

**HERBS THAT INVIGORATE BLOOD**

Revised: 8/19/2019

Sources:


Herbs that Invigorate Blood

Symptoms of Blood Stagnation may include:

- Fixed, sharp pain (including headache)
- Menstruation problems
- Chest Bi (angina pain)
- Dry or scaly skin with dull complexion
- Choppy pulse
- Purple tongue with prickles

Herbs in this category tend to be warm, acrid, and dry, and may damage yin and blood.

Use caution during pregnancy, or with profuse menses.
## Herbs that Invigorate Blood

| Taste:   | • acrid  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>• bitter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Temperature:</td>
<td>• warm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channels:</td>
<td>• LV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Action:</td>
<td>• Invigorate blood; remove blood stasis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Cautions & Contraindications: | • Use caution during pregnancy.  
|                                      | • Use caution with heavy menses. |

### Herbs that Invigorate Blood

- chuān xiōng
- chì sháo
- dān shēn
- jì xuè téng
- yán hú suǒ
- yù jīn
- yì mù cǎo
- jiāng huáng
- zé lán
- táo rén
- hóng huā
- é zhú
- sān léng
- rǔ xiāng
- mò yào
- niú xī
- wáng bù liú xíng
- wǔ líng zhī
chuān xiōng
*chuanxiong rhizoma*

**Temp:** warm  
**Taste:** acrid  
**Channels:** LV, GB, PC  
**Dosage:** 3-9 grams

1. invigorates blood and moves qi
   - stops pain  
2. expels wind and treats headache

Some people say that Chuan Xiong is especially useful for Yang Ming headache. Some people say it’s better for Shao Yang or Shao Yin headache. Some people say it’s only for headache during an external attack. In practice, it is used for any type of headache with any pattern, depending on what herbs it’s combined with.

chì sháo
*paeoniae radix rubra*

**Temp:** slightly cold  
**Taste:** sour, bitter  
**Channels:** LV, SP  
**Dosage:** 6-15 grams

1. invigorates blood  
2. clears heat and cools blood
dān shēn
*salviae miltiorrhizae radix*

**Temp:** slightly cold  
**Taste:** bitter  
**Channels:** HT, PC, LV  
**Dosage:** 6-15 grams

1. **invigorates blood**  
   - moves blood to treat chest bi  
   - softens hardness and masses (for tumor, cirrhosis, fibroids, etc)

2. **clears Heart heat to calm shen**  
   - also tonifies yin/blood to calm shen  
   - for restlessness, irritability, insomnia, palpitation

3. **clears heat toxicity to treat skin problems**  
   - for early-stage breast abscess (internal use only)

Dan Shen is the most essential herb for treating Chest Bi due to blood stagnation.

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jī xuè téng
*spatholobi caulis*

**Temp:** warm  
**Taste:** bitter, sweet  
**Channels:** HT, LV, SP  
**Dosage:** 9-15 grams

1. **invigorates blood**

2. **tonifies blood**

3. **stretches, smoothes, relaxes, and unblocks the channels to treat bi syndrome**  
   - for internal wind (e.g. numbness, tingling, loss of sensation, clenched jaw, etc.)

Ji Xue Teng is not strong at tonifying or invigorating blood, however the combination of all three functions makes it especially useful for treating internal wind due to blood deficiency.
Yan Hu Suo is a pain killer. It is related to the opium family. Compared to opium, it is not as strong, but it is longer lasting and not addictive.

Yan Hu Suo  
*corydalis rhizoma*

**Temp:** warm  
**Taste:** acrid, bitter  
**Channels:** HT, LV, ST  
**Dosage:** 3-9 grams  

1. invigorates blood and moves qi to **stop pain**

Yu Jin
*curcumae radix*

**Temp:** cold  
**Taste:** acrid, bitter  
**Channels:** HT, LU, LV  
**Dosage:** 6-12 grams

1. invigorates blood and moves Liver qi
   - stops pain (esp. for trauma)
   - softens hardness and masses
2. clears heat and cools blood
   - for nosebleed, vomiting blood, blood in the urine, nosebleed at the onset of menstruation (inverted menses)
3. transforms phlegm
   - for shen problems due to insubstantial phlegm misting Heart orifices
4. relieves jaundice
**yì mǔ cǎo**
*leonuri herba*

- **Temp:** slightly cold
- **Taste:** acrid, bitter
- **Channels:** HT, LV, UB
- **Dosage:** 9-15 grams

1. invigorates blood  
   - esp. for OB/GYN conditions, including abdominal masses
2. promotes urination  
   - for lin syndrome or acute edema
3. clears heat toxicity  
   - for carbuncles, sores, boils; use topically as fresh herb

Yi Mu Cao means “benefitting mother grass”. It is an important herbs for treating gynecological issues.

