

Respiratory Tract, Part 2b

Treatment Plants

Materia Medica and Therapeutics

The Respiratory Tract According to Chinese Medicine

- Nourishes the hair, moistens the skin, regulates sweat
- The health of the Lungs is reflected in the body hair
- Protects against external “pernicious influences”
- “Surface” immune functions; “protective shield”; helps prevent colds, flu

Lung TCM Syndromes

Treatment Principles for TCM Syndromes

- Lung yin deficiency
- Tonify lung yin
- Lung Qi deficiency
- Tonify lung Qi
- Lung heat
- Clear lung heat (berberine-containing herbs)
- Lung cold
- Warm lungs, dispel cold

Tonify Lung Yin (for some chronic lung ailments like COPD, asthma)

- Shan Yao (*Dioscorea opposita*)
- dong chong xia cao (*Cordyceps chinensis*)
- Sha shen (*Glehnia littoralis*)
- American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*)
- Asparagus root (*Asparagus cochinchinensis*)
- Sweet bulbs from the lily family; classic Chinese bulb is *Lilium brownii*, but consider *Lilium washingtonianum*, or any of the western tiger lilies, blue camas bulbs, or *Dichelostemma pulchellum*, or the ookows *D. congestum*)

Lung Qi Deficiency

- Ginseng (*Panax ginseng*)
- Solomon's seal (*Polygonatum sibiricum*)
- Cordyceps (also tonifies lung yin)
- Schisandra (*Schisandra chinensis*) or ginkgo seed (*Ginkgo biloba*) [use if chronic cough and wheezing are present]

Lung Heat Conditions

- White mulberry leaf, Sang Ye (*Morus alba*)
- lu gen (Giant reed rhizome, *Phragmites communis*)
- yu xing cao (*Houttuynia cordata*)

Lung Cold Conditions

- Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*)

— Tea or tincture or powdered extract

Demulcent Respiratory Herbs

- Slippery elm
- Marshmallow root
- Mallow leaf
- Comfrey
- Iceland moss, other lichens
- Fenugreek
- Turkey tails
- Mullein leaf

Western Pathology

- Surface conditions
 - Colds
 - Flu
 - Allergies
- Organ level conditions

- Sinus infections
- Asthma
- Bronchitis
- Pneumonia

Treatment Plan: Colds

- Surface condition
 - Cold pathogen
 - No fever
 - Tongue normal
 - Body aches (pathogen penetrating to muscle level)
 - Congested sinus with runny mucus (clear, copious)
 - Sore throat

Treatment Plan: Flu

- Surface condition (heat pathogen)
- Fever
- Fatigue, prostration
- Tongue may have thick yellow coating
- Severe myalgia
- Thicker mucus discharge, congestion
- Sore throat
- Digestive involvement common (nausea, anorexia); can aggravate immune weakness, low energy

Treatment Plan: Allergies

- Respiratory allergies can cause runny nose, congestion, inflamed mucous membranes around eyes, sinuses
- Deficiency and excess types
- Tongue can be normal
- Antihistamine: Nettle, goldenrod, eucalyptus
- Antispasmodic: Lobelia, *Verbena lasiostachys*, yarrow, khella
- Immune regulator: Astragalus, dong quai, codonopsis, poria
- Decongestant: Ephedra, eyebright, eucalyptus, magnolia (xin yi hua)

Treatment Plan: Sinus Infections

- **Antiinflammatories**
 - Berberine-containing herbs, especially *Hydrastis*
 - *Achillea* (w/proazulenes)
- **Antibacterial**
 - Berberine-containing herbs (huang lian su, ½ tablet for pint + ½ tsp. salt; flush with ear syringe)
 - Garlic
 - Yerba mansa spray
 - Myrrh & or bayberry snuff
 - Hyssop, thyme
- **Immune-regulating**
 - Bayberry
 - Echinacea
 - Baptisia, Thuja spray

Treatment Plan: Bronchitis

- **Antibacterial**
 - Berberine-containing herbs
 - Garlic
- **Antiviral**
 - Andrographis, shiitake, thuja, usnea, Iceland moss
- **Immunostimulant**
 - Echinacea, wild indigo, thuja
- **Expectorant**
 - Yerba santa, grindelia
- **Antipyretic, diaphoretic**
 - Yarrow, elder flower
- **Antitussive**
 - Loquat, wild cherry bark

Treatment Plan: Pneumonia

- Same actions as bronchitis
- Add lung tonics when lung Qi is weak
 - Codonopsis
 - Mullein leaf tea (*ad lib*)

Symptomatic Relief

• Coughs

- **Dry:** marshmallow root, licorice, flax, Iceland moss, slippery elm, maidenhair fern, plantain leaf, tricolored violet, hollyhock root and flowers, fenugreek seed tea, evening primrose root
- **Productive:** black sage, garden sage, grindelia, elecampane, English ivy shoots, bloodroot, red clover, false solomon seal, alder shoots, thyme, cottonwood buds
- **Spasmodic:** wild cherry bark, bloodroot, California poppy, celandine, horehound, tricolored violet

