

WARM ACRID HERBS THAT RELEASE THE EXTERIOR

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Sources:

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Warm Acrid Herbs that Release the Exterior

Herbs that Release the Exterior promote sweating in order to expel external pathogens from superficial levels of the body (called *diaphoresis*).

External Attack of Wind-Cold:

- Fever and chills
- Headache, nasal congestion
- Stiff neck, muscle ache
- Absence of thirst
- Floating pulse

Because these herbs promote sweating and disperse qi, caution should be used with patients with deficiency. These herbs should not be used longterm.

Warm Acrid Herbs that Release the Exterior

Taste:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• acrid
Temperature:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• warm
Channels:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LU
Cautions & Contraindications:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• These herbs are warm, acrid, and dispersing• Use caution in patients with qi deficiency, yin deficiency, sweating, or with long term use
Main Action:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promotes sweating to release the exterior

Warm Acrid Herbs that Release the Exterior

- má huáng
- guì zhī
- zǐ sū yè
- jīng jiè
- fáng fēng
- qiāng huó
- gǎo běn
- bái zhǐ
- xì xīn
- shēng jiāng
- shēng jiāng pí
- cōng bái
- xiāng rú
- cāng ěr zǐ
- xīn yí huā

má huáng

ephedra herba

麻
黄

Temp: warm

Taste: acrid, slightly bitter

Channels: LU, UB

Dosage: 2-9 grams

1. promotes sweating to release the exterior
 - for Tai Yang syndrome with absence of sweating
2. stops cough and wheezing
3. promotes urination to treat edema
 - for wind-water edema in the upper body
4. treats bi syndrome



If Ma Huang is used for warm conditions, it should be combined with cold herbs (e.g. Shi Gao, Huang Qin) or cooked in honey.

guì zhī

cinnamomi ramulus

桂
枝

Temp: warm

Taste: acrid, sweet

Channels: LU, UB, HT

Dosage: 3-9 grams

1. releases the exterior and muscle layer
 - harmonizes the Ying and Wei
 - for wind-cold deficiency patterns with presence of sweating
2. warms and unblocks yang qi
 - warms the middle-jiao → abdominal pain due to cold, watery diarrhea
 - warms the chest → chest bi, chest pain, SOB, palpitations
 - warms the UB → edema, urine retention, can be used externally as compress
 - warms the channels and (indirectly) invigorates blood



zǐ sū yè

perillae folium

Temp: warm

Taste: acrid, aromatic

Channels: LU, SP

Dosage: 5-9 grams

1. promotes sweating to release the exterior
 - mild
2. regulates middle-jiao qi
 - for vomiting, nausea, morning sickness
 - calms the fetus; for restless fetus due to middle-jiao qi stagnation
 - Zi Su Geng (perilla stem) is stronger for this
3. detoxifies seafood poisoning



紫
苏
叶

jīng jiè

schizonepetae herba

Temp: slightly warm (almost neutral)

Taste: acrid

Channels: LU, LV

Dosage: 4.5-9 grams

1. promotes sweating to release the exterior
 - used for both wind-cold and wind-heat
 - esp. for skin rash due to wind-heat
2. used charred to stop bleeding
 - esp. for lower-body bleeding (blood in the urine, heavy menstruation, blood in the stool, etc.)
 - when charred, called Jing Jie Tan



荆
芥

fáng fēng

saposhnikoviae radix

Temp: slightly warm (almost neutral)

Taste: acrid, sweet

Channels: UB, LV, SP

Dosage: 4.5-9 grams

1. promotes sweating to release the exterior
 - used for both wind-cold and wind-heat
2. dispels wind-cold-damp from the channels
 - for bi syndrome
3. relieves spasm and contraction
 - for trembling hands and feet, lock jaw, tenesmus
4. detoxifies mercury and arsenic poisoning



Fang Feng means “protect from wind.” It is the commander of all wind herbs. It is not drying, so it will not damage yin.

防
风

qiāng huó

notopterygii rhizoma seu radix

Temp: warm

Taste: acrid, bitter, aromatic

Channels: UB, KI

Dosage: 3-9 grams

1. promotes sweating to release the exterior
 - esp. with accompanying symptoms of dampness, e.g. joint pain, body heaviness, sleepiness
 - for Tai Yang (occipital) headache
2. dispels wind-cold-damp to treat bi syndrome
 - esp. in upper body



羌
活

gǎo běn

ligustici rhizoma

Temp: warm
Taste: acrid
Channels: UB, DU
Dosage: 3-9 grams

藁
本

1. promotes sweating to release the exterior
 - mild
 - esp. for headache (vertex and occipital) and nasal congestion
2. dispels wind-dampness
 - treats bi syndrome, esp. acute low back pain
 - for wind-dampness affecting the the middle-jiao, e.g. acute abdominal pain and diarrhea



bái zhǐ

angelicae dahuricae radix

Temp: warm
Taste: acrid
Channels: LU, SP, ST
Dosage: 3-9 grams

白
芷

1. promotes sweating to release the exterior
 - relieves yang-ming headache
 - opens nasal orifices
2. reduces swelling, stops pain, discharges pus
 - for sores, carbuncles, mastitis
3. eliminates dampness
 - for vaginal discharge due to damp-cold or damp-heat in lower jiao



xì xīn

asari radix et rhizoma

Temp: warm

Taste: acrid, toxic

Channels: LU, HT, KI

Dosage: 1-3 grams

1. promotes sweating to release the exterior
 - esp. for pain; e.g. headache, body ache
2. warms the Lung
 - for profuse, thin, white, bubbly phlegm
3. dispels wind-cold-damp
 - for painful obstruction due to cold

Xi Xin is toxic. It is believed that it can cause Liver cancer and Kidney failure. Boiling the herb reduces its toxic effects. Xi Xin used to be *asari herba*, but it was found that the leaves contain aristolochic acids. Now only the roots and rhizomes are used.



