

HERBS THAT CLEAR HEAT AND RESOLVE TOXICITY

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Sources:

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Herbs that Clear Heat and Resolve Toxicity

Heat toxicity (热毒 rè dú) is extreme accumulation of heat, usually associated with an infectious disease.

Herbs in this category treat symptoms such as:

- hot, swollen, painful, deep-set sores (boils, carbuncles, furuncles)
- abscess (collection of pus), including breast abscess and intestinal abscess
- diarrhea and dysentery (inflammation of colon, severe diarrhea, abdominal pain)
- epidemic febrile outbreak (e.g. mumps, encephalitis)
- snake bite or insect bite
- cancer

Heat toxicity is almost always acute in nature.

Many of these herbs can also be used topically as well.

Herbs that Clear Heat and Resolve Toxicity

- **Abscess** - swollen area within body tissue, containing an accumulation of pus
- **Boil** - skin infection that starts in a hair follicle or oil gland, usually caused by staphylococcal bacteria
- **Furuncle** - same thing as a boil
- **Carbuncle** - red, swollen, and painful cluster of boils that are connected to each other under the skin
- **Sty** - a boil that forms in the eyelid

Herbs that Clear Heat and Resolve Toxicity

Taste:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• bitter
Temperature:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• cold
Channels:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ???
Cautions & Contraindications:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• These herbs are cold and bitter; they may damage the Spleen
Main Action:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear heat toxicity (skin infections with pus, dysentery, viral infections)
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some of these herbs also have anti-cancer properties

Herbs that Clear Heat and Resolve Toxicity

- jīn yín huā
- lián qiào
- dà qīng yè / bǎn lán gēn
- qīng dǎi
- pú gōng yīng
- zǐ huā dì dīng
- bài jiàng cǎo
- chuān xīn lián
- bài huā shé shé cǎo
- bài tóu wēng
- mǎ chǐ xiàn
- hé yè
- lù dóu
- bái xiān pí
- tǔ fú líng
- shān dóu gēn
- shè gān

jīn yín huā *Ionicerae flos*

Temp: cold
Taste: sweet
Channels: LI, LU, ST
Dosage: 6-20 grams

1. clears heat toxicity

- for hot, painful sores and swellings on the throat, breast, eyes
- for large intestine abscess, diarrhea with blood or pus
- can be used internally or externally to treat skin infection

2. expels wind-heat invasion

3. clears damp-heat from lower-jiao

- for lin syndrome, diarrhea

4. use charred to stop bleeding

- for bloody dysentery

金
银
花



lián qiào

forsythiae fructus

Temp: slightly cold
Taste: bitter, slightly acrid
Channels: HT, LU, GB
Dosage: 6-15 grams

连
翘

1. clears heat toxicity
 - esp. Heart heat, heat in upper jiao
 - promotes urination to treat lin syndrome
2. expels wind-heat invasion
3. discharges pus
 - for sores, abscess, scrofula, throat obstruction



dà qīng yè / bǎn lán gēn

isatidis folium / isatidis radix

Temp: very cold
Taste: bitter
Channels: HT, LU, ST
Dosage: 9-15 grams

大 | 板
青 | 蓝
叶 | 根

1. clears heat toxicity
 - for epidemic febrile disease
 - esp. for throat problems, Lung heat
2. cools the blood
 - for macular rashes or skin eruptions due to blood heat
 - for bleeding due to blood heat (nosebleed, vomiting blood, etc.)



qīng dǎi

indigo naturalis

Temp: cold
Taste: salty
Channels: LV, LU, ST
Dosage: 1.5-3 grams (stir powder with strained decoction)

青
黛

1. clears heat toxicity and cools the blood
 - for swelling, macular rashes, mumps, and other skin eruptions
 - for swollen painful throat, mouth sores
 - for bleeding due to heat; esp. nosebleed
2. drains Liver fire, extinguishes wind, and stops tremor
 - for febrile convulsions
 - for cough due to Liver fire entering the Lung

Qing Dai is powder from indigo plant processed with lime (calcium-oxide — not the fruit). It can be used externally for skin problems and nosebleed



pú gōng yīng

taraxaci herba

Temp: cold
Taste: bitter, sweet
Channels: LV, ST
Dosage: 9-30 grams

蒲
公
英

1. clears heat toxicity
 - reduces swelling and pain, discharges pus
 - **for breast abscess, mastitis**
2. clears Liver heat to brighten eyes
3. promotes urination to drain dampness
 - for jaundice, lin syndrome

Pu Gong Ying is dandelion. It can be used internally as a decoction, or externally as a fresh poultice.



