

**Herbs that Calm Shen (Spirit)**  
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**Outline**

- I. 3 Treasures
- II. 5 Entities (Spiritual-Mental Aspects)
- III. Emotions & their Effects on Qi
- IV. Herbal Categories
- V. Patterns & Formulas

**I. The Three Treasures**

Represent three different states of condensation of Qi:

**Jing**- the most dense. The foundation of our body and the root of the mind.

**Qi**- rarified. Vital life force energy

**Shen**- most subtle. Shen is understood to be an expression of Mind, Spirit, Consciousness, Soul, Energy, God. An extension of Heaven.

The state of our Shen depends on the vitality of our Jing & Qi, and vice versa.

**II. Five Entities**

There are 5 mental-spiritual aspects of humanity that reside within us. They are commonly associated with 5 Elements.

Fire- **Shen** is our mind, consciousness, psyche. Shen is responsible for thinking, consciousness, insight, memory, emotions, sleep, our 4 senses, our sense of self.

Earth- **Yi** is our intellect, intention. Yi assists Shen in applied thinking, memorizing, studying, generating ideas.

Metal- **Po** is our corporeal soul. Po is responsible for movement, balance, coordination. Po feels emotions on a physical level- heart rate increase, crying, shaking. All emotions affect Po.

Water- **Zhi** is our willpower, determination, enthusiasm, motivation. Zhi assists Shen in storing data and past events, long term memory.

Wood- **Hun** is our ethereal soul. Hun assists Shen in mental activities. Shen is rational thinking, Hun is intuition, inspiration and the ability to relate to others.

**III. Emotions & Effects on Qi**

There are 5 main emotions that effect on Qi and Shen

**Anger** makes Qi rise, resulting in Rebellious Qi

**Grief, Sadness** dissolves Qi, resulting in Qi deficiency

**Overstimulation (Joy)** slows Qi down, resulting in Qi deficiency

**Shock/Fright** scatters Qi, resulting in Qi deficiency

**Fear** makes Qi descend, resulting in Qi deficiency

**Worry, Pensiveness** knots Qi, resulting in Qi stagnation

The most common outcome is Qi stagnation from either deficiency or excess. The health of our Shen depends on the vitality of our Qi and Jing (& vice versa).

#### **IV. Herbal Categories**

Each person is unique, so herbs from any category could be used in formulas for all disturbances of the Shen. For this class, we will cover herbs in the Calm Shen categories as well as Herbs that Regulate Qi.

##### **1. Herbs that Calm Shen**

Commonly broken down into 2 subcategories;

**Calm Shen, Nourish Heart and Calm Shen, Anchor Yang**

##### **He Huan Pi (*Albizzia julibrissin*)**

**Nature-** Sweet, neutral

**Enters-** Heart, Liver

**Functions-** Calms Shen and relieves emotional constraint; Invigorates Blood & reduces swelling

**Indications-** Anxiety, Insomnia (from deficiency), Constrained emotions, Trauma, Fractures

**Pharmalogical Effects-** CNS suppressant; Uterine stimulant

**Dosage-** 6-15 grams

##### **Yuan Zhi (*Polygala tenuifolia*) "Profound Will"**

**Nature-** Bitter, spicy, sl. warm

**Enters-** Heart, Lung

**Functions-** Calms Shen and pacifies the Heart; Expels phlegm & clears the orifices; Expels phlegm from the Lung; Reduces abscesses & swellings

**Indications-** Reduces Heart Qi stagnation from brooding pent up emotions, breast abscesses, sores

**Pharmacological Effects-** Expectorant; CNS suppressant; Diuretic; Antibiotic; Uterine stimulant

**C/I-** Gastritis, Ulcers; those with heat symptoms or hot phlegm

**Dosage-** 3-9 grams

**Herb-Drug Interaction-** Ethanol, ameliorates the impairment effect of ethanol on learning and memory processes. Diuretics, may lead to increased urination

##### **Suan Zao Ren (*Zizyphus spinosa*)**

**Nature-** Sweet, sour, neutral, Astringent

**Enters-** Heart, Liver

**Functions-** Nourishes Heart, Calms Spirit; Astringes sweat

**Indications-** Heart/Liver Yin & Blood Deficiency causing shen disturbance- insomnia, palpitations, bad temper, night sweats, dry mouth; Qi and/or Yin Deficiency causing pontaneous or night sweats

**Pharmacological Effects-** Sedative, hypnotic; Cardiovascular tonic; Uterine stimulant; Analgesic; Antipyretic

**C/I-** Excess conditions or diarrhea; insomnia caused by heat or phlegm; caution in pregnancy as it can stimulate uterine contractions

