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# LECTURE NINE

## COMMONLY USED GYNECOLOGICAL AND PEDIATRIC FORMULAS

*Fù ér kē cháng yòng de fāng jì*

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Many patients come to the internal medicine department seeking treatment for gynecological conditions such as painful menstruation, irregular menstruation, vaginal discharge, persistent failure to conceive, nausea during pregnancy, and miscellaneous postpartum diseases. Also, many parents bring their children to the internal medicine department seeking treatment for conditions such as cough, asthma, diarrhea, heat effusion, vomiting, vomiting of milk, and fright wind. Thus, we have the saying: “There is no division between internal medicine, gynecology, and pediatrics.” This underscores that internal medicine doctors, especially those working in primary care medical units, should be familiar with common gynecological and pediatric diseases. Of course, the professional training of gynecologists and pediatricians involves deeper and more detailed study of these specialties, and ordinary internal medicine doctors cannot replace them. However, in my own practice I often encounter patients seeking treatment for common gynecological and pediatric diseases, and by identifying their patterns and treating them accordingly, I have also achieved good results. Therefore, this Lecture introduces several commonly used gynecological and pediatric formulas that are applicable to such patients.

### 9.1

### Wēn Jīng Tāng

### 温经汤

Channel-Warming (Menses-Warming) Decoction

from *Jīn Guì Yào Lùe*

(金匮要略 “Essential Prescriptions of the Golden Coffin”)

*wú zhū yú* (吴茱萸 *evodia*, *Evodiae Fructus*) 3 liǎng

*dāng guī* (当归 Chinese angelica, *Angelicae Sinensis Radix*) 2 liǎng

*chuān xiōng* (川芎 *chuanxiong*, *Chuanxiong Rhizoma*) 2 liǎng

*bái sháo yào* (白芍药 white peony, *Paeoniae Radix Alba*) 2 liǎng

*rén shēn* (人参 ginseng, Ginseng Radix) 2 liǎng  
*guì zhī* (桂枝 cinnamon twig, Cinnamomi Ramulus) 2 liǎng  
*ē jiāo* (阿胶 ass hide glue, Asini Corii Colla) 2 liǎng  
*mǔ dān pí* (牡丹皮 moutan, Moutan Cortex) 2 liǎng  
*shēng jiāng* (生姜 fresh ginger, Zingiberis Rhizoma Recens) 2 liǎng  
*gān cǎo* (甘草 licorice, Glycyrrhizae Radix) 2 liǎng  
*mài mén dōng* (麦门冬 ophiopogon, Ophiopogonis Radix) 1 shēng  
 (remove the core)  
*bàn xià* (半夏 pinellia, Pinelliae Rhizoma) 0.5 shēng

Boil these 12 medicinals in one dǒu of water until three shēng remain. Divide into three doses and take while it is warm.

The dosages listed above are from the Hàn dynasty. When I use this formula in clinical practice, I change the medicinals and dosages as listed below:

*wú zhū yú* (吴茱萸 evodia, Evodiae Fructus) 9 g  
*dāng guī* (当归 Chinese angelica, Angelicae Sinensis Radix) 6 g  
*chuān xiōng* (川芎 chuanxiong, Chuanxiong Rhizoma) 6 g  
*bái sháo yào* (白芍药 white peony, Paeoniae Radix Alba) 9 g  
*dǎng shēn* (党参 codonopsis, Codonopsis Radix) 6–9 g  
*guì zhī* (桂枝 cinnamon twig, Cinnamomi Ramulus) 9 g  
*ē jiāo* (阿胶 ass hide glue, Asini Corii Colla) 6 g<sup>1</sup>  
*mǔ dān pí* (牡丹皮 moutan, Moutan Cortex) 6–9 g  
*shēng jiāng* (生姜 fresh ginger, Zingiberis Rhizoma Recens) 6 g  
*gān cǎo* (甘草 licorice, Glycyrrhizae Radix) 5 g  
*mài mén dōng* (麦门冬 ophiopogon, Ophiopogonis Radix) 6–9 g  
*bàn xià* (半夏 pinellia, Pinelliae Rhizoma) 6–9 g

Boil in water and take.

