



# TCM Principles Guide

Applying Eastern Medicine  
Theories to Single Herb Extracts

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## How To Use This Guide

The TCM Principles Guide can be used by Eastern and Western Herbalists alike. Herbalists have more choices and availability now more than ever and by utilizing these different herbs, they can create a more focused and individualized treatment for patients. This guide aims to be a reference for understanding how foreign herbs may be useful in your practice.

### FOR CHINESE HERBALISTS

Western herbal products are abundant and well-known for the general public. Many patients are likely already taking Western herbs before they start treatment with a Chinese Herbalist. This guide can help examine if the Western herbs would be helpful for the patient and their TCM condition. The herbalist can use the Western herbs with TCM principles to make them more effective. For instance, if a patient has a Yin Deficiency pattern and they are taking a Western herb that doesn't seem to be helping, the herbalist can refer to this guide which might suggest that the herb the patient was taking would be better suited for a Yang

Deficiency pattern. The herbalist can then educate the patient and recommend a more suitable herb.

This guide would also be very useful on using herbal blends that are a combination of Western and Eastern herbs or using Western herbs solely. Refer to the reference when choosing the herbs or reviewing them on a company's formula. It should help direct what the overall formula would treat on both a TCM and a Western setting.

### FOR WESTERN HERBALISTS

Chinese herbs can be very powerful and help make a formula much more effective. Considering both the Western and TCM indications can make a herbal formula much more effective. A simple example would be if a patient is needing an herbal remedy for insomnia, then a formula is likely to be more effective by considering the energetics of the patient. If the patient has a heat pattern, then cooling herbs are likely going to be more effective. Using this guide can help individualize herbal choices by considering TCM pattern for each specific case.

HERB (LATIN)	ENGLISH NAME	CHINESE NAME	TCM PRINCIPLES	PROPERTIES	CHANNELS
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow	Ya Luo	Invigorates Qi and Xue, drains damp, heals wounds, stops bleeding, tonifies Qi, releases the exterior, harmonizes SP and LV, descends LV Yang	bitter, astringent, pungent	SP, LU, KD
<i>Alchemilla xanthochlora</i>	Lady's Mantle		Drains damp, stops bleeding, clears heat	bitter, cool, dry	
<i>Allium sativum</i>	Garlic	Da Suan	Drains damp, resolves swelling, stops diarrhea, expels parasites	pungent, warm	SP, ST, LU, LI
<i>Althaea officinalis</i>	Marshmallow	Yao Shu Kui	Tonifies Yin, clears heat, drains damp, moistens sinews	sweet, cool, bitter	ST, LU, UB
<i>Angelica sinensis</i>	Dong Quai	Dang Gui	Tonifies Xue, regulates menstruation, invigorates Xue, moistens LI/SI, reduces swellings	sweet, acrid, warm	HT, LV, SP

