

AROMATIC HERBS THAT TRANSFORM DAMPNESS

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Sources:

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Aromatic Herbs that Transform Dampness

Aromatic herbs have three properties:

1. They have a strong, fragrant smell
2. They treat middle-jiao dampness
3. They activate middle-jiao function

Theoretically, these herbs should be added during the last five minutes of cooking to preserve their aromatic properties (this is not always done in practice).

These herbs tend to be warm, acrid, and drying. They may cause heat signs or dryness. Use caution in patients with yin deficiency.

Signs and Symptoms:

- abdominal fullness, nausea, vomiting
- absence of thirst, poor appetite
- morning lethargy, grogginess, stiffness
- diarrhea, vaginal discharge
- greasy tongue coat; soggy or slippery pulse

Aromatic Herbs that Transform Dampness

Taste:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• acrid, aromatic• bitter (sometimes)
Temperature:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• warm
Channels:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SP/ST
Main Action:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Awaken the Spleen to transform dampness
Cautions & Contraindications:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• These herbs are warm, acrid and drying. They may exhaust qi or dry up yin.
Other:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add last five minutes (theoretically)

Aromatic Herbs that Transform Dampness

- hòu pò
- cāng zhú
- huǒ xiāng
- shā rén
- bái dòu kòu
- cǎo dòu kòu
- cǎo guǒ

cāng zhú

atractylodis rhizoma

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

苍
术

1. strongly dries dampness and strengthens the Spleen
 - **transforms middle-jiao dampness:** for diarrhea, n/v, fatigue
 - **clears lower-jiao damp-heat:** combine with cold herbs; for vaginal discharge, swollen joints
 - essential herb for dampness; use whenever the tongue coat is thick
2. dispels wind-dampness from the channels and muscles
 - body ache and body heaviness, damp-predominant bi syndrome
3. brightens the eyes
 - for night blindness, poor vision, cataracts and glaucoma



Cang Zhu is a Spleen/Stomach guiding herb.

hòu pò

magnolia officinalis cortex

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

厚
朴

1. moves qi and dries dampness
2. moves middle-jiao qi
 - for qi stagnation or food stagnation
 - moves qi downward
3. transforms phlegm and stops cough
 - for cough and wheezing due to phlegm obstructing the Lung



Due to its downward nature, use caution during pregnancy.

huǒ xiāng

pogostemonis/agastaches herba

Temp: slightly warm

Taste: acrid

Channels: LU, SP, ST

Dosage: 3-9 grams (add last five minutes)

1. transforms middle-jiao dampness

- esp. for nausea and vomiting, motions sickness, stomach flu
- also treats summerheat

2. harmonizes middle-jiao

- for nausea and vomiting

3. releases the exterior

- mild; for wind-cold and summerheat-dampness
- esp. when nausea and vomiting are present

Chief herb in *Huo Xiang Zheng Qi San*; for exterior attack with n/v, such as stomach flu.



藿香

shā rén

amomi fructus

Temp: warm

Taste: acrid, aromatic

Channels: SP, ST

Dosage: 3-6 grams (crush first, add last five minutes)

1. transforms middle-jiao dampness and moves qi

2. warms middle-jiao

- esp. for **diarrhea** due to cold

3. calms restless fetus to prevent miscarriage

Also used in formulas with tonifying herbs to prevent stagnation.



砂仁

bái dòu kòu

amomi fructus rotundus

Temp: warm
Taste: acrid, aromatic
Channels: LU, SP, ST
Dosage: 3-6 grams (crush first)

1. transforms middle-jiao dampness and moves qi
 - for vomiting and nausea
 - can be used as single herb
2. warms middle-jiao
 - for vomiting due to cold



白
豆
蔻

cǎo dòu kòu

alpiniae katsumadai semen

Temp: warm
Taste: acrid, aromatic
Channels: SP, ST
Dosage: 3-6 grams (crush first, add last five minutes)

1. dries dampness and moves qi
2. warms middle-jiao
 - for abdominal fullness and pain, nausea, vomiting due to cold



Cao Dou Kou is stronger than Bai Dou Kou and may be overly warm and drying.

草
豆
蔻

cǎo guǒ

tsaoko fructus

草
果

Temp: warm
Taste: acrid
Channels: SP, ST
Dosage: 3-6 grams

1. strongly dries dampness and disperses cold
2. transforms phlegm-cold in the Lung
 - treats malaria disorders



Can also be used for food stagnation from overconsumption of meat.

Summary

cang zhu
atractylodis rhizoma

transforms dampness

- treats wind-dampness
- brightens eyes
- guides other herbs to SP/ST

hou po
magnoliae officinalis rhizoma

transforms dampness

- downward action to treat rebellious qi
- transforms phlegm and stops cough

huo xiang
pogostemonis herba

transforms dampness
• n/v, stomach flu

- summerheat
- releases exterior

sha ren
amomi fructus

transforms dampness & warms m-j
• **diarrhea**

- **calms restless fetus**

bai dou kou
amomi fructus rotundus

transforms dampness & warms m-j
• **vomiting and nausea**

cao dou kou
alpine katsumadai semen

transforms dampness & warms m-j
• stronger than bai dou kou

cao guo
tsaoko fructus

strongly dries dampness & warms m-j

- malaria