
Class 5: Blood Tonics

Fayi Wu

Herbs Tonifying Blood

- Definition: These are the herbs with the function of nourishing blood and taking blood deficiency as the main indication.
- Manifestations of Blood Deficiency: Sallow complexion, pale lips and nails, dizziness, vertigo, palpitation, delayed menstruation with small amount and light-color blood or even amenorrhea.
- Compatibility:
 - With yin tonics for accompanying yin deficiency
 - Many herbs can both tonify blood and yin
 - Often used with qi tonics to promote generation of blood

Herbs

- Radix Rehmanniae Preparatae (Shu di huang) MM: pp 742-744
- Radix Rehmanniae (Sheng di huang) MM: pp 120-123
- Radix Angelicae Sinensis (Dang gui) MM: pp 748-752
- Radix Ligustici (Chuan xiong) MM: pp 599-602
- Radix Paeoniae Albae (Bai shao) MM: pp 752-755
- Radix Paeoniae Rubra (Chi shao) MM: pp 622-624
- Semen Persicae (Tao ren) MM: pp 624-627
- Flos Carthami (Hong hua) MM: pp 627-629
- Colla Corii Asini Gelatin (E jiao) MM: pp 756-758
- Folium Artemisiae Vulgaris (Ai ye) MM: pp 594-596
- Rhizoma Alismatis (Ze xie) MM: pp 272-274



Raw

processed

Shu Di Huang (Prepared Rehmanniae)

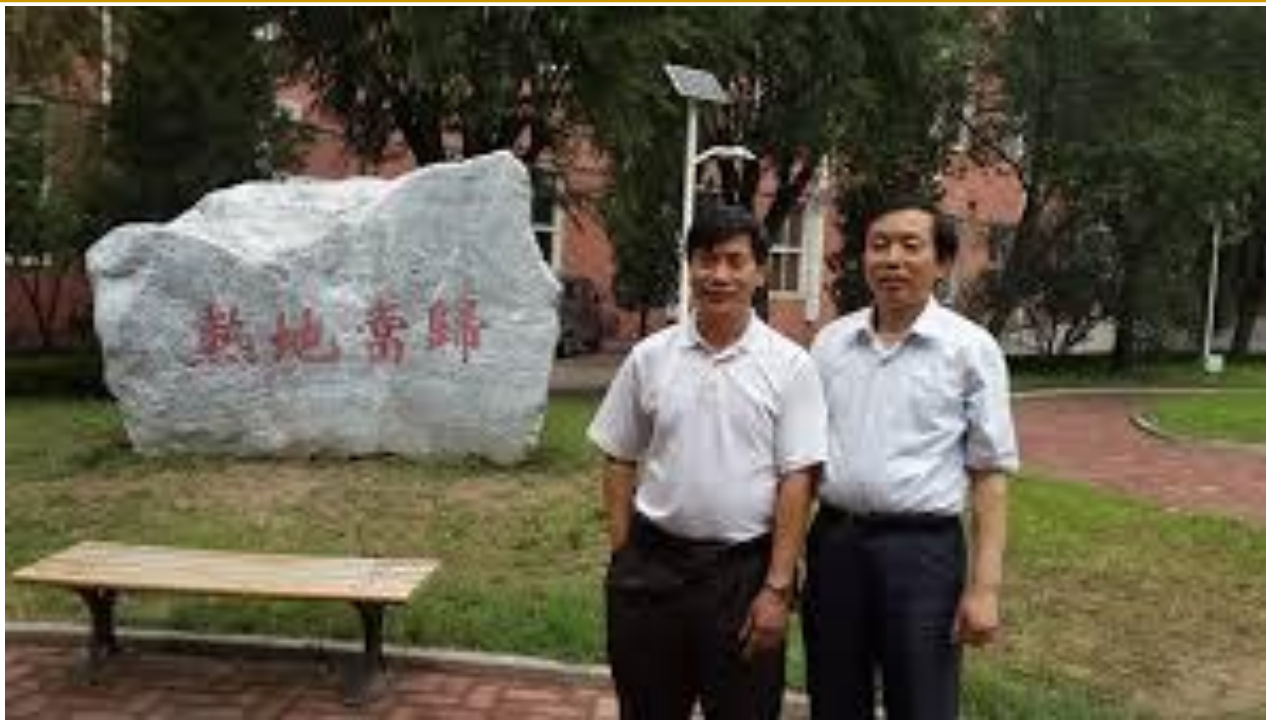
- **Categories:** herbs that tonify blood
- **Taste and Property:** Sweet, slightly warm
- **Meridian Tropism:** Liver and kidney
- **Actions:** Tonify blood, nourish yin, supplement essence and marrow
- **Applications:**
 - Blood deficiency marked by sallow complexion, dizziness, palpitation, insomnia, irregular menstruation and metrorrhagia, i.e. Si Wu Tang
 - Kidney yin deficiency marked by night sweating, tidal fever, emission and diabetes, used as a main herb for tonifying yin, i.e. Liu Wei Di Huang Wan
 - Deficiency of both essence and blood marked by soreness and weakness in the lower back and knees, dizziness, vertigo, tinnitus, deafness and early graying of hair can all be treated with this herb
- **Dosage:** 10-30g. Often used with herbs strengthening the function of the spleen such as Chen Pi and Sha Ren
- **Attention:** This herb is sticky and greasy and impair the digestion, so it is not applicable for patients with stagnation of qi, much phlegm, fullness in the abdomen or poor appetite and loose stool.