**Dosage-** 6-18 grams

**Herb-Drug Interactions-** Sedatives- potentiates sedative effects of barbiturates, reverses stimulating effects of caffeine

### **Hu Po (*Succinum*)**

**Nature-** Sweet, neutral

**Enters-** Urinary Bladder, Heart, Liver

**Functions-** Sedates & Calms Shen, Arrests tremors; Promotes urination; Invigorates Blood and Dissipates Stasis; Reduces swelling, promotes healing

**Indications-** Forgetfulness, Epilepsy, Childhood Convulsions; Lin zheng- Painful Urination, retention or stones; Fibroids, palpitations, angina; use topically on non healing ulcers and sores

**Pharmacological Effects-** CNS suppressant

**C/I-** yin xu heat or frequent urination; may cause drowsiness and sedation

**Dosage-** 1-3 grams- do not process with fire and heat; take as an elixir; wear as amulet

**Herb-Drug Interaction-** Sedatives, may potentiate the effect of barbiturate

### **Ci Shi (*Magnetitum*) “magnetic stone”**

**Nature-** Spicy, salty, cold

**Enters-** Liver, Heart, Kidney

**Functions-** Settles & tranquilizes Shen, Pacifies Liver & anchors Yang, Aids Kidneys in grasping Qi; Improves hearing, Brightens eyes

**Indications-** Liver Yang Rising- headache, dizziness, hypertension, epilepsy, tinnitus, blurred vision, irritability; Chronic asthma, wheezing

**C/I-** Spleen Qi Deficiency; difficult to digest in powder form so not for long term use

**Dosage-** 9-30 grams, as an elixir

## **2. Herbs that Regulate Qi**

### **Chen Pi (*Citrus reticulata*)**

**Nature-** Spicy, bitter, warm, Aromatic

**Enters-** Lung, Spleen, Stomach

**Functions-** Regulates Qi, Improves transformative function of the Spleen; Dries dampness & transforms phlegm; Relieves cough and relaxes the diaphragm

**Indications-** Indigestion, Vomiting, Distention and fullness due to Food stagnation; Stuck thinking due to poor digestion; Cough, dyspnea from phlegm stagnation

**Pharmacological Effects-** Gastrointestinal; Anti-asthmatic; Anti-inflammatory; Cardiovascular

**C/I-** fluid deficiencies; excess heat in the interior; cough due to qi or yin xu

**Dosage-** 3-9 grams

**Tan Xiang (*Santalum album*)**

**Nature-** Spicy, warm, Aromatic

**Enters-** Spleen, Stomach, Lung

**Functions-** Regulates qi, harmonizes middle jiao; Disperses cold, relieves pain

**Indications-** Abdominal pain, vomiting clear fluids; Coronary Heart Disease, Chest pain, "Heart" pain, Depression

**C/I-** yin xu heat; vomiting due to heat

**Dosage-** 1-3 grams internally; burn as incense

**Mu Xiang (*Saussurea vladimirae*) “fragrant wood”**

**Nature-** Spicy, bitter, warm

**Enters-** GB, LI, Spleen, Stomach

**Functions-** Promotes movement of Qi, Alleviates pain, Strengthens Spleen; Regulates qi and prevents stagnation; Dispels damp-heat, harmonizes Liver and Spleen

**Indications-** Tight diaphragm, Food stagnation, indigestion, fullness, bloating, tenesmus; Liver qi stagnation- pain and distention in hypochondriac region, bitter taste in mouth, jaundice if severe

**Pharmacological Effects-** Respiratory; Cardiovascular; Antibiotic; Effects on smooth muscles

**C/I-** yin xu, fluid deficiency, excess fire

**Dosage-** 3-10 grams

**Xiang Fu (*Cyperus rotundus*) “aromatic appendage”**

**Nature-** Spicy, bitter, sweet, neutral

**Enters-** Liver, San Jiao

**Functions-** Circulates Qi, Resolves constrained Liver Qi; Regulates menstruation & Alleviates pain

**Indications-** Hypochondriac pain, Dysmenorrhea, PMS, chest congestion, frequent sighing; Irregular menstruation, dysmenorrhea, breast tenderness

**Pharmacological Effects-** Sedative; Uterine relaxant; Analgesic; Antipyretic; Cardiovascular; Antibiotic

**C/I-** yin xu w/ heat in the blood; qi xu w/ absence of stagnation

**Dosage-** 3-12 grams

**V. Patterns & Formulas****1. Heart Yin & Qi Xu w/ Liver Qi Stagnation**

**Clinical Manifestations-** Zang Zao (restless organ), absent-mindedness depression, anxiety, worry, lack of emotional control, crying spells, abnormal behavior or speech, insomnia, low energy, frequent yawning