• Sore throat

- Usnea, garden sage, black sage, kava, Oregon grape root, goldenseal, kishwoof, osha, slippery elm, plantain, pacific bistort, fenugreek, hyssop, mallow leaf tea, myrrh, pearly everlasting, speedwell, wild ginger

• Body aches

- Peuraria, meadowsweet, wintergreen, willow bark (standardized or not; high salicin content), cayenne liniment, St. John's wort oil, hot bath with strong yarrow, meadowsweet, rosemary, and/or lavender tea added (consider adding essential oils also)

• Headache

- Liver/GB (temples and over eyes): blue vervain, centaury, feverfew, fringe tree, blessed thistle, boldo, wormwood tea, mugwort tea
- Tension (occiput, general): rosemary, willow bark, meadowsweet, wintergreen tea, shepherd's purse, betony*, greater periwinkle*, hops, kava, birch bark tea or tincture, catnip, chamomile (both), skullcap
- External application: rosemary, lavender essential oils (30-70 with fixed oil), liniment, or tea compress, St. John's wort oil, liniment

- **Fever**

- Diaphoretics: yarrow, elder flower, blue vervain, ma huang, boneset, catnip, mormon tea, life everlasting, lobelia, feverfew
- Antipyretics: willow bark, meadowsweet, birch bark, dogwood bark (either pacific or streamside), quaking aspen bark
- With deficiency of yin: coral root (*Coralarrhiza* spp.), American ginseng
- With fast pulse: add linden flower, passionflower

- **Fatigue:**

- With fever: eat lightly, especially broths made with green leafy vegetables, barley, a little fish or chicken; add herbs like American ginseng, turkey tails, cordyceps, witch's butter; use gentian or centaury tincture before meals sparingly
- With deficiency of Kidney yin or Qi or Spleen Qi deficiency: American ginseng, codonopsis, burdock root, false Solomon's seal

- **Runny nose**

- Clear mucus: magnolia buds, cayenne, sage leaf, eyebright
- Highly viscous mucus: saponin-containing herbs (violet leaf, evening primrose root, *Trillium* spp., *Smilacina* spp., fenugreek, licorice, cayenne, primrose root (cowslip), starflower (*Trientalis* spp.), shooting stars (*Dodecatheon* spp.), *Eryngium* spp., English ivy tips

- **Nasal congestion**

- Antihistamines: nettle leaf, goldenseal, Oregon grape root, goldthread, goldenrod, ginger*, lemon, orange, tangerine peel, aged tangerine peel (also contains a sympathomimetic alkaloid, synephrine)
- Sympathomimetics: ma huang tincture, tea; tangerine or orange peel

Respiratory Wellness

- Deep belly "Qi" breathing
- Clean air to breathe
- Singing for breath support and building lung Qi
- "Haw" breaths and woodchoppers
- Respiratory tonic herbs
 - Codonopsis

- American ginseng
- Mullein
- Solomon's seal root

Materia Medica

Review of a few important herbs for respiratory tract ailments

- **Andrographis**

- Cold, bitter antiviral herb
- Use with flu, viral pneumonia

- **American ginseng**

- Use sparingly for respiratory tract infections with deficiency of Yin and Qi, along with other herbs

- **Betony**

- Useful for tension headaches or headaches due to disordered Qi during colds and flu

- **Cottonwood buds**

- All *Populus* spp. unopened leaf buds harvested in the spring while still sticky with resin contain salicylates and phenolic resins
- Expectorant, antispasmodic, antibacterial, antiviral

- **Echinacea**

- Antiviral, immunostimulant
- Use for up to 10 days for any respiratory tract infection, along with other herbs
- High alcohol tincture is warming and dispersing; tea and fresh juice preparations tend to be cooler in action

- **Elder**

- Flower heads are diaphoretic and antiviral; clears blood heat and toxins; use with flu
- Fruit syrups and other preparations are antiviral and cooling, also strongly antioxidant; use with colds or flu

- **Feverfew**

- Feverfew is diaphoretic, antiinflammatory
- Reduces fevers, aids with headaches

- **Grindelia**

- Sticky resinous buds are expectorant,
- anodyne, antitussive
- Iceland moss

- **Cetraria**

- cold, acrid, dispersing, expectorant, antibacterial, immunomodulating

- **Mullein**

- Mullein flowers and leaves are expectorant, demulcent, antiinflammatory, anodyne (flowers), and considered a gentle respiratory cleanser and tonic

- **Usnea**

- Cool in nature, clears heat and infection, soothes (also contains mucilage), immunomodulating
- Expectorant, antiviral, antibacterial
- Very useful for strep throat, pneumonia, bronchitis, tuberculosis

- **Yarrow**

- Flowering tops are antiinflammatory (use species with proazulenes and make a tea), antiviral, diaphoretic, Qi-regulating
- Useful for fevers, colds, flu

- **Yerba santa**

- Resinous leaves are resinous and warming
- Good flavor to make syrups, tincture formulas
- Expectorant, antibacterial, antiviral