Arctium lappa	Burdock	Niu Bang Zi	dispels wind and clears heat, promotes eruption, clears Xue heat, calms shen	pungent, bitter, cold	LU, ST
Arctostaphylos uva-ursi	Uva-ursi	Xiong Guo	Clears damp heat in lower jiao, tonifies SP, stops bleeding, heals wounds, promotes urination, promotes labor	sweet, astringent, cold, dry	KD, UB, LU
Armoracia rusticana	Horseradish	La Gen	Strengthen Yang, clear phlegm in LU, support LV Yang, resolve food stagnation, harmonize middle jiao, soothe GB, promote urination	acrid, spicy, pungent, warm	LU, SP, LI
Astragalus membranaceus	Astragalus	Huang Qi	Tonifies Qi and Xue, tonifies SP, raises Yang, tonifies Wei Qi, regulates water, promotes healing	sweet, warm	LU, SP
Avena sativa	Oat, Milky oats	Yan Mai	Moistening, Tonifies Qi, Calms spirit, Regulates HT Qi, Invigorates Qi	sweet, warm, moist	SP, KD, Chong, Ren
Baptisia tinctoria	Wild Indigo		Moves LV Qi, moves intestines, clears damp heat	cool	
Barosma betulina	Buchu		Drains damp in lower jiao, promotes urination, tonifies SP	dry, hot	
Calendula officinalis	Calendula (Marigold)	Jin Zhan Ju	Clears heat, invigorates Xue, Tonifies Qi, releases exterior, clears wind heat, tonifies Yin, Calms Shen, tonifies LV	drying, bitter, pungent, sweet	SP, LV, HT
Caulophyllum thalictroides	Blue Cohosh		Clears wind heat, invigorates Qi and Xue	cool	
Ceanothus americanus	Red Root	Yuan Hua	Transforms phlegm, invigorates Xue, cools Xues	acrid, bitter	LU, SP, KD
Centella asiatica	Gotu Kola	Ji Xue Cao	Clear heat, Drain damp, resolve swelling, remove toxicity	cold, bitter, pungent	KD, LI, LIV, SI, SP
Chamaelirium luteum	False Unicorn		Tonifies Xue, tonifies KD Qi, promotes urination	bitter	
Chelidonium majus	Celandine	Bai Qu Cai	Descends LU Qi, promotes urination, invigorate Qi	bitter, cool	LU, HT, KD
Chimaphila umbellata	Pipsissewa		Tonifies SP Yang		
Chionanthus virginicus	Fringe Tree		Regulates LV Qi	cool	LV
Cimicifuga racemosa	Black Cohosh		Harmonizes SP and LV	sweet, spicy, cool	LI, LU, SP, ST
Cinnamomum aromaticum	Cinnamon	Rou Gui	Warms KD, tonifies SP Yang, tonifies Yang, dispels cold, leads fire back to source	acrid, sweet, hot	HT, KD, LV, SP
Commiphora mukul	Guggul		Transforms phlegm, tonifies Xue and Qi		
Commiphora myrrha	Myrrh	Mo Yao	Invigorates Xue, heals wounds	bitter, pungent	HT, LV, SP
Coptis chinensis	Chinese Goldthread	Huang Lian	Clear heat and damp, calm spirit, calms HT fire, stops bleeding	bitter, cold	HT, LV, ST, LI
Crataegus spp.	Hawthorne	Shan Zha	Tonifies ST/SP, resolves food stagnation, invigorates Xue	sour, sweet, warm	SP, ST, LV
Curcuma longa	Turmeric	Yu Jin	Invigorates Xue and Qi, cools Xue, clears damp heat, clears channels	pungent, bitter, warm	LV, SP

<i>Cynara scolymus</i>	Artichoke	Yang Ji	Cools LV heat, tonifies ST	bitter, sweet	LV, HT, ST
<i>Dioscorea villosa</i>	Wild Yam	Shan Yan (Chinese Yam, but has similar properties)	Tonifies Qi and Yin of SP, ST, and KD, and LU. Tonifies Yin	sweet	KI, LU, SP
<i>Echinacea angustifolia/purpurea</i>	Coneflower	Zi Zhu Hua	Cools Xue heat, transforms phlegm, tonifies Wei Qi, Release exterior, clears wind heat	mild, pungent, salty, cool, dry	LU, SP
<i>Eleutherococcus senticosus</i>	Siberian Ginseng	Ci Wu Jia	Tonifies SP/ST Qi, Invigorates Xue, Augments HT Qi, Calms Spirit	warm, acrid	SP, HT, KD
<i>Equisetum arvense</i>	Horsetail	Mu Zei	clears wind and heat, promotes urination, stops bleeding, builds bone	bitter, astringent, bland	LI, LU, UB, KD
<i>Eriodictyon californicum</i>	Yerba Santa		Transforms phlegm, descends LU Qi, Tonifies SP Yang, dispels wind	acid, bitter, sweet, warm	LU, SP
<i>Eschscholzia californica</i>	California Poppy	Hua Ling Cao	clear heat, settle pain	cool	
<i>Eupatorium perfoliatum</i>	Boneset	Guan Ye Zelan	Release exterior, expels wind heat, clears heat, clears shao yang	bitter, astringent, cold	LU, LV
<i>Euphrasia stricta</i>	Eyebright	Xiao Mi Cao	Clears heat, stops urination, restores eyes, invigorates Qi	astringent, bitter, cold, dry	LU, LV
<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	Fennel	Xiao Hui Xiang	Dispels cold (pain), invigorates Qi, harmonize ST	pungent, warm	SP, ST, LV, KD
<i>Fucus vesiculosus</i>	Bladderwrack		Tonifies Xue, drains damp, clears damp heat, invigorates Qi in middle jiao		
<i>Galega officinalis</i>	Goat's Rue	Shan Yang Dou	Drains damp, clears wind damp, tonifies KD Qi	warm, dry	
<i>Galium aparine</i>	Cleavers	Zhu Yang Yang	Clears damp heat, invigorates Qi, drains damp, transforms phlegm	astringent, bitter, sweet, cool	KD, LV, UB
<i>Gentiana lutea</i>	Gentian	Long Dan Cao (Qin Jiao) (These refer to <i>Gentiana sabra</i> and <i>macrophylla</i> )	Clears wind and damp, clears heat and damp, sedates LV fire	pungent, bitter	ST, LV, GB
<i>Ginkgo biloba</i>	Maidenhair Tree	Bai Guo (Yin Xing)	Consolidate LU Qi, invigorate Xue, transforms phlegm, clears damp heat	sweet, bitter, astringent	LU, KD
<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i>	Licorice root	Gan Cao	Tonify SP and Qi, clears heat, relieves pain, moistens LU, harmonizes herbs	warm/neutral, sweet	All 12 (HT, LU, SP, ST mainly)
<i>Grindelia spp.</i>	Gum Weed		Descends LU Qi, clears heat in KD and UB	bitter, acrid, cool	
<i>Gymnema sylvestre</i>	Gymnema	Chi Geng Teng	Dispels pathogenic wind heat, Tonifies Yin, stops leakage, drains damp	astringent, bitter	KD, LV, SI, ST
<i>Hamamelis virginiana</i>	Witch Hazel	Chiu Lu Mei	Stops bleeding, invigorates Xue, drains damp	pungent, astringent, cool, dry	SP, LU, LI
<i>Harpagophytum procumbens</i>	Devil's Claw	Nan Fei Gou Ma	Clears heat, invigorates Qi and Xue		
<i>Hydrastis canadensis</i>	Golden Seal	Bai Mao Liang	Invigorates Xue, drains damp, clears heat, stimulates uterus, harmonize LV and ST	bitter, astringent, cool	LU, SP, LV
<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	St. John's Wort	Guan Ye Lian Qiao	Clears heat, stops bleeding, dispels wind damp, relieves pain, regulates LV Qi	bitter, acrid, astringent	LV

