

## CERTIFIED CHINESE HERBOLOGY ONLINE COURSE - SESSION 12

- How does Chinese herbal practice differ from other types of clinical herbology?
- The dangers of using single symptoms or medical disease labels to choose herbs
- The dangers of not paying attention to one's symptoms and sensations
- The most common mistake people make when using herbs
- Choosing herbs is like following a road map; first, you need the right map.
- Ancient Chinese physicians compile precise symptom-sign "maps" of human health
- Age-to-Dose & Weight-to-Dose Dosing Guidelines

### How does Chinese herbal practice differ from other types of clinical herbology?

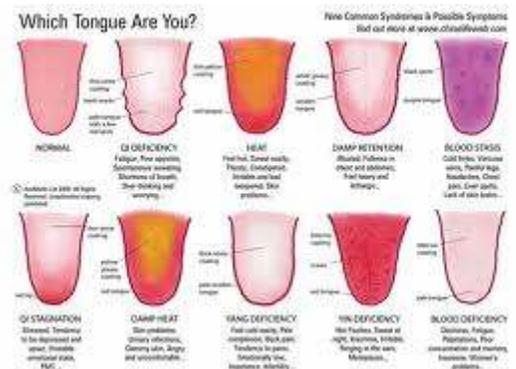
To the casual observer, an herbalist skilled in the methods of clinical Chinese herbology appears to operate as any other herbalist around the world. He or she assesses an individual's problems and chooses appropriate herbs and herbal formulas; textbooks can be consulted which list herbs and formulas for each type of health problem. A pile of various dried herbs may be bagged and given to the individual to cook up at home and drink as a tea, or commercial preparations of freeze-dried powders, pills or liquid extracts may be given instead.

A certain mystique has accompanied the introduction of Chinese herbs into the West, and many people have assumed that there is something especially potent about "Chinese" herbs. Chinese herb shops have intensified this mystique by prominently displaying dried sea horses, woody funguses, ginkgo, and other plant and animal products foreign to America and Europe. However, plant products such as mint, dandelion, rhubarb root, cattail pollen, fennel, and licorice root are included in the Chinese pharmacopeia, yet each one of these plants is also common to North America and Europe. Black pepper, turmeric, cinnamon, and ginger are common table spices in the West, yet these herbs originally were introduced from Asia; they too are included in the Chinese pharmacopeia.



Useful medicinal plant products can be found throughout the world, and the Chinese were probably the first to actively seek out plant products from other countries. At various phases in China's history, myrrh and frankincense were imported from the Middle East, cinchona bark (useful for malaria) was imported from South America, and, recently, American ginseng (Rx *Panax quinquefolium*) has been imported from Wisconsin.

If there is nothing particularly unique about "Chinese" herbs, what is unique about Chinese herbology? If we look more closely at the routine of a skilled herbalist, we will observe several curious techniques that are considered essential by all properly trained TCM herbalists. While taking an individual's pulse the herbalist seems to take an inordinate amount of time; palpation of the radial pulse is performed not just at one position, but at several positions and depths at both wrists. In addition to a simple count of the pulse rate, other pulse qualities seem to be of interest. The TCM herbalist also carefully inspects the tongue, preferably using a bright, full-spectrum lamp, noting the color, thickness and distribution of tongue coating, and color and texture of tongue tissue. She will ask about the individual's complaints and symptoms, especially those which reveal the individual's metabolic and neuroendocrine characteristics, such as thirst, appetite, perception of body heat or coolness, general energy level, urination and bowels, moods and mental states.

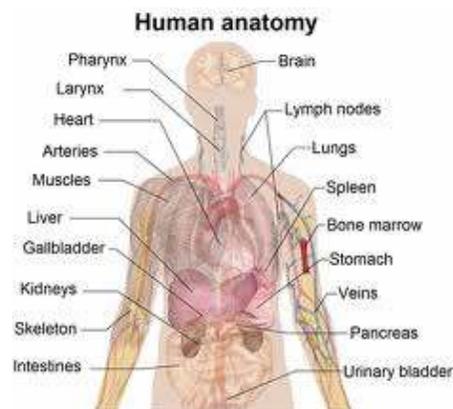


After pondering and evaluating all of this information, TCM herbalists develop herbal formulas that are tailored to each individual's total body characteristics, as well as the chief complaint and primary symptoms. Note that they do not choose herbs or herbal formulas based solely upon the chief complaint, nor do they choose formulas based on the medical condition that a physician may have diagnosed. Why? The answer to this question will reveal the crucial philosophical and scientific differences between the Chinese herbal sciences and Western medicine.

