nourish HT and calm the Spirit.

- primarily neutral and sweet; tonify HT Yin, HT Blood, and LR Yin.

Herbs for opening the Orifices

- primarily used for stroke/CNS collapse with coma or imminent coma.
- must differentiate between Cold-type or Heat-type.
- not for Yang Collapse; aromatic and scattering, can easily drain the body's Qi.

Herbs for extinguishing Internal Wind

- treat tremors, paralysis, convulsions, muscle twitches, and dizziness
- tend to be neutral to cold, salty and sweet; enter LR

Herbs for expelling Parasites

- can be warm, neutral or cold; may be bitter or toxic; enter SP, ST, LI