Hyssopus officinalis	Hyssop	Shen Xiang Cao	Releases exterior, clears wind heat, harmonizes middle jiao, drains damp	bitter, spicy, dry	LU, ST, SP
Inula helenium	Elecampane	Xuan Fu Hua	Dispels cold and damp, tonifies LU Qi, Warms LU, ST/SP channel, transform phlegm in LU, descends rebellious Qi of LU and ST	satly, warm	LU, SP, ST, LI
Iris versicolor	Blue Flag	Hu Die Hua	Clears heat, relaxes intestines	acidic, bitter, cold	LI
Leonurus cardiaca	Motherwort	Yi Mu Cao (Chinese motherwort, has similar properties)	invigorates Xue, promotes urination, drains damp, clears heat	spicy, bitter, cold	HT, LV, UB, PC
Lepidium meyenii	Maca	Ting Li Zi (seed)	Tonifies KD Yin	pungent, bitter, cold	LU, UB
Ligusticum porteri	Osha		Release exterior, dispel wind cold, tonify LU, expel phlegm, Tonify ST, invigorate Xue, promote urination	pungent, bitter, warm, dry	LU, ST, SP
Ligustrum lucidum	Ligustrum	Nu Zhen Zi	Tonifies LV and KD Yin, tonifies Jing, clears heat, brightens eyes, strengthens back	bitter, sweet, cool	KD, LV
Lobelia inflata	Lobelia		Descends LU Qi, transforms LU phlegm, clears LU heat		
Lomatium dissectum	Desert Parsley		Clears heat and damp, tonifies LU, descends LU Qi, clears skin	sweet, cool	LU, SP
Lycopus virginicus	Bugleweed	Ze Lan (Lycopus lucidus seems to have similar properties)	Invigorates Xue, promotes urination, invigorates LV Qi, opens channels	acidic, bitter, warm	LV, SP
Mahonia spp.	Oregon Grape Root	Gong Lao Mu (Shi Da Gong Lao) (2 types of Chinese Mahonia that have similar properties and uses to Oregon Grape Root)	Purges heat, drains damp, descends LU Qi, Calms HT fire and ST fire, Tonifies Yin	bitter, cold	ST, LI, LU
Matricaria recutita	Chamomile	Yang Gan Ju	Clear heat, resolve toxins, descend LU Qi, expel wind damp, calm shen	sweet, bitter	HT, ST
Medicago sativa	Alfalfa	Zi Mu (Mu Xu)	Tonifies SP and ST, clears damp heat, promote urination	bitter	ST, KD
Melissa officinalis	Lemon Balm		Calm shen, clear wind heat, drain damp	sour, spicy, cool	LU, LV
Mitchella repens	Partridgeberry		Tonifies KD/UB, tonifies Jing, stops bleeding	dry, sour, bitter	
Oplopanax horridus	Devil's Club		Descends LU Qi, Tonifies ST/SP, Tonifies KD Qi	cool, sweet	KD, SP, LU
Panax ginseng	Asian Ginseng	Ren Shen	Tonify Yuan Qi, SP/ST, LU, KD, HT Qi, generates fluids, calms shen	sweet, bitter, warm	LU, SP
Passiflora incarnata	Passionflower		Descends LV Yang, clears internal wind, calms shen, Tonifies HT Yin, invigorates Qi	cool	
Petroselinum crispum	Parsley	Zhou Ye Ou Qin	Tonifies ST/SP, removes stagnant food, invigorates Qi	warm	
Phytolacca americana	Poke	Shang Lu	Promotes bowel movement and urination, drains damp	bitter, cold	LU, KD, LI, UB, SP
Pimpinella anisum	Anise	Yi Ye Hui Qin (E Jiao Ban)	Expel cold, resolve swelling, eliminate stasis	bitter, pungent	LU, ST, LV