This formula warms the menses (channels)<sup>2</sup> and dissipates cold and also nourishes blood and warms the uterus. It mainly treats vacuity cold of the uterus, persistent failure to conceive, and menstrual irregularities, such as early menstruation, delayed menstruation, profuse menstruation, and irregular menstruation. It also treats menstrual

<sup>1</sup> After brewing the decoction, dissolve this ingredient into the decoction. (Ed.)

<sup>2</sup> The characters in this formula name allude to two interpretations, and this and other writings on this formula accept both interpretations. The character 经 (*jīng*) means a number of things, including “menses” and “channels.” The formula treats women for menstrual disorders of a cold nature, which would lead one to interpret the formula name as “menses-warming” decoction. Yet, as one practitioner from the PRC asked, what does it really mean to warm the menses? Others claim that the formula treats menstrual disorders by warming the channels, yet translating the formula name as “channel-warming decoction” completely obscures the fact that the *wēn jīng tāng* mostly treats menstrual disorders. Note that Chinese authors have little need to address this issue, because the one name in Chinese alludes to both meanings. (Ed.)

spotting, post-meridian low-grade fever, heat vexation in the hearts of the palms, abdominal urgency<sup>3</sup> in the lesser abdomen, and dryness of the lips and mouth, as well as menstruation in women more than 50 years of age. *Wēn jīng tāng* treats all forms of menstrual irregularities that result from vacuity cold in the blood aspect.

#### FORMULA ANALYSIS

*Wú zhū yú* is an acrid-hot medicinal that warms the center and serves as the chief medicinal; it also courses the liver and dries the spleen, warms the thoroughfare vessel, dispels abdominal urgency, and treats lower abdominal pain.

*Dāng guī*, *bái sháo yào*, *chuān xiōng*, *rén shēn*, and *guì zhī* are all supports. *Dāng guī* and *bái sháo yào* nourish and regulate blood. *Chuān xiōng*, which is a qì within blood medicinal, upbears yáng and opens depression and also moves blood and quickens stasis. *Rén shēn* supplements spleen and lung qì and thereby helps engender and transform qì and blood. *Guì zhī* warms the menses and frees the channels. Together with *bái sháo yào*, *guì zhī* also regulates and harmonizes construction and defense and thereby relaxes tension and relieves pain; together with *wú zhū yú*, *guì zhī* warms the menses and dissipates cold.

*Mǔ dān pí*, *mài mén dōng*, *ē jiāo*, *bàn xià* and *gān cǎo* are all assistants. *Mǔ dān pí* drains latent fire from within the blood and also frees the channels and dispels stasis. *Mài mén dōng* clears the heart and eliminates vexation, moistens the lung and transforms phlegm. *Ē jiāo* nourishes the liver and enriches the kidney, stops bleeding and dispels stasis. *Bàn xià* harmonizes the stomach, fortifies the spleen, downbears counterflow qì, and stops retching and vexation. *Gān cǎo* supplements the spleen and stomach and also drains heart fire. *Shēng jiāng*, the courier, moves yáng with acidity and warmth and also diffuses and moves the channels and network vessels.

#### PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

I once modified this formula to treat a woman who had passed age 50 yet she was still menstruating and had heavy flow. Using *wēn jīng tāng* as the base formula, I removed *rén shēn* and *bàn xià* and added:

*xù duàn tàn* (续断炭 charred dipsacus, *Dipsaci Radix Carbonisata*) 15–30 g  
*chì shí zhī* (赤石脂 halloysite, *Halloysitum Rubrum*) 12 g (pre-decoct)  
*ài yè tàn* (艾叶炭 charred mugwort, *Artemisiae Argyi Folium Carbonisatum*) 30 g

Taking three packets of this prescription reduced the bleeding, and taking seven packets completely stopped it. To consolidate the result, we also ground three packets of this prescription into a fine powder, mixed it with *liàn mì* (processed honey), and formed pills that weighed 9 g each. The patient took one pill, two or three times each

<sup>3</sup> Abdominal urgency (里急 *lǐ jí*): Abdominal pain with urge to defecate. Usually an indication of damp-heat, this is often associated with dysentery. (Ed.)

day. Follow-up inquiries over the next ten years revealed that patient never had any relapses of flooding and spotting.