### **The dangers of using single symptoms or medical disease labels to choose herbs**

To correctly apply the methods of traditional Chinese herbology requires that people rethink basic assumptions about how one chooses herbs. To understand why a new perspective is necessary, let us examine the consequences of asking the question: What herbs (foods, etc.) would be appropriate for specific conditions such as pneumonia, influenza, or insomnia?

First, many people assume that these terms are accurate and complete descriptions of specific health problems, adequate for the purpose of choosing appropriate herbs. They are not. A person with pneumonia has a condition of viral or bacterial infection in his lungs; this term says nothing about the condition of the person's other internal organs or behavior patterns. Likewise, influenza refers to the presence of one of a number of influenza viruses which have proliferated within a person's body. It does not specify how the person's body is responding to the infection. Different individuals may respond in different ways to the same infectious organism. Insomnia refers only to a person's inability to sleep soundly; temperature sensations, vitality levels, appetite, bowel patterns, and thirst may vary considerably among a group of people suffering from insomnia.



The human body is a complex creation, with all of its component parts functioning together, each organ having direct and indirect effects on every other part of the body. In practice, it is seldom possible to ingest a food, herb, or medicine which affects only one organ or body tissue without simultaneously affecting many other organs and tissues. Traditional Chinese herbalists have found that to obtain precise results, a complete description of the individual's state of health is required. Scientific and medical labels such as influenza, pneumonia, hepatitis, PMS, arthritis, or peptic ulcer do not provide all of the necessary information. These ideas may become clearer if we explore several examples.

### **Example 1: Rhubarb root and constipation**

Laxatives are one of the most widely purchased preparations either as herbal formulas or as chemically produced medications. Many people become dependent on certain laxatives. The traditional Chinese viewpoint helps us to understand why. Rhubarb root is a common herb in many laxative formulas, and both the Western and Chinese pharmacopeia list it. Western herbal texts describe its physiological actions as purgative, peristaltic, cholagogue, sialagogue, hepatic, and anthelmintic. The indications (conditions for which it is useful) include: constipation, diarrhea, weakened digestion, abdominal pains with distended bowels. Before giving you the traditional Chinese description of rhubarb root's properties, consider trying to make a real-life decision based on physiological information only.

In this first example, two individuals complain of constipation. Person A has dry and hard stools, tends to feel hot easily, is frequently thirsty, and is easily angered. On inspection the tongue appears very red with thick yellow coating, and the pulse is forceful and

slightly rapid. Person B has a constipation characterized by severe sluggishness, yet the consistency may be normal. He complains of constant fatigue, hands and feet becoming cold easily, is rarely thirsty and often has indigestion, gas and abdominal bloating. On inspection, the tongue is pale and wet appearing, with very thin white coating, and the pulse is very weak.



Can you determine which of the two people, A, B, or both, would benefit by taking rhubarb root by considering its physiological properties only? You might analyze the problem as follows. Both people have constipation; rhubarb root stimulates peristalsis, which might be helpful in both cases. In addition, rhubarb root's properties of stimulating digestion and promoting bile and saliva secretion would seem to be beneficial for B. Therefore, according to the limited information we have considered so far, rhubarb root might be more beneficial for B, but also helpful for A.

Now consider the information about rhubarb root from the Chinese pharmacopeia: it is bitter in taste and has a cold action. Its functions include: Drains Heat and moves stool; drains Damp Heat; detoxifies Fire Poison. (English translations of traditional Chinese texts often capitalize words used to indicate TCM functions to remind the reader that these special words denote specific functions and symptom-sign complexes.) Tastes are important in Chinese herbal science; the taste buds contain sensitive chemical analyzers, as noted previously. Bitter tastes generally tend to have "draining" and "cooling" effects.

Without knowing any more about Chinese herbal theory, you should now have no doubt about which individual should take rhubarb and which should not. The answer is A should, B should not. In practice, if B takes it, he will eventually become very fatigued and easily chilled, indigestion will become worse, and he will become dependent on harsh laxatives to stimulate peristalsis. Traditional Chinese theory would say that the bitter cold quality will exhaust the Middle Burner Fire of digestion and drain the central Qi or energy from the body, leaving him fatigued. For A, the rhubarb root would quickly resolve the constipation as well as the tendency to feel hot and irascible. This is because all of rhubarb root's properties closely match the requirements of A's total symptom pattern.