细
辛

shēng jiāng

zingiberis rhizoma recens

Temp: slightly warm

Taste: acrid

Channels: LU, SP, ST

Dosage: 3-9 grams (2-4 slices)

1. promotes sweating to release the exterior
 - mild
2. warms the middle jiao
 - for nausea, vomiting, cold in stomach
3. warms the Lung
 - for profuse, thin, white, bubbly phlegm
4. detoxifies other herbs



生
姜

shēng jiāng pí

zingiberis rhizomatis cortex

Temp: cool
Taste: acrid
Channels: LU, SP, ST
Dosage: 1-3 grams

1. promotes sweating to release the exterior
2. harmonizes the middle jiao
3. promotes urination to treat edema
 - esp. for edema just under the skin

Some books put Sheng Jiang Pi in the category *Herbs that Drain Dampness*.



生
姜
皮

cōng bái

alli fistulosi bulbus

Temp: warm
Taste: acrid
Channels: LU, ST
Dosage: 3-9 grams

1. promotes sweating to release the exterior
 - mild; for early-stage exterior attack
2. warms the yang qi in the Stomach
 - for abdominal pain
3. used externally to resolve toxicity
 - used as poultice for sores and abscesses



葱
白

xiāng rú

moslae herba

Temp: slightly warm
Taste: acrid, aromatic
Channels: LU, ST
Dosage: 3-9 grams

香薷

1. promotes sweating to release the exterior
 - esp. for wind-cold contracted during the summer accompanied by dampness
 - **expels summerheat dampness**
2. promotes urination to treat edema
 - for urinary difficulty, water retention, and dampness accompanying exterior attack



cāng ěr zǐ

xanthii fructus

Temp: warm
Taste: acrid, bitter, slightly toxic
Channels: LU
Dosage: 3-9 grams (usually less than 6 grams)

苍耳子

1. **disperses wind to open nasal orifice**
2. dispels wind-damp to treat bi syndrome
3. treats wind related skin problems
 - e.g. eczema, rash



Overdose of Cang Er Zi can cause symptoms such as digestive problems (n/v, abdominal pain, diarrhea) and fatigue.

xīn yí huā

magnoliae flos

Temp: warm

Taste: acrid

Channels: LU, ST

Dosage: 3-9 grams (put in cloth or bag)

1. disperses wind to open nasal orifice

辛夷花



As Xin Yin Hua is fuzzy, when used in decoction it should be put in a tea bag to avoid throat irritation.

e bu shi cao

centipediae herba

Temp: slightly warm

Taste: acrid

Channels: LU

Dosage: 6-9 grams

1. disperses wind-cold to open nasal orifice
 - esp. when accompanied by red and dry eyes
2. clears heat toxicity

鹅不食草

E Bu Shi Cao means, "grass that geese don't eat."

Large dosages can cause upset stomach. If this occurs, take ginger tea.

Summary

ma huang
ephedrae herba

releases the exterior
• for Tai Yang excess (no sweating)

- stops cough and wheezing
- promotes urination to treat edema

gui zhi
cinnamomi ramulus

releases the exterior
• for Tai Yang deficiency (sweating)

- warms the chest, middle jiao, UB
- indirectly moves blood

zi su ye
perillae folium

releases the exterior
• mild

- moves middle-jiao qi stagnation, esp for morning sickness

jing jie
schizonepetae herba

releases the exterior
• for both wind-heat and wind-cold
• vents rashes

- use charred to stop bleeding (LV channel)

fang feng
saposhnikoviae radix

releases the exterior
• for both wind-heat and wind-cold

- can be used for all types of wind - internal, external, hot, cold

qiang huo
notopterygii rhizoma seu radix

releases the exterior
• esp. when dampness is present

- treats upper-body bi syndrome

gao ben
ligustici rhizoma

releases the exterior
• headache and nasal congestion

- treats bi syndrome, esp acute low back pain (enters DU channel)

bai zhi
angelicae dahuricae radix

releases the exterior
• yangming headache, opens nasal orifices

- reduces swelling and discharges pus
- expels dampness (vaginal discharge)

xi xin
asari radix et rhizoma

releases the exterior
• esp. for body ache and headache

- for pain due to cold
- warms the Lung (profuse sputum)
- toxic (smaller dosage)

sheng jiang
zingiberis rhizoma

releases the exterior
• mild; esp for stomach problems

- warms the middle jiao (n/v)
- warms the Lung (profuse sputum)

sheng jiang pi
zingiberis rhizoma cortex

releases the exterior
• for superficial edema under the skin

cong bai
alli fistulosi bulbus

releases the exterior
• mild, for early-stage

- warms middle jiao

xiang ru
moslae herba

releases the exterior
• for summerheat dampness

cang er zi
xanthii fructus

releases the exterior
• opens nasal orifices

- relaxes joints
- treats skin conditions

xin yi hua
magnoliae flos

releases the exterior
• opens nasal orifices

- cook in tea bag or wrapped in gauze