I use a variation of *wēn jīng tāng* to treat young or middle-aged women who have uterine vacuity cold, menstrual irregularities, and persistent failure to conceive. In my formula, I use *wēn jīng tāng* as the base formula, remove *rén shēn*, *bàn xià*, and *mài mén dōng*, and add:

*pào jiāng* (炮姜 blast-fried ginger, Zingiberis Rhizoma Praeparatum) 5 g  
*zǐ shí yīng* (紫石英 fluorite, Fluoritum) 12 g (pre-decoct)  
*xiāng fù zǐ* (香附子 cyperus, Cyperi Rhizoma) 9 g  
*ròu guì* (肉桂 cinnamon bark, Cinnamomi Cortex) 5 g

#### FORMULA COMPARISON

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### Wēn Jīng Tāng 温经汤

Channel-Warming (Menses-Warming) Decoction

from *Xiào Zhù Fù Rén Liáng Fāng*

(校注妇人良方 “Revised Good Remedies for Women”)

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*dāng guī* (当归 Chinese angelica, Angelicae Sinensis Radix) 1.5 g  
*chuān xiōng* (川芎 chuanxiong, Chuanxiong Rhizoma) 1.5 g  
*sháo yào* (芍药 peony, Paeoniae Radix) 1.5 g  
*guì xīn* (桂心 shaved cinnamon bark, Cinnamomi Cortex Rasmus) 1.5 g  
*é zhú* (莪朮 curcuma rhizome, Curcumae Rhizoma) 1.5 g (stir-fried in vinegar)  
*mǔ dān pí* (牡丹皮 moutan, Moutan Cortex) 1.5 g  
*rén shēn* (人参 ginseng, Ginseng Radix) 2 g  
*niú xī* (牛膝 achyranthes, Achyranthis Bidentatae Radix) 2 g  
*zhì gān cǎo* (炙甘草 mix-fried licorice, Glycyrrhizae Radix cum Liquido Fricta) 2 g

In addition to the *Jīn Guì* version of this formula, there is also a version from *Xiào Zhù Fù Rén Liáng Fāng*. The *Jīn Guì* version warms the menses and dissipates cold by warming the liver and nourishing blood; it tends to regulate menstruation, supplement blood, and stop spotting. In contrast, the *Liáng Fāng* version of the formula warms the menses and dissipates cold by warming the kidney and quickening blood; it tends to quicken blood and transform stasis and to eliminate congealed cold from the blood chamber.<sup>4</sup> In clinical practice we usually increase the dosages.

In the past, I have used the *Liáng Fāng* version of this formula to treat patients with uterine myoma. The results are often good, and the treatment will usually reduce the size of the tumor. For that purpose, I modify it by removing *chuān xiōng*, *rén shēn*, and *niú xī* and by adding:

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<sup>4</sup> Blood chamber (血室 *xuè shì*): Various defined as the uterus, the thoroughfare vessel (*chōng mài*), and the liver. (Ed.)

In the past, I have used the *Liáng Fāng* version of this formula to treat patients with uterine myoma. The results are often good, and the treatment will usually reduce the size of the tumor. For that purpose, I modify it by removing *chuān xiōng*, *rén shēn*, and *niú xī* and by adding:

*táo rén* (桃仁 peach kernel, Persicae Semen) 9 g  
*hóng huā* (红花 carthamus, Carthami Flos) 6 g  
*sān léng* (三棱 sparganium, Sparganii Rhizoma) 5 g  
*xù duàn tàn* (续断炭 charred dipsacus, Dipsaci Radix Carbonisata) 15 g  
*chǎo wǔ líng zhī* (炒五灵脂 stir-fried squirrel's droppings, Troglodyteri Faeces Frictum) 10 g  
*ài yè tàn* (艾叶炭 charred mugwort, Artemisiae Argyi Folium Carbonisatum) 20–30 g

For patients who do not have a large amount of bleeding, remove *ài yè tàn*. On the other hand, for patients who have uterine bleeding, add:

*zōng lú tàn* (棕榈炭 charred trachycarpus, Trachycarpi Stipulae Fibra Carbonisata) 20–30 g  
*ē jiāo zhū* (阿胶珠 ass hide glue pellets, Asini Corii Gelatini Pilula) 10 g  
*chì shí zhī* (赤石脂 halloysite, Halloysitum Rubrum) 12–15 g (pre-decoct).