Sheng di huang (Radix Rehmanniae)

- **Categories:** herbs that cool the blood
- **Taste and Property:** Sweet, bitter, cold
- **Meridian Tropism:** Heart, Liver and kidney
- **Actions:** clears heat, cools the blood, enriches yin.
- **Applications:**
 - For all warm-heat pathogen diseases where heat enters the nutritive level causing very high fever, thirst, and a scarlet tongue, i.e. Qing Ying tang
 - For yin deficiency with heat signs: dry mouth, continuous low grade fever, and constipation. i.e. Qing Hao Bie Jia Tang
- **Dosage:** 9-15g

Dang Gui (Radix Angelicae)

- **Categories:** herbs that tonify blood
- **Taste and Property:** Sweet, pungent and warm
- **Meridian Tropism:** Liver, heart and spleen
- **Actions:** Tonify blood, activate blood flow, relieve pain and moisten intestine
- **Application:**
 - Blood deficiency: Applicable to various kinds of blood deficiency, often used together with qi tonics, such as Dang Gui Bu Xue Tang
 - Irregular menstruation, dysmenorrhea or amenorrhea: Being able to tonify blood, move blood and relieve pain, this herb serves as an important herb for menstrual disorders, i.e. Si Wu Tang
 - Abdominal pain due to yang deficiency, pain due to stagnation of blood, traumatic injury and arthralgia: i.e. Dang Gui Sheng Jiang Yang Rou Tang
 - Carbuncles: This herb can move blood, tonify blood, relieve pain, drain pus and promote regeneration of new tissues, serving as a common herb for TCM surgery, i.e. Xian Fang Huo Ming Yin
 - Constipation due to blood deficiency
- **Dosage:** 5-15g



Chuan xiong (Ligusticum root)



- **Categories:** herbs that invigorate blood
- **Taste and Property:** warm, acrid
- **Meridian Tropism:** Liver, gallbladder and pericardium
- **Actions:** invigorates the blood, promotes the movement of qi, expels wind, stops pain
- **Applications:**
 - For any blood stasis pattern: dysmenorrhea, amenorrhea, difficult labor, or retained lochia. For patterns of qi stagnation and blood stasis: pain and soreness in the chest, flanks and hypochondria. It is also called qi herbs in the blood. i.e. Si Wu Tang
 - For externally-contracted wind disorder characterized by headache, dizziness, or painful obstruction i.e. Chuan Xiong Cha Tiao San
- **Dosage:** 3-9g
- **Attention:** used with caution during pregnancy or bleeding easily or have profuse menses, not for fire from yin deficiency

Bai Shao (*Radix Peoniae Alba*)



- **Categories:** herbs that tonify blood
- **Taste and Property:** Bitter, sour and slightly cold
- **Meridian Tropism:** Liver and spleen
- **Actions:** Nourish blood, astringe yin, soften liver to relieve pain and suppress liver yang
- **Application:**
 - Irregular menstruation, abdominal pain in the period, metrostaxis and metrorrhagia, night sweating or spontaneous sweating i.e. Si Wu Tang;
 - Pain in the hypochondrium, abdomen and epigastric region due to disorder of liver qi or convulsion and pain of the limbs: Being able to soften the liver, nourish blood, this herb can relieve spasm and pain. i.e. Xiao Yao San, Shao Yao Gan Cao Tang
 - Hyperactivity of liver yang marked by headache and dizziness: Often used together with Sheng Di, Dai Zhe Shi and Niu Xi. i.e. Jian Ling Tang
- **Dosage:** 6-15g
- **Attention:** Opposite to Li Lu

