

# HERBS THE CLEAR HEAT AND DRY DAMPNESS

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**Sources:**

- Bensky, D. (2004). *Chinese Herbal Medicine: Materia Medica*. Seattle, WA: Eastland Press. pp. 130-148
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## Herbs that Clear Heat and Dry Dampness

Dampness is characterized by stubbornness. Damp-heat is especially difficult because dampness is a yin pathogen and heat is a yang pathogen.

- Diarrhea, dysentery
- Urination problems (difficult or painful urination)
- Jaundice
- Skin problems (boils, furuncles, carbuncles, eczema)
- Vaginal discharge

These herbs are cold and bitter. Use caution in cases of Spleen deficiency.

These herbs are often combined with Herbs that Drain Fire or Herbs that Resolve Toxicity.

## Herbs that Clear Heat and Dry Dampness

<b>Taste:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• bitter</li></ul>
<b>Temperature:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• cold</li></ul>
<b>Channels:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ???</li></ul>
<b>Cautions &amp; Contraindications:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• These herbs are cold and bitter; they may damage the Spleen</li></ul>
<b>Main Action:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clear heat and dry dampness (dysentery, urination problems, jaundice, skin problems)</li></ul>
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• These herbs are often combined with Herbs that Drain Fire or Herbs that Resolve Toxicity</li></ul>

## Herbs that Clear Heat and Dry Dampness

- huáng qín
- huáng lián
- huáng bǎi
- lóng dǎn cǎo
- kǔ shēn
- qín pí

# The Three Huangs

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<b>Huang Qin</b>	<b>UPPER JIAO</b> Clears Lung heat: fever, thirst, cough with thick, yellow, sticky sputum	Also clears heat from Stomach, Gallbladder, and Lower Jiao
<b>Huang Lian</b>	<b>MIDDLE JIAO</b> Damp-heat in SP/ST: diarrhea	Also clears Heart heat
<b>Huang Bai</b>	<b>LOWER JIAO</b> Damp-heat in UB: vaginal discharge, urination problems	Also clears heat due to Kidney yin deficiency

## huáng qín *scutellariae radix*

黄芩

**Temp:** cold

**Taste:** bitter

**Channels:** LU, ST, GB, LI

**Dosage:** 3-9 grams

- clears heat and dries dampness
  - for damp-heat in the Stomach, Large Intestine (diarrhea)
  - for damp-heat in the lower jiao (urination problems)
- clears heat and resolves toxicity
  - clears Lung heat** → fever, thirst, irritability, cough with thick yellow sputum
  - clears Liver heat → headache, irritability, red eyes, bitter taste
  - for hot sores and boils (also used topically)
- cools blood to stop bleeding
- calms the fetus

Of the three huangs, Huang Qin is the weakest.

# huáng lián

## *coptidis rhizoma*

**Temp:** cold  
**Taste:** bitter  
**Channels:** HT, LI, LV, ST  
**Dosage:** 1.5-9 grams

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1. clears heat and dries dampness
  - for damp-heat in the Stomach, Large Intestine (diarrhea)
2. clears heat and resolves toxicity
  - clears Heart heat (irritability, delirium, disorientation)
  - clears Stomach heat (nausea, acid reflux)
  - treats skin problems (boils, carbuncles, abscesses)
3. cools blood to stop bleeding

Of the three huangs, Huang Lian is the strongest.  
Huang Lian can be used topically on the eyes, tongue, and mouth.

# huáng bǎi

## *phellodendri cortex*

**Temp:** cold  
**Taste:** bitter  
**Channels:** KI, UB  
**Dosage:** 3-12 grams

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1. clears heat and dries dampness
  - esp. for damp-heat in the lower jiao
  - for leukorrhea, diarrhea, pain in knees
2. clears deficiency heat
  - for heat due to Kidney yin deficiency

# **lóng dǎn cǎo**

## *gentianae radix*

**Temp:** cold

**Taste:** bitter

**Channels:** LV, GB, ST

**Dosage:** 3-9 grams

### 1. clears heat and dries dampness

- drains damp-heat from Liver and Gallbladder
- for jaundice, leukorrhea, genital itching, herpes

### 2. clears excess heat from Liver and Gallbladder

- for headache, red eyes, flank pain

龙胆草

# **kǔ shēn**

## *sophorae flavescens radix*

**Temp:** cold

**Taste:** bitter

**Channels:** UB, HT, LV, LI, ST, SI

**Dosage:** 3-9 grams

### 1. clears heat and dries dampness

- for damp-heat in the lower jiao
- for jaundice, diarrhea, leukorrhea, sores

### 2. kills parasites and stops itching

- for fungal infections, genital itching, athlete's foot
- used internally or externally

### 3. promotes urination to treat lin syndrome

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# qín pí

*fraxini cortex*

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**Temp:** cold  
**Taste:** bitter, astringent  
**Channels:** GB, LI, LV, ST  
**Dosage:** 6-12 grams

1. clears heat and dries dampness
  - for diarrhea and dysentery
  - binds the intestines
2. clears Liver heat to brighten eyes
3. treats hot bi syndrome
4. stops cough and wheezing
  - for cough due to Lung heat



## Summary

**huang qin**  
*scutellariae radix*

clears heat and dries dampness  
• primarily from Lung and Stomach

- calms fetus
- stops bleeding

**huang lian**  
*coptidis rhizoma*

clears heat and dries dampness  
• primarily from Stomach and Heart  
• diarrhea

- stops bleeding

**huang bai**  
*phellodendri cortex*

clears heat and dries dampness  
• primarily from lower jiao

- clears deficiency heat

**long dan cao**  
*gentianae radix*

clears heat and dries dampness  
• LV/GB heat and damp-heat

**ku shen**  
*sophorae flavescens radix*

clears heat and dries dampness  
• primarily from lower burner

- kills parasites (fungal infections)

**qin pí**  
*fraxini cortex*

clears heat and dries dampness  
• diarrhea (astringent)  
• brightens eyes

- hot bi syndrome