## 9.2

### Xiōng Guī Jiāo Ài Tāng

#### 芎归胶艾汤

Chuanxiong, Chinese Angelica,  
Ass Hide Glue, and Mugwort Decoction

*Jīn Guì Yào Lǜe*

(金匱要略 “Essential Prescriptions of the Golden Coffin”)

*chuān xiōng* (川芎 chuanxiong, Chuanxiong Rhizoma) 2 liǎng  
*ē jiāo* (阿胶 ass hide glue, Asini Corii Colla) 2 liǎng  
*gān cǎo* (甘草 licorice, Glycyrrhizae Radix) 2 liǎng  
*ài yè* (艾叶 mugwort, Artemisiae Argyi Folium) 3 liǎng  
*dāng guī* (当归 Chinese angelica, Angelicae Sinensis Radix) 3 liǎng  
*bái sháo yào* (白芍药 white peony, Paeoniae Radix Alba) 4 liǎng  
*gān dì huáng* (干地黄 dried rehmannia, Rehmanniae Radix) 6 liǎng

The original formula did not list dosages, so I am providing those listed in *Qiān Jīn Yào Fāng* (“A Thousand Gold Pieces Prescriptions”). Boil with five shēng of water and three shēng of *qīng jiǔ* (clear wine) until there are just three shēng. Remove the dregs, dissolve the *ē jiāo* in the decoction, and take one shēng three times a day, warm. If necessary, make more.

The above-mentioned dosages, cooking method, and administration are those listed in the older texts. In modern times, however, practitioners often use the following dosages and preparation:

*chuān xiōng* (川芎 *chuanxiong*, *Chuanxiong Rhizoma*) 6 g  
*ē jiāo* (阿胶 *ass hide glue*, *Asini Corii Colla*) 9 g (melt)  
*gān cǎo* (甘草 *licorice*, *Glycyrrhizae Radix*) 5 g  
*ài yè* (艾叶 *mugwort*, *Artemisiae Argyi Folium*) 9 g  
*dāng guī* (当归 *Chinese angelica*, *Angelicae Sinensis Radix*) 9 g  
*bái sháo yào* (白芍药 *white peony*, *Paeoniae Radix Alba*) 12–15 g  
*shēng dì huáng* (生地黄 *dried/fresh rehmannia*, *Rehmanniae Radix Exsiccata seu Recens*) 18–24 g

Boil, divide into two doses, and drink.

This formula is also known as *jiāo ài tāng* (Ass Hide Glue and Mugwort Decoction) and also as *jiāo ài sì wù tāng* (Ass Hide Glue and Mugwort Four Agents Decoction). It nourishes blood and regulates menstruation and also stops bleeding and calms the fetus. It mainly treats women who have insufficiency of the lower origin, vacuity detriment of the thoroughfare and controlling vessels, and flooding and spotting with continuous dripping of blood. The patient could also have profuse menstruation, post-conception bleeding, or abdominal pain during pregnancy.