zǐ huā dì dīng

violae herba

Temp: cold
Taste: bitter, acrid
Channels: HT, LV
Dosage: 15-30 grams

1. clears heat toxicity

- treats skin infection; for deep-set, hot sores
- for insect bites, snake bites
- used internally or externally (usually fresh)



紫
花
地
丁

bài jiàng cǎo

patrinae herba

Temp: slightly cold
Taste: acrid, bitter
Channels: ST, LI, LV
Dosage: 6-15 grams

1. clears heat toxicity and discharges pus

- for hot sores, Large Intestine abscess

2. invigorates blood

- for pain due to blood stagnation caused by heat
- esp. for abdominal pain, chest pain, postpartum pain, OB/GYN conditions



败
酱
草

chuān xīn lián

andrographitis herba

Temp: cold
Taste: bitter
Channels: LU, ST, LI, SI
Dosage: 6-15 grams

1. clears heat toxicity

- for Lung heat and upper-body conditions (throat, ears, eyes)
- applied externally for scald, burn, snakebite, nosebleed

2. dispels dampness

- for diarrhea due to damp-heat
- promotes urination to treat lin syndrome
- used externally for eczema

Some sources say Chuan Xin Lian has antibiotic, antiviral, and anti-inflammatory properties, and can inhibit staphylococcus and streptococcus organisms. Chuan Xin Lian may have certain anti-cancer properties.



穿
心
莲

bài huā shé shé cǎo

hedyotis diffusae herba

Temp: cold
Taste: bitter, sweet
Channels: ST, LI, SI
Dosage: 15-30 grams

1. clears heat toxicity

- used internally and externally to treat skin infection
- for cancer, especially cancer in the digestive system
- used externally for snakebite

2. promotes urination

- for lin syndrome and jaundice due to damp-heat

Bai Hua She is a snake ("white flower snake"). This herb resembles the tongue of Bai Hua She.



白
花
蛇
舌
草

hé yè

nelumbinis folium

Temp: neutral

Taste: bitter, slightly sweet

Channels: HT, LV, SP

Dosage: 3-9 grams

1. clears heat

- esp. for summer heat

2. transforms middle-jiao dampness

- esp. for diarrhea

3. stops bleeding

- mild
- for lower jiao bleeding or vomiting of blood due to heat or stagnation

He Ye can also be used in food therapy.

荷
叶



lù dòu

phaseoli radiati semen

Temp: cold

Taste: sweet

Channels: HT, SP, ST, UB

Dosage: 15-30 grams, used in food therapy

1. clears heat toxicity

- used internally or externally, for skin problems, eye problems, throat problems, bites

2. clears summer heat

- esp. when thirst is the main symptom

3. promotes urination to treat edema

- esp. for edema with diabetes

4. detoxifies Fu Zi poisoning

Lu Dou can be used in food therapy by cooking with congee, or by grinding into a powder and drinking as tea. It can also be made into a sleeping pillow to benefit the eyes, ears, treat headaches, and correct upside-down sleeping pattern.

绿
豆



bài tóu wēng

pulsatillae radix

Temp: cold
Taste: bitter
Channels: LI, ST
Dosage: 6-15 grams

1. clears heat toxicity

- one of the most effective herbs for dysentery



白
头
翁

bái xiān pí

dictomni cortex

Temp: cold
Taste: bitter
Channels: SP, ST
Dosage: 4.5-9 grams

1. clears heat toxicity and damp-heat

- used internally or externally
- for damp-heat related skin problems (moist, lots of pus)
- for leukorrhea, vaginal discharge (stops itching)

2. dispels wind and dampness

- mild; for jaundice and bi syndrome



白
鲜
皮

mǎ chǐ xiàn

portulacae herba

Temp: cold
Taste: sour (slippery)
Channels: LI, LV
Dosage: 9-15 grams

1. clears heat toxicity and damp-heat

- used internally and externally for skin infection (boils, abscesses, sores, carbuncles)
- for snake bite and wasp sting
- for dysentery, diarrhea
- for leukorrhea and lin syndrome due to heat

2. induces astringency

- for OB/GYN conditions such as profuse menstruation, leukorrhea, lingering lochia (postpartum bleeding)

Contraindicated during pregnancy. According to the Grand Materia Medica, Ma Chi Xian "terminates pregnancy."