**Tongue-** red tongue body, scanty coating

**Pulse-** weak, fine

**Clinical Applications-** Hysteria, neurosis, neurasthenia, schizophrenia, autonomic nervous system disorders, insomnia, sleep walking, night-crying in infants, uterine cramping, menopause

**Treatment Principle-** Nourish Heart Yin & Qi, Calm Shen, Harmonize Middle Jiao, Tonify Spleen Qi

**Gan Mai Da Zao Tang (Licorice, Wheat & Jujube Decoction)**

Gan Cao ( <i>Glycyrrhiza uralensis</i> )	9 grams
Fu Xiao Mai ( <i>Triticum aestivum levis</i> )	9-15 grams
Da Zao ( <i>Zizyphus jujuba</i> )	5-10 pieces

**Modifications-**

With irritability and thirst, add Men Dong and Wu Wei Zi

With palpitations and fear, add Huang Qi and Ren Shen

With dizziness from blood xu, add Dang Gui and Suan Zao Ren

Source text preparation is to prepare ingredients as a decoction using 6 cups of water and reduce liquid to 3 cups. Take the warm, strained decoction in 3 equal doses daily.

**2. Phlegm Obstruction of the Heart & Gallbladder/ Phlegm Fire Harass Heart/Disharmony of GB & Stomach**

**Clinical Manifestations-** Anxiety, depression, insomnia, excess dreaming, phlegm in throat, palpitations, chest oppression, slight mania, dizziness, bitter taste in the mouth, nausea

**Tongue-** red tongue, (swollen) with sticky yellow coat

**Pulse-** slippery, wiry

**Clinical Applications-** Meniere's syndrome, psychiatric disorders like schizophrenia and bipolar, melancholia, nephropathy, diabetes mellitus & its micro-vascular complications, cardiovascular disorders, organophosphate poisoning

**Treatment Principle:** Regulate Qi, Dissolve Phlegm, Clear Heat in GB, Harmonize GB & Stomach

**C/I-** Insomnia due to Heart xu, palpitations caused by Blood xu, dizziness caused by Yin xu, nausea caused by Stomach cold

**Wen Dan Tang (Warm the Gallbladder Decoction)**

Zhu Ru ( <i>Bambusa tuldoidea</i> )	6 grams
Zhi Shi ( <i>Citrus aurantium</i> )	6 grams
Ban Xia ( <i>Pinellia ternata</i> )	6 grams
Chen Pi ( <i>Citrus reticulata</i> )	9 grams
Fu Ling ( <i>Poria cocos</i> )	4.5 grams
Gan Cao ( <i>Glycyrrhiza uralensis</i> )	3 grams
Da Zao ( <i>Zizyphus jujuba</i> )	3-4 pieces

**Modifications-**

With dry mouth & throat, remove Ban Xia and add Wu Wei Zi, Men Dong

With irritability and bitter taste in mouth, add Huang Lian

With dizziness or vertigo, add Ju Hua and Huang Qin

Source text preparation is to grind ingredients (except Da Zao) into a powder. Cook 12 grams of the powder with 5 slices of Sheng Jiang and 1 piece Da Zao in 1.5 large bowls of water until the liquid is reduced to 70%. Take the strained decoction before meals.

**3. Lung Qi Stagnation & Qi Deficiency**

**Clinical Manifestations-** Mei he qi (plum pit qi), sensation of something stuck in throat, difficulty swallowing, chest oppression and fullness

**Tongue-** possibly puffy,

**Pulse-** tight, slippery, small

**Clinical Applications-** Globus hystericus, swallowing disorder, hysteria, nervousness, panic disorder, enteritis, chronic laryngitis, sleep apnea w/ hypopnea, esophageal spasms

**Treatment Principle-** Activate Qi, Disperse Stagnation; Descends rebellious qi; Dissolves phlegm

**C/I-** yin xu w/ red checks, red tongue body without coat; internal heat due to qi stagnation

**Ban Xia Huo Po Tang (Pinellia & Magnolia Decoction)**

Ban Xia (*Pinellia ternata*) 9-12 grams

Hou Po (*Magnolia officinalis*) 9 grams

Zi Su Ye (*Perilla frutescens*) 6 grams

Fu Ling (*Poria cocos*) 12 grams

Sheng Jiang (*Zingiber officinale*) 15 grams

**Modifications-**

With more phlegm and saliva, add Chen Pi and Gan Cao

With palpitations and insomnia, add Gan Mai Da Zao Tang

With severe qi stagnation, add Xiang Fu and Yu Jin

Source text preparation is to cook ingredients in 7 cups of water, reduce to 4 cups. Take the warm, strained decoction in 4 equal doses, three times during the day and one time at night.