Chi Shao (Radix Paeoniae Rubra)



- **Categories:** herbs that cools blood
 - **Taste and Property:** Bitter, sour and slightly cold
 - **Meridian Tropism:** Liver and spleen
 - **Actions:** cools heat in the blood, Invigorates blood, transforms stasis, stops pain,
 - **Application:**
 - For dysmenorrhea, amenorrhea, abdominal pain, and fixed abdominal masses, (i.e. Zhi Xue Tang)also for the swelling and pain associated with traumatic injury and the early stages of abscesses and boils
 - For heat entering the blood level with fever, purple tongue, maculae and bleeding due to blood heat i.e. Xi Jiao Di Huang Tang
 - **Dosage:** 6-15g
 - **Attention:** Used with caution in those with cold from deficiency. Opposite to li lu
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Tao ren (Semen Persicae)

- **Categories:** herbs that invigorate blood
- **Taste and Property:** bitter, sweat, neutral
- **Meridian Tropism:** Liver, heart, LI, lung
- **Actions:** invigorates the blood, dispels stasis, moistens the intestines, stop coughs and wheezing
- **Applications:**
 - For many blood stasis patterns: dysmenorrhea, amenorrhea, difficult labor, or retained lochia. (i.e. Tao Hong Si Wu Tang)Traumatic injury, flank pain, (i.e. Fu Yuan Huo Xue Tang)lung abcess and intestinal abscess with fixed abdominal pain. (i.e. Da Huang Mu Dan Pi Tang)
 - For constipation due to dry intestine
- **Dosage:** 4.5-9g
- **Attention:** used with caution during pregnancy

Hong hua (Flos Carthami)



- **Categories:** herbs that invigorate blood
- **Taste and Property:** acrid, warm
- **Meridian Tropism:** Liver, heart
- **Actions:** invigorates the blood, stops pain
- **Applications:**
 - For many blood stasis patterns: dysmenorrhea, amenorrhea, difficult labor, or retained lochia and abdominal masses.
 - Traumatic injury, carbuncles, incomplete expression of rash of measles or pain fu obstruction of the chest due to blood stasis,
- **Dosage:** 3-9g
- **Attention:** used with caution during pregnancy

Ai ye (Folium Artemisiae Vulgaris)



- **Categories:** herbs that stop bleeding
- **Taste and Property:** bitter, acrid, warm
- **Meridian Tropism:** Liver, spleen and kidney
- **Actions:** stops bleeding, calms fetus, dispels cold dampness, stops pain due to cold,
- **Applications:**
 - For prolonged menstrual bleeding and uterine bleeding due to cold from deficiency. Used with gan jiang. i.e. Jiao Ai Tang Also for restless fetus, lower abdominal pain, and vaginal bleeding, as in threatened miscarriage.
 - Decocted and applied as an external wash for a variety of skin problems marked by dampness and itching.
- **Dosage:** 3-9g
- **Attention:** used with caution with heat from yin deficiency



E Jiao (Colla, Corri Asini)



- **Categories:** herbs that tonify blood
- **Taste and Property:** Sweet and neutral
- **Meridian Tropism:** Lung, liver and kidney
- **Actions:** Tonify blood, stop bleeding, nourish yin and moisten the lung
- **Applications:**
 - Blood deficiency marked by dizziness and palpitation: Often used with Dang Shen, Huang Qi, Dang Gui, Shu Di.
 - Hamatemesis, epistaxis, hematochezia, and metrostaxis and metrorrhagia: This is a very important herb for stopping bleeding i.e. Huang Tu Tang
 - Restlessness and insomnia due to yin deficiency: Huang Lian E Jiao Tang
 - Asthma or dry cough due to yin deficiency: This herb can nourish yin and moisten the lung i.e. Bu Fei E Jiao Tang
- **Dosage:** 5-10g. Taken after melt in hot water or rice wine.