Piper methysticum	Kava	Ka Wa Hu Jiao	Nourish HT, calm shen	warm	HT, ST, KD
Piscidia piscipula	Jamaican Dogwood		Invigorates Xue, calms shen		
Plantago spp.	Plantain	Che Qian Zi	Drains damp, clears heat, promotes urination, stops bleeding, descends LU Qi, brightens eyes	sweet, cold	LV, SP, LU, KD, UB, SI
Propolis	Propolis	Feng Jiao	Tonifies Yin, drains damp, heals wounds	bitter, pungent, cold	SP, ST
Prunus spp.	Wild Cherry		Invigorates Qi, calms shen, tonifies HT, LU, and LI, transforms phlegm, tonifies upper jiao	astringent, bitter	LU
Rhodiola rosea	Rhodiola	Hong Jing Tian	Tonify SP Qi, invigorate Xue, descend LU Qi, nourishes LU Yin, stop bleeding	sweet, bitter	LU, HT
Rhuem palmatum	Rhubarb	Da Huang	purges, clears heat, invigorates Xue	bitter, cold	LV, SP, ST, LI
Rumex crispus	Yellow Dock	Chin Ch'iao Mai	Clears heat, Drains damp, cools Xue, soothes LV	bitter, cold	
Salvia miltiorrhiza	Dan Shen	Dan Shen	Invigorates Xue, cools Xue heat, tonifies Xue, calm shen	bitter, cold	HT, LV
Sambucus spp.	Black Elderberry	Jie Gu Mu	Release exterior, clear heat, tonifies LU, transforms phlegm, promotes urination	sweet, warming	LU, KD, UB
Sanguinaria canadensis	Bloodroot	Mei Zhou Xue Gen Cao	Descends LU Qi, transforms phlegm, clears heat		
Schisandra chinensis	Wu Wei Zi	Wu Wei Zi	Contains LU Qi, descends LU Qi, calms shen, tonifies KD, astringes essence, protects LV	sour, sweet, warm	HT, KD, LU
Serenoa repens	Saw Palmetto	Ju Zhong	Tonifies Yin, drains damp in lower jiao	warm	
Scutellaria lateriflora	Skullcap		Invigorates Qi, calms shen, clears heat, restores ST/SP, promotes urination	bitter, cold	ST, LU, KD
Selenicereus grandiflorus	Night-Blooming Cereus	Ba Wang Hua	Descends LU Qi, clear heat, Tonifies HT Qi and Yang, invigorates Xue, drains damp, calms Shen	sweet, cool	LU, HT
Silybum marianum	Milk Thistle (St. Mary's Thistle)	Da Ji	Invigorates Qi and Xue, promotes urination, dispels cold, drains damp	bitter, warm, dry	LV, HT
Spilanthes acmella	Paracress	Tian Wen Cao	Descends LU Qi, drains damp		
Stillingia sylvatica	Queen's Root		Cools Xue heat, tonifies SP and KD Qi, and soothes LV Qi	acrid	LV, LU, UB
Tabebuia impetiginosa	Pau D'Arco	Ban Zhen Zhong Hua Shu	Clears damp heat	cool	
Taraxacum officinale	Dandelion	Pu Gong Ying	Clear LV heat, soothe LV, Clear Xue Heat, resolves damp	sweet, bitter, cold	LV, ST
Thuja plicata	Western Red Cedar	Hong Shan Shu	Drains damp	bitter, pungent, warming	LU, SP, UB, KD
Thymus vulgaris	Thyme	Bai Li Xiang	Tonify Qi, Tonify and warm LU, Tonify SP Yang, Tonify Wei Qi	pungent, bitter, astringent, warm, dry	LU, SP, ST
Tilia europea	Linden	Duan Hua	Release exterior, clears wind heat, invigorates Qi, calms shen, promotes urination, clears LV heat	sweet, astringent, pungent	LU, LV