#### FORMULA ANALYSIS

We call this formula *jiāo ài tāng*<sup>5</sup> because *ē jiāo* and *ài yè* are the chief medicinals. *Ē jiāo* enriches yīn and nourishes blood and also secures the thoroughfare vessel and stops bleeding, while *ài yè* warms the uterus and calms the fetus and also stanches bleeding due to stirring fetus. *Dāng guī*, *bái sháo yào*, *shēng dì huáng*, and *chuān xiōng* comprise what we know as *sì wù tāng* (Four Agents Decoction).<sup>6</sup> Together, they are particularly effective for nourishing blood and regulating menstruation, supplementing the thoroughfare and controlling vessels, and quieting the fetus in pregnancy. Furthermore, *gān cǎo* in combination with *bái sháo yào* has an enhanced capacity to relax tension and stop pain. The *sì wù tāng* ingredients together with *gān cǎo* are the assistants and couriers of this formula. *Xiōng guī jiāo ài tāng* is unique in that it treats insufficiency of the thoroughfare and controlling vessels, such as flooding and spotting and such as stirring fetus.

#### CASE STUDIES

**CASE ONE:** I once treated a middle-aged woman who was four months pregnant and had been having continuous uterine bleeding for more than half a month. She also

<sup>5</sup> *Jīn Guì Yào Lǚe* (“Essential Prescriptions of the Golden Coffin”) also uses this name for this formula. (Au.)

<sup>6</sup> This explains the other alternative name that Dr. Jiāo gave for this formula: *jiāo ài sì wù tāng* (胶艾四物汤 *Ass Hide Glue and Mugwort Four Agents Decoction*). (Ed.)

had a slight sagging<sup>7</sup> sensation in her lumbus and abdomen. The obstetrics and gynecology department examined her and determined that the fetus was normal; they gave her a hemostatic medication that had no effect. The patient had a sunken fine slippery rapid pulse and a slight tongue fur that was white, thick, and a little yellow.

My diagnosis was fetal spotting. The cause was insufficiency of the lower origin, such that yáng-essence entering yīn-blood (in the process of conception) gave rise to a condition of yáng harassing yīn. Then, the patient's tendency to heat before pregnancy developed into frenetic movement of hot blood and fetal spotting. The pattern was one of blood vacuity complicated by fetal heat, and the treatment principle was to enrich and nourish the lower origin, secure the thoroughfare vessel and quiet the fetus, and cool the blood and stanch bleeding. I prescribed the following modification of *jiāo ài tāng*:

*sāng jì shēng* (桑寄生 mistletoe, Taxilli Herba) 30 g  
*xù duàn tàn* (续断炭 charred dipsacus, Dipsaci Radix Carbonisata) 30 g  
*chǎo bái zhú* (炒白朮 stir-fried white atractylodes, Atractylodis Macrocephalae Rhizoma Frictum) 6 g  
*huáng qín* (黄芩 scutellaria, Scutellariae Radix) 12 g  
*zǐ sū gěng* (紫苏梗 perilla stem, Perillae Caulis) 12 g  
*shēng dì huáng* (生地黄 dried/fresh rehmannia, Rehmanniae Radix Exsiccata seu Recens) 30 g  
*dāng guī* (当归 Chinese angelica, Angelicae Sinensis Radix) 10 g  
*bái sháo yào* (白芍药 white peony, Paeoniae Radix Alba) 12 g  
*ài yè* (艾叶 mugwort, Artemisiae Argyi Folium) 6 g  
*ē jiāo* (阿胶 ass hide glue, Asini Corii Colla) 12 g (melt)  
*huáng bǎi tàn* (黄柏炭 charred phellodendron, Phellodendri Cortex Carbonisatus) 12 g

She took a total of twelve packets and the condition was relieved.

CASE TWO: I once treated a 28-year-old woman named Zhāng who was generally healthy except that during the past six months her menses had been arriving about 10 days early. The symptoms were fresh red menstrual discharge, slightly dry mouth with thirst, and aching lumbus and legs; besides these symptoms she had no other major discomfort. The tongue fur was thin white, the tongue body was slightly red, and the pulse was fine, slippery, and slightly rapid. Because the menstruation was early and the blood was fresh red and lacked clots, and because there was dry mouth and thirst, my diagnosis was blood vacuity engendering interior heat and heat harassing the sea of blood. The treatment principle was to regulate menstruation and secure the thoroughfare vessel and also to cool the blood and stop bleeding; therefore, I modeled her prescription after *jiāo ài tāng*:

<sup>7</sup> This symptom is a hint that the patient is susceptible to miscarriage. (Ed.)