### The dangers of not paying attention to one's symptoms and sensations

While blood and urine tests are often useful indicators of serious problems, it is common for people to notice definite symptoms well before these tests become abnormal. To understand why this is possible, we need to examine the characteristics of our own senses. The body's sensory system consists of nerve cells connecting together a network of sensitive detectors of light, temperature, pressure, chemical makeup, and sound. These sensors provide the basis of sight, touch and pain, taste and smell, and hearing. Scientific studies have shown that the sensitivity of many of these biological detectors approaches or exceeds that of state-of-the-art instrumentation. A person who is consciously aware of his sensory perceptions can detect health problems long before medical instrumentation will be able to detect problems. Traditional Chinese herbology places emphasis on directly perceived sensory information: symptoms that an individual reports plus the herbalist's perceptions of that individual (clinical signs). The latter include tongue examination, palpation of the pulse for rate, strength and quality, abdominal palpation, and observation of mannerisms, movement and speech qualities.

**The Five Senses** Name \_\_\_\_\_

Draw a line from each picture to two matching words.

hear		eye
see		nose
smell		ear
taste		tongue
touch		skin

People in technologically-based societies are taught to ignore or suppress important indicators of health problems. Pain medication manufacturers encourage people to suppress pain and discomfort; co-workers pressure individuals to continue a job or activity in spite of health risks and the onset of chronic symptoms; and medical care consumers are often told that their own perceptions are imaginary if these can't be verified with diagnostic instrumentation. As a result, people often ignore perceptions that signal something is not quite right.

### **The most common mistake people make when using herbs**

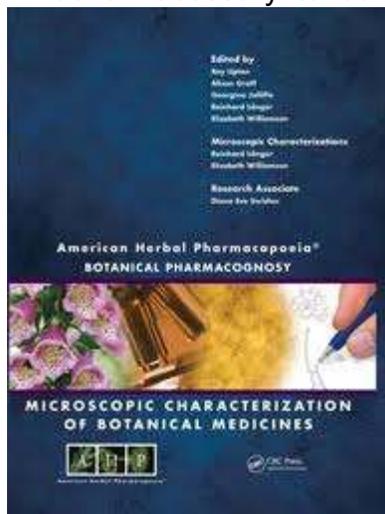
Lack of sensory awareness is an obstacle to improving both personal and planetary health. Tasks ranging from choosing correct herbal formulas and diet plans to reversing global environmental destruction are hampered by this lack of awareness. The most common mistake people make in using medications, vitamins, herbs or diet plans is to continue using a product even when their symptoms are worsening; they often persist in believing theories, advice from an "expert", and scientific data even when their own senses warn them to stop. Shifting focus to a larger scale, while scientists reassure the public that they are investigating effects of environmental damage, people's senses detect the nature and severity of effects long before results of scientific studies are available. Until people learn to demand action on what their senses are telling them, we will continue to be fleeced by slick-talking agents of the corporate profit machines.

### **Choosing herbs is like following a road map; first, you need the right map.**

How do we understand and analyze our sensory perceptions in order to take correct action? We can find clues in the way in which we use maps. If you need to determine how to drive from Denver to Seattle, you would be wise to refer to a road map of the western U.S. It is obvious that a vegetation map of the western U.S. would not be helpful for this purpose. Likewise, an herbalist collecting herbs would not refer to a geological map for likely collecting areas; a vegetation map would be useful here. This same principle applies to using herbs to improve health. You need a special type of information to make real-life decisions about helping someone with a specific set of symptoms and body type.



What is necessary to correctly choose herbs is a "map" of the herbal pharmacopeia that matches symptom-sign patterns to specific herbs and herbal formulas that counteract the health imbalance as a whole. If we think of our state of health (symptom-sign description) as being analogous to a location in space, then the herbal properties should be described in a manner that tells us how the herb alters the total symptom pattern and moves us from one state of health to another, just as a road map tells us how to get from one location to another by means of a road network. If the herb is chosen correctly, it will eventually move us in a direction of better health. Conversely, incorrectly chosen herbs may move us in the wrong direction, intensifying existing symptoms.



