

HERBS THAT STABILIZE AND BIND

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Sources:

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Herbs that Stabilize and Bind

This category is also called “Astringent Herbs” or “Herbs that Induce Astringency.” These herbs restrain prevent the abnormal leakage of fluids from the body.

Lung Leakage:

- cough, wheezing, shortness of breath
- sweating

Middle-Jiao/ Large Intestine Leakage:

- diarrhea

Kidney Leakage:

- frequent, copious, uncontrolled urination
- leakage of essence: seminal emission, vaginal discharge

These herbs are for long-standing, chronic cases of leakage due to deficiency. They should not be used for excess conditions as they can trap the pathogen inside the body (this is like locking the door when the thief is still in the house).

These herbs treat the branch symptoms only. They should be combined with tonifying herbs to treat the root cause.

Herbs that Stabilize and Bind

Taste:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sour/astringent
Temperature:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • warm or neutral
Channels:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LU, LI, KI
Main Action:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induce astringency to stop leakage
Other:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These herbs are used to treat leakage due to deficiency. • Avoid detaining evil: if a pathogen is still present, astringent herbs can trap the pathogen in. Expel the evil first before giving astringent herbs. • These herb treat the branch symptoms. They should be combined with tonifying herbs to treat the root.

Herbs that Stabilize and Bind

COUGH/SWEATING

- wǔ wèi zǐ
- fú xiǎo mài
- bái guǒ

DIARRHEA

- wū méi
- hē zǐ
- ròu dòu kòu
- chūn pí
- chī shí zhǐ
- lián zǐ
- qiàn shí

URINE/ESSENCE

- shān zhū yú
- jīn yīng zǐ
- fù péng zǐ
- hǎi piāo xiāo
- sāng piāo xiāo

wǔ wèi zǐ

schisandrae fructus

Temp: warm
Taste: sweet, sour
Channels: KI, HT, LU
Dosage: 3-6 grams

1. constrains Lung qi leakage
 - for coughing and wheezing due to deficiency
2. stops sweating and generates fluids
 - for spontaneous sweating, night sweats (esp. with thirst or dry throat)
3. stops Kidney leakage
 - for leakage of essence: nocturnal emission, spermatorrhea, vaginal discharge, frequent urination
 - for early morning diarrhea due to KI/SP yang deficiency
4. calms shen
 - holds Heart qi together; prevents qi from scattering
 - for irritability, insomnia, palpitations, dream-disturbed sleep



五味子

fú xiǎo mài

tritici fructus levis

Temp: cool
Taste: sweet, slightly salty
Channels: HT
Dosage: 15-30 grams

1. inhibits sweating
 - for spontaneous sweating due to qi deficiency
 - for night sweating due to yin deficiency
2. tonifies Heart qi to calm shen



浮小麦

bái guǒ

ginkgo semen

Temp: neutral

Taste: sweet, bitter, astringent, slightly toxic

Channels: LU, ST

Dosage: 3-9 grams (crush before decocting)

白
果

1. constrains Lung qi and stops wheezing

- for wheezing and coughing
- esp. for chronic cough or cough copious phlegm

2. eliminates dampness and induces astringency

- for abnormal vaginal discharge
- for turbid urine, frequent urination, enuresis
- used for both deficiency and damp-heat



má huáng gēn

ephedrae radix

Temp: neutral

Taste: sweet

Channels: LU

Dosage: 3-9 grams

麻
黃
根

1. stops sweating

- for spontaneous sweating due to qi deficiency, night sweats due to yin deficiency, and postpartum sweating

wū méi

mume fructus

Temp: warm
Taste: sour, astringent
Channels: LI, LV, LU, SP
Dosage: 6-12 grams

1. constrains Lung qi leakage
 - for chronic cough due to Lung deficiency
2. binds up Intestines and stops diarrhea
 - for chronic diarrhea and dysentery
 - for blood in the stool (use charred)
3. generates fluids and alleviates thirst
 - for thirst due to deficiency heat, wasting and thirsting disorder
4. quiets roundworms and alleviates pain
 - for vomiting roundworms and abdominal pain

Wu Mei can also be used topically for skin sores, corns, and warts.

烏梅



hē zǐ

chebulae fructus

Temp: neutral
Taste: bitter, sour, astringent
Channels: LU, ST, LI
Dosage: 3-9 grams

1. binds up intestines and stops diarrhea
 - for chronic diarrhea and dysentery
 - can be used for both hot and cold patterns of diarrhea depending on the combination
2. constrains Lung qi leakage
 - for chronic coughing and wheezing
 - esp. for loss of voice



诃子

ròu dòu kòu

myristicae semen

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

1. binds up intestines and stops diarrhea
 - for chronic diarrhea or early-morning diarrhea due to SP/KI yang deficiency
2. warms middle jiao and moves qi
 - for abdominal pain and vomiting due to cold

Unprepared Rou Dou Kou is toxic; it may cause nausea, vertigo, and hallucinations. It should be prepared by roasting with bran, or coating it in a wheat flour paste, toasting it, and discarding the coating. The paste will soak up the oils. This prepared form is called *Wei Rou Dou Kou*.