*shēng dì huáng* (生地黄 dried/fresh rehmannia, *Rehmanniae Radix*  
*Exsiccata seu Recens*) 20 g  
*xù duàn* (续断 *dipsacus*, *Dipsaci Radix*) 18 g  
*chǎo dù zhòng* (炒杜仲 stir-fried eucommia, *Eucommiae Cortex Frictus*) 15 g  
*dāng guī* (当归 Chinese angelica, *Angelicae Sinensis Radix*) 9 g  
*bái sháo yào* (白芍药 white peony, *Paeoniae Radix Alba*) 12 g  
*ē jiāo kuài* (阿胶块 ass hide glue lumps, *Asini Corii Gelatini in Glaeba*)  
 12 g (melt)  
*ài yè tàn* (艾叶炭 charred mugwort, *Artemisiae Argyi Folium*  
*Carbonisatum*) 20 g  
*huáng qín tàn* (黄芩炭 charred scutellaria, *Scutellariae Radix Carbonisata*) 12 g  
*bǔ gǔ zhī* (补骨脂 psoralea, *Psoraleae Fructus*) 9 g

Decoct and take. I also prescribed 2 g of *sān qī* (notoginseng) powder, which the patient divided into two doses and took drenched with the decoction.

After taking 14 packets of the prescription, the menstruation arrived on time. I advised her to take ten doses of this prescription during the ten days preceding her next menses to regulate its onset. She took this prescription following this method for three consecutive months, taking twelve packets in the two weeks prior to menstruation, and her periods arrived on time each month. From then on, all her symptoms were relieved and her menstruation was normal.

In modern practice we use this formula to treat patients with threatened miscarriage or incomplete postpartum recovery of the uterus (with symptoms such as bleeding, advanced menstruation, and profuse menstruation) when their pattern is ascribed to blood vacuity and insufficiency of the lower origin. For quieting the fetus, I normally add the following medicinals:

*huáng qín* (黄芩 *scutellaria*, *Scutellariae Radix*) 9–12 g  
*bái zhú* (白朮 white atractylodes, *Atractylodis Macrocephalae Rhizoma*) 6–9 g  
*sāng jì shēng* (桑寄生 mistletoe, *Taxilli Herba*) 20–30 g  
*xù duàn* (续断 *dipsacus*, *Dipsaci Radix*) 12–18 g

### 9.3

### Dāng Guī Sháo Yào Sǎn

#### 当归芍药散

#### Chinese Angelica and Peony Powder

from *Jīn Guì Yào Lùe*

(金匱要略 “Essential Prescriptions of the Golden Coffin”)

*dāng guī* (当归 Chinese angelica, *Angelicae Sinensis Radix*) 3 liǎng  
*bái sháo yào* (白芍药 white peony, *Paeoniae Radix Alba*) 1 jīn  
*fú líng* (茯苓 *poria*, *Poria*) 4 liǎng

*bái zhú* (白朮 white atractylodes, *Atractylodis Macrocephalae Rhizoma*) 4 liǎng  
*zé xiè* (泽泻 alisma, *Alismatis Rhizoma*) 0.5 jīn  
*chuān xiōng* (川芎 chuanxiong, *Chuanxiong Rhizoma*) 3 liǎng

Grind the six medicinals into a fine powder. Take one square-inch-spoon<sup>8</sup> (roughly 3 g) with warm wine, three times per day.

In modern times, we commonly prepare this formula as a decoction with the dosages listed below:

*dāng guī* (当归 Chinese angelica, *Angelicae Sinensis Radix*) 6–9 g  
*bái sháo yào* (白芍药 white peony, *Paeoniae Radix Alba*) 30–45 g  
*fú líng* (茯苓 poria, *Poria*) 12 g  
*bái zhú* (白朮 white atractylodes, *Atractylodis Macrocephalae Rhizoma*) 9–12 g  
*zé xiè* (泽泻 alisma, *Alismatis Rhizoma*) 15–25 g  
*chuān xiōng* (川芎 chuanxiong, *Chuanxiong Rhizoma*) 6–9 g

Boil, divide into two doses, and take.