**jiāng huáng**
*curcumae longae rhizoma*

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

1. invigorates blood and moves qi  
   - esp. for menstruation problems from blood stagnation due to cold
2. treats bi syndrome  
   - for wind-damp bi syndrome with blood stagnation  
   - esp. for shoulder pain

Jiang Huang is turmeric. Because it is moving and has a downward direction, it is contraindicated during pregnancy.
1. invigorates blood
   - for pain and swelling due to trauma
2. promotes urination to treat edema
3. treats skin infection
   - use topically as fresh herb

Tao Ren is peach kernel and is toxic in larger dosages. Tao Ren and Hong Hua are often used together as paired herbs. Both are contraindicated during pregnancy.
**hóng huā**  
*carthami flos*

- **Temp:** warm  
- **Taste:** acrid  
- **Channels:** HT, LV  
- **Dosage:** 3-9 grams

1. invigorates blood

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Red flower

Tao Ren and Hong Hua are often used together as paired herbs. Both are contraindicated during pregnancy.

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**é zhú**  
*curcumae rhizoma*

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

1. strongly moves blood
2. softens hardness and masses  
   - for pain and abdominal masses due to blood stasis
3. treats cancer  
   - for “solid” cancers, such as cervical cancer

E Zhu and San Leng are used together as paired herbs.  
Contraindicated during pregnancy.
sān léng  
sparganii rhizoma

Temp: neutral  
Taste: bitter, acrid  
Channels: LV, SP  
Dosage: 3-9 grams

1. strongly moves blood  
2. softens hardness and masses  
   • for pain and abdominal masses due to blood stasis

E Zhu and San Leng are used together as paired herbs.  
Contraindicated during pregnancy.

ru xiāng  
olibanum

Temp: warm  
Taste: bitter, acrid  
Channels: HT, LV, SP  
Dosage: 3-9 grams (melt in at end)

1. strongly moves blood  
   • stops pain; for injury and trauma  
   • can be used internally or externally  
2. promotes regeneration of flesh  
   • for healing wounds

Ru Xiang is a tree sap (frankinsence). Used internally, it can cause stomach irritation. Used externally, it can cause skin irritation. Contraindicated during pregnancy.
**mò yào**
*myrrha*

**Temp:** neutral  
**Taste:** bitter  
**Channels:** HT, LV, SP  
**Dosage:** 3-9 grams (melt in at end)

1. strongly moves blood
   - stops pain; for injury and trauma  
   - can be used internally or externally
2. promotes regeneration of flesh
   - for healing wounds

Mo Yao is a tree sap (myrrh). Used internally, it can cause stomach irritation. Used externally, it can cause skin irritation. Contraindicated during pregnancy. Ru Xiang and Mo Yao reinforce each other and are often used together.

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**niú xī**
*achyranthis bidentatae radix*

**Temp:** neutral  
**Taste:** bitter, sour  
**Channels:** LV, KI  
**Dosage:** 6-15 grams

1. invigorates blood
   - guides blood downward; for painful menses, amenorrhea, lochia retention
2. tonifies Liver and Kidney yin to strengthen tendon and bone
   - for bone weakness, osteoporosis
3. descends upper body heat
   - for dizziness, headache, nosebleed, etc. due to Liver yang rising
4. promotes urination
   - for damp-heat in the lower jiao

Chuan Niu Xi is better at moving blood. Huai Niu Xi is better at everything else. Contraindicated during pregnancy.
wáng bù liú xíng
*vaccariae semen*

*Temp:* neutral  
*Taste:* bitter  
*Channels:* LV, ST  
*Dosage:* 4.5-9 grams

1. invigorates blood
   - promotes lactation; for poor lactation due to blood stagnation
   - unblocks menses; for amenorrhea due to blood stagnation
2. reduces painful swellings
   - esp. for swelling of breasts or testicles
3. promotes urination
   - for stone lin

"Even the King cannot stop it from moving."
Wang Bu Liu Xing is also as ear seeds.

wǔ líng zhī
*trogopterori faeces*

*Temp:* warm  
*Taste:* bitter, sweet, (salty)  
*Channels:* LV, ST  
*Dosage:* 4.5-9 grams

1. invigorates blood and stops pain
   - esp. for painful menses
2. stops bleeding
   - for heavy menses due to blood stagnation
   - use charred

Traditionally, Wu Ling Zhi should not be used with Ren Shen.
# Summary

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<th>Herb/Component</th>
<th>Function(s)</th>
<th>Additional Notes</th>
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<td>chuan xiong</td>
<td>invigorates qi and blood</td>
<td>treats headache</td>
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<tr>
<td>chi shao</td>
<td>invigorates blood</td>
<td>cools blood</td>
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<td>dan shen</td>
<td>invigorates blood</td>
<td>calms shen, clears heat toxicity, temp. cool</td>
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<tr>
<td>ji xue teng</td>
<td>invigorates blood</td>
<td>tonifies blood, unblocks channels to treat bi syndrome</td>
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<tr>
<td>yan hu suo</td>
<td>invigorates qi and blood</td>
<td>pain killer</td>
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<tr>
<td>yu jin</td>
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<td>cools blood, treats phlegm misting the Heart, relieves jaundice</td>
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<td>yi mu cao</td>
<td>invigorates blood</td>
<td>promotes urination, clears heat toxicity</td>
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<tr>
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<td>ze lan</td>
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<td>tao ren</td>
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<td>hong hua</td>
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<td>e zhu</td>
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<td>niu xi</td>
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<td>• moves downward</td>
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<tr>
<td>wang bu liu ting</td>
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<td>• reduces swelling (breast and testicles)</td>
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