

Grounded

Supports mental-emotional balance. ∞

Traditionally used to promote a calm, peaceful mind and allow for restful sleep. ∞

Chinese Medicine has a concept called *Shen*. We can loosely define this as “consciousness or spirit”, but it is so much more than that. It is the spark that gives life to all of the material structures and substances of the physical body. It is the moving, breathing, interaction of all of the subtle parts that make us up and connect us all. *Shen*, an immaterial energy, needs a material home within the body, and that home is the heart blood. When the heart is balanced and full of healthy, circulating blood, *Shen* descends from the mind and anchors cozily in this organ. When *Shen* is anchored we feel peaceful, clear minded, are able to sleep restfully, and have a sense of vibrancy about us.

The classical formula Chai Hu Jia Long Gu Mu Li Tang is used, according to its source text, to correct an imbalance of the the three layers closest to the surface of the body that negatively affect *Shen*. When flaring heat agitates the heart and the chest is tight, *Shen* is unable to descend and remains unanchored. We often call this “*Shen* disturbance”, and it can negatively affect one’s ability to sleep or feel calm and at peace. It goes on to describe people with this imbalance experiencing feelings of anxiety or panic, and perhaps exhibiting uncontrollable talking, nervous laughter or racing thoughts.

Looking at the body in terms of layers, this problem can begin with a common cold. When one experiences common cold symptoms, such as headache, runny nose, and fever/chills the best thing to do is rest and consume foods and medicine that help generate a sweat. Once there is adequate sweating, the surface layer, Tai Yang, is unblocked, and the body can send its protective energy or *wei qi* there once again. This restored qi circulation at the surface acts as our immune system to push out pathogens and defend the body. The imbalance can end right there.

In another scenario, if the body is unable to sweat and unblock the surface, then the pathogen can go deeper affecting the next layer, creating a new set of symptoms. When this happens, the common cold usually gives way to Shao Yang symptoms, which involve more congestion of fluids and heat. This is because the organs that make up the Shao Yang layer, the gallbladder and triple burner, become stuck. The triple burner is a system that moves fluid throughout the body, often likened to the lymphatic system. When this system is impaired, it can create lymphatic swelling and difficult urination and when the gallbladder energy is stuck, heat builds up. Rather than this Shao Yang heat (also called *ministerial fire*) staying anchored in the abdomen as it should, it flares upward. A person can stay suspended in this state, with a ministerial fire that has a tendency to flare for years if proper treatment is not given.

In a balanced body, the functional heat (*yang*) generated by the heart should be pushed downward in order to bring energy to the abdominal organs (see *Recharge* formula explanation for more details). In the imbalance described here however, the upward surging ministerial fire won’t allow yang to anchor in the abdominal organs, reinforcing the uncontrolled heat flaring to the upper body. This means the organs of the abdomen remain yang deficient and therefore stagnant. Without yang anchored in the abdomen the intestines can have a difficult time eliminating, and this constipation can cause more inflammatory heat. Now the digestive organs of Yang Ming, the third layer deep in the body, are heating up and drying out too. As this imbalance passes into deeper layers of the body, the symptoms of *Shen* disturbance become more extreme.

This formula is classically described to correct this imbalance by restoring the proper movement to the Shao Yang layer, freeing congested heat and fluids and settling the *Shen*. Herbs are used to gently stimulate the bowels, allowing heat to clear from the Yang Ming layer. Urine is promoted with the use of mild diuretic herbs, allowing fluid to become unblocked and its functionality restored. Minerals with an anchoring action work to descend flaring heat, thereby calming the heart and allowing the *Shen* to settle. We’ve included an additional herb traditionally used to support the heart and *Shen* by tonifying the heart blood, creating a more hospitable environment in which *Shen* can anchor.

Imbalance addressed: Shao Yang disorder, Shen disturbance, stomach heat rising, congested gallbladder heat

Formula Action: Harmonize Shao yang, free congested yang, discharge pathological heat, calm and sedate the spirit

Base formula: Chai Hu Jia Long Gu Mu Li Tang (Bupleurum Plus Dragon Bone and Oyster Shell Decoction)

Ingredients*: *Chai Hu, Long gu, Da zao, Huang qin, Sheng jiang, Dai zhe shi, Ren shen, gui zhi, mu li, ban xia, da huang (Chinese thoroughwax, draconis os, Baikal skullcap, fresh ginger root, hematite clay, ginseng root, cinnamon twig, oyster shell, pinellia rhizome, Chinese rhubarb root)*

Additional, symptomatic herbs: *Ling zhi* (ganoderma mushroom)

Source Text(s): Shang Han Lun (Treatise on Cold Damage)

Additional ingredients: Filtered water, Non-GMO cane sugar alcohol

*Organic, Non-GMO herbs are used whenever available, all herbs used undergo laboratory testing to ensure they are free from possible impurities or contaminants.

∞*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. The information in this article is for educational purposes only. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.*