肉
豆
蔻

chūn pí

ailanthi cortex

Temp: cold
Taste: bitter, astringent
Channels: LI, ST
Dosage: 6-9 grams

1. clears damp-heat and induces astringency
 - for chronic diarrhea and dysentery due to damp-heat
 - for vaginal discharge due to damp-heat
2. kills parasites
 - for roundworms
 - used topically for itchy scabs and lichen



椿
皮

chì shí zhǐ

halloysitum rubrum

Temp: warm

Taste: sweet, sour, astringent

Channels: SP, ST, LI

Dosage: 9-18 grams

1. binds up intestines and stops diarrhea
 - for chronic diarrhea due to deficiency cold
 - for chronic dysentery with blood and mucus
2. induces astringency to stop bleeding
 - for profuse menses, flooding and spotting
 - for blood in the stool
 - use topically for bleeding due to trauma
3. regenerates flesh
 - for chronic, non-healing sores



赤
石
脂

lián zǐ

nelumbinis semen

Temp: neutral

Taste: sweet, astringent

Channels: HT, KI, SP

Dosage: 6-15 grams

1. tonifies Spleen and stops diarrhea
 - for chronic diarrhea and loss of appetite due to SP deficiency
2. tonifies Kidney and secures essence
 - for seminal emission, premature ejaculation, enuresis
 - for excessive vaginal discharge, uterine bleeding
3. tonifies Heart to calm spirit
 - for palpitations, irritability, anxiety, insomnia
 - esp. for Kidney and Heart not communicating



莲
子

Often used in food therapy.

qiàn shí

euryales semen

Temp: neutral
Taste: sweet, astringent
Channels: KI, SP
Dosage: 9-15 grams

1. tonifies Spleen and stops diarrhea
 - for chronic diarrhea due to SP deficiency
2. tonifies Kidney and secures essence
 - for nocturnal emission, premature ejaculation, frequent urination, incontinence
3. eliminates dampness and stops discharge
 - for vaginal discharge due to deficiency or damp-heat

Often used in food therapy.



芡
实

shān zhū yú

corni fructus

Temp: slightly warm
Taste: sour
Channels: KI, LV
Dosage: 6-12 grams

1. secures Kidney essence
 - for seminal emission, frequent urination, incontinence
2. stops sweating
 - for excessive sweating, especially in cases of devastated yang and collapsed qi (shock)
3. tonifies Liver and Kidney
 - for impotence, dizziness, sore and weak low back
 - tonifies both yang and essence
4. stabilizes menses and stops bleeding
 - for profuse menses, prolonged menses, flooding & spotting
 - mild



山
茱
萸

jīn yīng zǐ

rosae laevigatae fructus

Temp: neutral
Taste: sour, astringent
Channels: UB, KI, LI
Dosage: 6-12 grams

1. secures Kidney essence
 - for seminal emission, frequent urination, vaginal discharge
2. binds up intestines and stops diarrhea
 - for chronic diarrhea and dysentery



金
樱
子

fù pén zǐ

rubi fructus

Temp: neutral
Taste: sweet, astringent
Channels: KI, LV
Dosage: 6-12 grams

1. tonifies Kidney and secures essence
 - for frequent urination, enuresis, spermatorrhea, premature ejaculation, wet dreams
2. brightens the eyes
 - for poor vision due to Liver and Kidney deficiency



覆
盆
子

hǎi piāo xiāo

sepiae endoconcha

Temp: slightly warm
Taste: salty, astringent
Channels: KI, LV, ST
Dosage: 6-12 grams

1. secures essence and stops discharge
 - for seminal emission and vaginal discharge
2. induces astringency to stop bleeding
 - for a wide array of bleeding patterns, esp. deficiency
 - used topically for bleeding due to trauma
3. reduces stomach acid
 - for stomach pain, acid regurgitation, ulcer
4. absorbs dampness and closes sores
 - for chronic, non-healing ulcers or damp rashes
 - use topically as powder



海
鰓
蛸

sāng piāo xiāo

mantidis ootheca

Temp: neutral
Taste: sweet, salty
Channels: KI, LV
Dosage: 4.5-9 grams

1. tonifies Kidney, secures essence, contains urine
 - for frequent urination, dribbling urination
 - for nocturnal emission, impotence
 - **esp. for enuresis in children**



桑
鰓
蛸

Summary

wú wèi zǐ
schisandrae fructus

stops leakage
• LU: coughing and sweating
• KI: essence, diarrhea

• calms shen

fú xiǎo mài
triticifolius levis

stops sweating

bái guǒ
ginkgo semen

stops LU leakage
• coughing and wheezing

• eliminates dampness (vaginal discharge, cloudy urine)

wú méi
mume fructus

stops leakage
• LU: cough
• LI: diarrhea

• generates fluids and alleviates thirst
• kills roundworms

hē zǐ
chebulae fructus

stops leakage
• LI: diarrhea
• LU: cough, loss of voice

ròu dòu kòu
myristicae semen

stops LI leakage
• diarrhea (early-morning)

• warms middle jiao
• moves middle-jiao qi

chūn pí
allanthi cortex

stops leakage (damp-heat)
• diarrhea
• vaginal discharge

• kills parasites

chì shí zhǐ
halloysitum rubrum

stops leakage
• LI: diarrhea, dysentery
• stops bleeding

• regenerates flesh

lián zǐ
nelumbinis semen

stops leakage
• LI: diarrhea (tonifies SP)
• KI: seminal emission, vaginal discharge (tonifies KI)

• calms shen

qiàn shí
euryalae semen

stops leakage
• LI: diarrhea (tonifies SP)
• KI: seminal emission, vaginal discharge (tonifies KI)

• eliminates dampness (vaginal discharge)

shān zhū yú
corni fructus

stops leakage
• KI: seminal emission, urination
• sweating (yang collapse)

• tonifies LV/KI
• stabilizes menses

jīn yīng zǐ
rosae laevigatae fructus

stops leakage
• KI: seminal emission, urination, vaginal discharge
• LI: diarrhea

fù péng zǐ
rubi fructus

stops KI leakage
• urination, seminal emission

• brightens eyes

hǎi piāo xiāo
sephiae endoconcha

stops leakage
• KI: seminal emission, vaginal discharge
• stops bleeding

• reduces stomach acid
• closes sores