

Intro to Chinese Herbal Medicine

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Chinese Herbal Medicine Ancestors – The Three Cultural Heroes

- Emperor Fu Xi – Yi Jing (I Ching, Book of Changes) 2852 BC
- Huang Di, Yellow Emperor (Nei Jing, Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine. 2600 BC
- Shen Nong – Shen Nong Ben Cao Jing (The Divine Farmer's Classic of Materia Medica. Actual compilers not known. Early Han Dynasty 200-100 BC)

Other notables...

- Zhang Zhong-jing (150–219)– Shan Hun Lun (Treatise on Cold-Induced Disorders) 6 Divisions
- Ge Hong 283—343 C.E.– also alchemist – Upper/Superior, Middle, Lower/Inferior Class herbs divisions
- Bao Gu (Goddess Bao)(284-364CE) married Ge Hong. She is credited for being the first to use dried mugwort as a needle alternative and using medicinals that grew locally and abundantly to make treatment cost effective.
- Tao Hong-jing (456-536 CE) famous alchemist - compiler of Shen Nong Ben Cao Jing. Emphasized meditation, breathing and visualization over other forms of alchemy.
- Tan Yunxian (1461-1554) -The Sayings of a Female Doctor-self published
- Tu Youyou (20th century) discovered artemisinin in sweet wormwood. Nobel prize in medicine.

Other significant texts-

- Laozi's Dao De Jing (approximately 600 BCE, Zhou dynasty)
- Huang Di Nei Jing. Su Wen and Ling Shu. Han dynasty (between 206 BCE–220 CE)

“Yi is Yi”

Intention is medicine

- Taking a group of symptoms & signs and to have a thought/ idea to make meaningful

Li – inner essence, treatment principle

Fa – method or way, treatment method

Fang – formula/prescription, giving direction, stability to person

Yao – medicinal , cure (sacred music in plant form)

- Why herbal medicine?
 - yào 药[藥] (sacred music in plant form)

Laws of Correspondence, Vibration and Polarity

- As above, so below, Heaven ><Earth.
- Resonance, Octaves & harmonization
- Life as a continuity of non/static polarities. “A pair of opposites with multiphasic degrees between the” (Chandler)

-A medicine of multiple lenses

Yin Yang

4 Level – Wei level (defensive) Qi level, Ying level (nutritive), Blood level

5 Phases – Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, Water

6 Divisions – Tai Yang, Yang Ming, Shao Yang, Tai Yin, Shao Yin, Jue Yin

8 Principle Patterns

- Yin or Yang
- Interior or Exterior
- Deficiency or Excess
- Cold or Hot

Zang Fu

- Zang – Heart/Lung/Liver/Kidney/Spleen
- Fu – Small Intestine/Large Intestine/Gallbladder/Bladder/Stomach
- Pericardium(Zang), Triple Burner (Fu)

The 5 Substances –

Qi

blood(xue)

Jin(thin) & Ye(thick) fluids

Jing(essence)

Shen(Spirit)

Patterns of Disharmony

- 6 Pernicious Influences. Climatic Phenomena
- wind, cold, fire/heat, dampness, dryness, summer heat

The Emotions - elation, anger, sadness, grief, worry, fear, fright

- impact on the qi
- anger ascends qi, elation scatters qi, sadness and grief weakens qi, worry knots qi, fear descends qi, fright induces chaotic qi.

The Four Inspections – Gathering information.

- To See, To Ask, To Feel, To Hear/Smell

4 Qi - “Hot diseases must be cooled, Cold diseases must be warmed.” -

5 Tastes – Sour, acrid, salty, sweet, bitter

- Other “tastes” aromatic – piercing through turbidity to revive a function
- Astringent – preventing leakage

Hierarchy of Ingredients – Organizing principle to guide formula construction.

1) Chief - emperor, main ingredient that treats/harmonizes with the principal pattern.

2) Deputy - minister, aids the chief and/or treats/harmonizes an additional pattern.

3) Assistant - supports Chief and deputy(helping/zuo zhù), moderates toxicity(correcting/zuo zhì), has opposite effect on Chief(opposing/zuo fan)

4) Envoy - messenger, guides herbs to a particular area of the body or harmonizes all other ingredients- ex licorice.

Dui Yao – Combining medicinals (composition of song)

Pao Zhi -preparation

TCM methods of delivery-

- external use - soft and hard plasters, powders, steams, soaks, washes, liniments, compresses,
- internal use - decoction, powders, pills/tablets, capsules, infusions, decoctions, granules, wines.