Ze Xie (Rhizoma Alismatis)

- **Categories:** herbs that drain dampness
- **Taste and Property:** Sweet, bland and cold
- **Meridian tropism:** Kidney, and bladder
- **Actions:** Induce diuresis to eliminate dampness and purge heat
- **Applications:**
 - **Edema or oliguria, diarrhea, leukorrhea and phlegm retention:** This herb has a similar effect of inducing diuresis as Fu Ling. As it is cold in nature, it can purge heat in the bladder and kidney, so it is mostly suitable for damp heat in the lower jiao. Often used together with Fu Ling and Zhu Ling to strengthen the effect of inducing diuresis.
 - **For dizziness and diarrhea caused by retention phlegm,** often used together with Bai Zhu, i.e. Ze Xie Tang
- **Dosage:** 5-10g

Formulas

- Si Wu Tang, Tao Hong Si Wu Tang, Jiao Ai Si Wu Tang FS: pp pp 248-249
- Shao Yao Gan Cao Tang FS: pp pp 252-253
- Dang Gui Shao Yao San FS: pp 251-252

Si wu tang (Four substances decoction)

Categories: formulas that tonify blood

Ingredients: Shu di huang, Bai shao, Dang gui, Chuan xiong

Actions and indications of the formula

■ Actions

- Tonify blood and regulate liver

■ Indications

- Dizziness, blurred vision, lusterless complexion and nails, generalized muscle tension. Irregular menstruation with little flow or amenorrhea, and lower abdominal pain. Pale tongue, thin and wiry or thin and choppy pulse.
- Hard abdominal masses with recurrent pain, Lochioschesis with a firm and painful abdomen and sporadic fever and chills.
- Restless fetus disorder

Analysis of Formula

- Chief: Shu di huang
 - tonify liver and kidney, nourish yin and blood.
- Deputy: Bai shao, Dang gui
 - Bai shao, tonify blood and preserve the yin
 - Dang gui, tonify and invigorate blood
- Assistant: Chuan xiong
 - invigorate the blood and promote the movement of qi.

Modern application and modifications

- Modern application
 - infertility, anemia, irregular menstruation
- Modifications
 - Jiao Ai Si Wu Tang: for restless fetus disorder with continuous bleeding from the vagina, add ai ye, e jiao, and gan cao
 - Tao Hong Si Wu Tang: for concurrent blood deficiency and blood stasis leading to a shortened menstrual cycle with copious bleeding of dark-purple, sticky blood with or without clots, also used when menstruation is accompanied by abdominal pain and distention
 - For signs of heat, substitute sheng di huang for shu di huang
 - For a predominance of blood stasis, substitute chi shao for bai shao

Dang gui shao yao san (Tangkuei and peony powder)

Categories: formulas that tonify blood

Ingredients: Bai shao, Dang gui, Bai zhu, Fu ling, Ze xie, Chuan xiong

Actions and indications of the formula

- Actions

- Nourish liver blood, spreads the liver qi, strengthen the spleen and resolve dampness

- Indications

- Continuous, cramping pain in the abdomen that is not severe, urinary difficulty, and slight edema (primarily of the lower limbs) during pregnancy.

Analysis of Formula

- Chief: Bai shao, Dang gui, Chuan xiong
 - Bai shao: soften liver, nourish blood and stop pain
 - Dang gui: tonify and invigorate blood
 - Chuan xiong: invigorate the blood and harmonize liver's function
- Deputy: Fu ling, Bai zhu, Ze xie
 - strengthen spleen and leach out dampness

Modern application and modifications

- Attention:
 - This formula focuses on the blood aspects of liver dysfunction and the damp aspects of spleen dysfunction.
- Modern application:
 - Gestation hypertension, polyhydramnios, abnormal fetal position, premenstrual syndrome
- Modifications:
 - For relatively cold presentations, add gui zhi.
 - For relatively hot presentations, add mu dan pi and zhi zi.
 - For threatened miscarriage, add ai ye, e jiao.

Shao yao gan cao tang (Peony and licorice decoction)

Categories: formulas that tonify blood

Ingredients: Shao yao, Zhi gan cao

Actions and indications of the formula

- Actions

- Soften liver, moderates painful spasms, and alleviates pain.

- Indications

- Irritability, slight chills, pain, cramps, spasms in the calves due to liver blood deficiency or injury to the fluids.

Analysis of Formula

- Chief: Bai shao,
 - tonify blood, preserve the yin, soften the liver and alleviate pain.
- Deputy: Zhi Gan cao
 - tonifies and augments the qi of the middle burner, especially that of the spleen.
- These herbs use together to regulate the relationship between the liver and spleen and nourish the sinews

Modern application and modifications

- Modern application:
 - Intercostals neuralgia, sciatica, trigeminal neuralgia, primary dysmenorrhea, and abdominal pain due to disharmony between liver and spleen
- Modifications:
 - For fixed pain that increase with pressure, substitute Chi shao for Bai shao.
 - For signs of cold, add Sheng jiang