If the information you have about an individual consists of their symptoms and what you perceive about their body surface, then a collection of information on the physiological effects of an herb ("physiological data maps") will not be very useful. You cannot "see" a person's

biological chemicals (hormones, enzymes, proteins, minerals, etc.) without sophisticated equipment. What many people do not realize about the knowledge in physiology texts is that much of this information has been obtained at very high cost, both in time and money. Even if you could afford to subject yourself to the most complete chemical analysis money could buy, you still might not be able to predict the effect of an herb or medication on your total set of symptoms. To analyze the body in terms of all of its component chemicals and parts and predict its response to common situations is a feat that continues to elude science. Physiological knowledge may be useful, but it cannot provide the basis for a complete clinical system without other information.

### **Ancient Chinese physicians compile precise symptom-sign "maps" of human health**

Ancient Chinese physicians recognized that the body itself provides sensitive signals about the nature of a potential problem, even though they did not understand the structure of sensory cells and the nervous system. These signals are perceived as symptoms such as abnormal temperature sensations, altered thirst and appetite, and emotional state. Chinese physicians created a precise system for describing the properties of herbs, acupuncture points, foods, climate, and other environmental factors in terms of how these alter an individual's entire set of symptoms and perceptions, and therefore his or her health. This system is the most detailed symptom-sign "map" of human health currently available in the world.

What this means for the herbalist is that with traditional Chinese assessment methods, a client's condition can be characterized by the total set of symptoms together with the clinical signs (general appearance, body structure, tongue appearance, and palpated quality of the radial pulse). Commonly observed patterns of symptoms and signs are given descriptive labels for convenience. Armed with this description, herbs and herbal formulas are then chosen which have been shown to be effective in counteracting the specific pattern.

### **Example 2: Ginseng and enhancing the immune response**

We can apply these principles to choosing herbs for enhancing immune system response.



From a physiological perspective, many herbs have been shown to increase white blood cell count and activity. However, for a specific individual only some of these herbs may be better than others for enhancing overall health. To illustrate this, let us consider two very different examples of people who both suffer from frequent bouts of colds and flu. (Neither person actually has a cold or flu at the time; we are considering preventive strategy only.) Person C complains of additional symptoms of poor appetite, fatigue and desire for lots of sleep, easily chilled, shortness of breath; on examination, the pulses are weak and soft in quality and the tongue is pale. Person D, on the other hand, is easily fatigued but nervously active, has insomnia, tends to be

thirsty, and frequently perspires during sleep; the pulses are weak, slightly rapid, and thready in quality; and the tongue is reddish with almost no coating.

Panax ginseng is one herb which has potent tonification properties, can alleviate fatigue, and has been shown to enhance the immune response in some people. Its nature is warm, sweet and slightly bitter. It is said to strongly tonify the central Qi (loosely translated as "energy"). If administered to person C, it will indeed enhance the immune response and will alleviate all of the other symptoms as well. If administered to person D, the insomnia may be aggravated, and the night sweats may increase. If ingested for a prolonged period, it will be deleterious to D's health. Hopefully, even if D knew nothing about traditional Chinese herbology, he

would have the sense to listen to his body's signals and stop taking it. For C, however, there are few other herbs on the planet that would be matched to his needs as closely as ginseng.

### **Summary**

All of an individual's characteristics must be considered in order to improve overall health without side effects. Because all of the body's component systems are closely interdependent, to effectively handle a person's main complaint it is usually necessary to consider the whole complex of symptoms and clinical signs in determining a strategy for restoring health.

## Age-to-Dose & Weight-to-Dose Dosing Guidelines

The standard dose of herbal extracts for an average adult is 6 grams per day. However, not everybody is an "average adult." The fundamental concept in dosing is to realize that one size does not fit all. Every person is unique and must be treated individual.



The principle behind the Age-To-Dose Dosing Guideline is based on the maturity of the organs to metabolize, utilize and eliminate herbs. This chart is very detailed and is especially useful for infants and younger children. The recommendations are taken from "Herbology" published by Nanjing College of Traditional Chinese Medicine in 1986.