Trifolium pratense	Red Clover	Mu	Drains SP damp, tonifies Xue, tonifies KD Qi, clears heat and Xue heat, tonifies Yin	sweet, bland, cool	LU, KD, UB
Trigonella foenum-graecum	Fenugreek	Hu La Ba	Warms KD, Tonifies Yang, disperses damp and cold	bitter, warm	KD, LV
Turnera diffusa	Damiana	Da Mia Na	Tonifies KD Yang, drains damp, calms shen, tonifies SP Qi		
Ulmus rubra	Slippery Elm	Chi Yu	Tonifies LU Yin, Promotes digestion	warm, bitter	LU, LI
Urtica dioica	Nettles	Xun Ma	Tonifies LU and skin, cleans Xue, transforms phlegm, tonifies Xue, Tonifies KD and LV yin, stops bleeding	bitter, astringent, cool, dry	LU, LV, KD
Usnea spp.	Old Man's Beard	Song Luo	Clears LU, transforms phlegm, stops bleeding	bitter, sweet	
Vaccinium spp.	Bilberry (European Blueberry)		Supports Jing, reduce urination, Tonify LV and KD, improve vision	sweet, sour, warm	LV, KD
Valeriana officinalis	Valerian	Xie Cao (Jie Cao)	Calm shen, stop bleeding	pungent, bitter, warm	LV, HT
Verbascum thapsus	Mullein	Jia Yan Ye	Tonifies LU Yin, drains damp, clears UB	sweet, astringent, bland, cool, moistening	LU, ST, LI/SI
Viburnum opulus	Cramp Bark		Invigorates Xue, mostly LV Xue		
Vitex agnus-castus	Chaste Tree		Tonifies Xue, Qi, and SJ, nourishes shen and Xue	acrid, bitter, neutral	UB, LV, ST
Zanthoxylum clava-herculis	Prickly Ash Bark	Hua Jiao (Chinese Prickly Ash)	Warms SP/ST, Dispels cold	pungent, hot	SP, ST, KD
Zea mays	Corn Silk	Yu Mi Xu	Tonifies GB, drains damp in lower jiao, stops bleeding	sweet	LV, GB, UB
Zingiber officinale	Ginger	Gan Jiang (Dried) Sheng Jian (Fresh)	Dried - Warms ST/SP, alleviates damp, harmonizes ST, warms LU, transforms phlegm, retrieves KD Yang from collapse, drives out cold, warms channel, stops pain. Fresh - warms surface, expels wind cold, warms middle jiao and stops vomiting, reduces food stagnation, resolves cold damp, warms LU	acrid, hot	HT, LU, SP, ST



## About Dr. Ren Bedasbad ND, L.Ac

Dr. Ren is a Naturopathic Physician and Acupuncturist in Bend, Oregon. He is a primary care physician that combines Western and Eastern methodology to commonly treat gastroenterology, autoimmune, thyroid, mental/emotional, and pediatric conditions.

He started Lumos Medical Center with his wife, Dr. Christy Bedasbad, who is also a Naturopathic Physician and Acupuncturist, to support the Central Oregon community to achieve their health goals. They choose the name “Lumos” because of its meaning of “Light” and their aim to find the cause of their condition and to give people hope.

They both studied at the Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine and the Phoenix Institute of Herbal Medicine and Acupuncture. They love traveling, Qi Gong, and spoiling their dog, cat, and two tortoises.

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