马
齿
苋

tǔ fú líng

smilacis glabrae rhizoma

Temp: neutral
Taste: sweet, bland
Channels: LV, ST
Dosage: 15-60 grams

1. clears heat toxicity and resolves dampness

- treats skin infection associated with dampness
- for mercury poisoning (which was used to treat syphilis)

2. benefits joints

- for painful joints and bi syndrome due to damp-heat
- for muscle spasm associated with syphilis

3. promotes urination

- for lin syndrome and jaundice



土
茯
苓

shān dòu gēn

sophorae tokinensis radix

Temp: cold
Taste: bitter
Channels: LU, LI
Dosage: 3-9 grams

1. clears heat toxicity and benefits throat
 - for swollen, painful throat
 - used internally or externally as gargle
2. clears heat toxicity
 - treat skin infection; for sores and abscesses
 - anti-cancer (esp. throat cancer and lung cancer)



山
豆
根

shè gān

belamcandae rhizoma

Temp: cold
Taste: bitter
Channels: LU
Dosage: 3-9 grams

1. clears heat toxicity and benefits throat
 - for swollen, painful throat
2. transforms phlegm
 - for cough and wheezing due to phlegm obstruction



Because of its downward-directing nature, She Gan is "relatively contraindicated during pregnancy."

射
干

ma bo

lasiosphaera

Temp: neutral
Taste: acrid
Channels: LU
Dosage: 1.5-6 grams

马
勃

1. clears heat toxicity and benefits the Lung and throat

- for swollen, painful throat
- for loss of voice or cough due to Lung heat

2. stops bleeding

- usually for bleeding in the mouth or lips
- used internally or externally



Ma Bo is a puffball (I guess that's some kind of fungus maybe?).

ya dan zi

bruceae fructus

Temp: cold
Taste: bitter, toxic
Channels: LI, LV
Dosage: 0.5-2 grams

鸭
蛋
子

1. clears heat toxicity and kills parasites

- for chronic or recurring dysentery; esp. amebic dysentery
- for malarial disorders
- **used externally for corn and warts**
- anti-cancer; esp. colon or breast cancer

Ya Dan Zi is toxic to the Liver and Kidneys. It should not be taken in large dosages or longterm.

Summary

jīn yīn huā <i>loniceræ flos</i>	clears heat toxicity • treats skin infection	• expels wind-heat • clears lower-jiao damp heat
lián qiào <i>forsythiæ fructus</i>	clears heat toxicity • esp for Heart heat	• expels wind-heat • discharges pus
dà qīng yè/bān lán gēn <i>isatidis folium/radix</i>	clears heat toxicity • for epidemic diseases • for Lung heat, throat problems	• cools blood, treats rashes and bleeding
qīng dài <i>indigo naturalis</i>	clears heat toxicity • treats skin infection	• cools blood, stops bleeding • drains Liver fire (tremor, Liver-Lung cough)
pū gōng yīng <i>taraxici herba</i>	clears heat toxicity • breast abscess	• brightens eyes • drains dampness (jaundice and lin)
zǐ huā dì dīng <i>violæ herba</i>	clears heat toxicity • treats skin infection (deep-rooted sores)	
bái jiāng cǎo <i>patriniae herba</i>	clears heat toxicity • treats skin infection, LI abscess	• invigorate blood to stop pain
chuān xīn lián <i>andrographitis herba</i>	clears heat toxicity • Lung heat	• resolves dampness (jaundice, lin, eczema)

bái huā shè shè cǎo <i>hedyotis diffusae herba</i>	clears heat toxicity • treats skin infection • cancer (esp digestive system)	
hè yè <i>nelumbinis folium</i>	clears summer heat	• transforms middle-jiao dampness (diarrhea)
lù dòu <i>phaseoli radiati semen</i>	clears heat toxicity • treats skin infection clears summer heat	• promotes urination to treat edema • detoxifies Fu Zi poisoning
bái tóu wēng <i>pulsatillae radix</i>	clears heat toxicity • dysentery	
bái xiān pǐ <i>dictamnī cortex</i>	clears heat toxicity and damp-heat • treats skin infection (pus) • itchy vaginal discharge	
mǎ chí xiān <i>partulacæ herba</i>	clears heat toxicity and damp-heat • treats skin infection (pus) • diarrhea, dysentery, leukorrhea	• induces astringency to stop bleeding
tú fú líng <i>similacis glare rhizoma</i>	clears heat toxicity and damp-heat • treats skin infection (pus) • detoxifies mercury	• benefits joints
shān dòu gēn <i>sophoræ tokinensis radix</i>	clears heat toxicity • treats skin infection • benefits throat	
shè gān <i>belamcandæ radix</i>	clears heat toxicity • benefits throat	• transforms phlegm (cough, throat obstruction)