The principle behind Weight-To-Dose Dosing Guideline is based on the effective concentration of the herb after it is distributed to different parts of the body. This dosing strategy is especially useful for patients whose body weight falls outside of the normal range which may require an increase or a decrease in dose. All calculations are based on Clark's Rule in "Pharmaceutical Calculations" written by Mitchell Stoklosa and Howard Ansel and published by Lea and Febiger in Philadelphia.

These two charts provide every herbal practitioner with a handy reference for dosing for those patients who fall outside the definition of an "average adult." It is still important to keep in mind, however that these charts serve only as a guideline - not an absolute rule. One must always remember to treat each patient as an individual, not as a chart!

## AGE-TO-DOSE DOSING GUIDELINE

Age	Recommended Daily Dosage	Fine Granules	Capsules (0.5 gm)	Tablets (0.3 gm)
0-1 month old	1/18 - 1/14 of adult dose*	0.3 - 0.4 grams		
1-6 months old	1/14 - 1/7 of adult dose	0.4 - 0.9 grams		
6-12 months old	1/7 - 1/5 of adult dose	0.9 - 1.2 grams		
1-2 years old	1/7 - 1/5 of adult dose	1.2 - 1.5 grams		
2-4 years old	1/4 - 1/3 of adult dose	1.5 - 2.0 grams		
4-6 years old	1/3 - 2/5 of adult dose	2.0 - 2.4 grams		
6-9 years old	2/5 - 1/2 of adult dose	2.4 - 3.0 grams	5 - 6 capsules**	8 - 10 tablets**
9-14 years old	1/2 - 2/3 of adult dose	3.0 - 4.0 grams	6 - 8 capsules	10 - 13 tablets
14-18 years old	2/3 - full adult dose	4.0 - 6.0 grams	8 - 12 capsules	13 - 20 tablets
18-60 years old	full adult dose	6.0 grams	8 - 12 capsules	13 - 20 tablets
60+ years old	3/4 of adult dose or less	4.0 - 6.0 grams	9 - 12 capsules	15 - 20 tablets

## WEIGHT-TO-DOSE DOSING GUIDELINE

Weight	Recommended Daily Dosage	Fine Granules	Capsules (0.5 gm)	Tablets (0.3 gm)
30-40 lbs	20% - 27% of adult dose*	1.2 - 1.6 grams		
40-50 lbs	27% - 33% of adult dose	1.6 - 1.9 grams		
50-60 lbs	33% - 40% of adult dose	1.9 - 2.4 grams		
60-70 lbs	40% - 47% of adult dose	2.4 - 2.8 grams		
70-80 lbs	47% - 53% of adult dose	2.8 - 3.2 grams	5 - 6 capsules**	8 - 10 tablets**
80-100 lbs	53% - 67% of adult dose	3.2 - 4.0 grams	6 - 8 capsules	11 - 13 tablets
100-120 lbs	67% - 80% of adult dose	4.0 - 4.8 grams	8 - 10 capsules	13 - 16 tablets
120-150 lbs	80% - 100% of adult dose	4.8 - 6.0 grams	10 - 12 capsules	16 - 20 tablets
150-200 lbs	100% - 133% of adult dose	6.0 - 7.9 grams	12 - 16 capsules	20 - 26 tablets
200-250 lbs	133% - 167% of adult dose	7.9 - 10.0 grams	16 - 20 capsules	26 - 33 tablets
250-300 lbs	167% - 200% of adult dose	10.0 - 12.0 grams	20 - 24 capsules	33 - 40 tablets

\* Standard Adult Dosage is 6 grams of herbal extract per day. \*\* Capsules or tablets should be used with caution in young children due to possible difficulty in swallowing. Each capsule weighs 0.5 grams and each table weighs 0.3 grams.

CERTIFIED CHINESE HERBOLOGY ONLINE COURSE - SESSION 12 – QUESTION & ANSWERS

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP, PC: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Please be sure to fill out the information above, complete the test and e-mail or fax it back to us at [iridology@netzero.net](mailto:iridology@netzero.net) or 530-878-1119. We will grade your question & answer session and will let you know if we have any questions or concerns. Please use a separate sheet to do this assignment.

1. This of 2 people you know and their symptoms they have complained about. What is the first herb that you can think of that would benefit them. List their symptoms and then determine if this herb would be beneficial to both of them. What did you determine and why?
2. Based on your age and weight, what would be your recommended age-to-dose?
3. Based on your age and weight, what would be your recommended weight-to-dose?