#### FORMULA ANALYSIS

*Dāng guī sháo yào sǎn* nourishes blood and boosts the spleen. It primarily treats gripping abdominal pain during pregnancy and various other gynecological abdominal pains. During pregnancy, the fetus requires nourishment from blood. If there is insufficiency of blood and qì, yīn is overwhelmed by yáng, the kidney rebels against earth, the spleen becomes depressed and unable to stretch, and there is no regulation of qì and blood in the center burner. This produces colic pain (i.e., gripping pain).

Within the formula, *dāng guī* nourishes blood while *bái sháo yào* boosts blood and relaxes tension to stop pain. *Fú líng* and *bái zhú* together fortify the spleen and transform dampness, support center burner movement, and secure the fetal origin. *Zé xiè* drains the stagnant water-dampness that results from spleen depression. *Chuān xiōng* is an acrid, penetrating, and coursing medicinal that both smoothes and extends blood-qì. Together, these medicinals nourish blood, boost the spleen, relieve pain, and quiet the fetus.

#### PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

I commonly use this formula to treat certain women with various types of abdominal pain, including gripping pain, dull pain, tugging pain, and stabbing pain. Such patients all undergo Western medical examinations that reveal no organic pathologies, and the results of their laboratory tests are within normal parameters; they are said to have undiagnosable abdominal pain from unknown causes. I treat such patients with a modification of *dāng guī sháo yào sǎn*, and I often achieve good results. My empirical formula is below.

<sup>8</sup> Square-inch-spoon (方寸匕 *fāng cùn bǐ*): A special spoon used in ancient times for measuring powdered medicinals. The dimensions of the spoon were exactly 1 inch (in the ancient measuring system) on each side. (Ed.)

*dāng guī* (当归 Chinese angelica, *Angelicae Sinensis Radix*) 10 g  
*bái sháo yào* (白芍药 white peony, *Paeoniae Radix Alba*) 30 g  
*fú líng* (茯苓 poria, *Poria*) 15 g  
*zé xiè* (泽泻 alisma, *Alismatis Rhizoma*) 20 g  
*chuān xiōng* (川芎 chuanxiong, *Chuanxiong Rhizoma*) 6 g  
*yán hú suǒ* (延胡索 corydalis, *Corydalis Rhizoma*) 9 g  
*chǎo wǔ líng zhī* (炒五灵脂 stir-fried squirrel's droppings, *Trogopteri Faeces Frictum*) 12 g  
*wū yào* (乌药 lindera, *Linderae Radix*) 12 g  
*chǎo xiǎo huī xiāng* (炒小茴香 stir-fried fennel, *Foeniculi Fructus Frictus*) 6 g

For patients with fixed pain in one spot and continuous stabbing pain, add:

*dān shēn* (丹参 salvia, *Salviae Miltiorrhizae Radix*) 30 g  
*pú huáng* (蒲黄 typha pollen, *Typhae Pollen*) 10 g (wrapped in gauze)  
*shā rén* (砂仁 amomum, *Amomi Fructus*) 6 g

For continuous dull pain that extends over a large area such that the patient cannot indicate a specific painful spot, add:

*bái zhú* (白朮 white atractylodes, *Atractylodis Macrocephalae Rhizoma*) 9 g  
*gān jiāng* (干姜 dried ginger, *Zingiberis Rhizoma*) 6 g

For tugging pain that improves with warmth, and, when the pain is severe, the subjective sensation of surging qì attacking in the chest area, add:

*guì zhī* (桂枝 cinnamon twig, *Cinnamomi Ramulus*) 15 g  
*ròu guì* (肉桂 cinnamon bark, *Cinnamomi Cortex*) 6 g  
*chǎo jú hé* (炒橘核 stir-fried tangerine pip, *Citri Reticulatae Semen Frictum*) 10 g  
*lì zhī hé* (荔枝核 litchiee pit, *Litchi Semen*) 10 g  
*wú zhū yú* (吴茱萸 evodia, *Evodiae Fructus*) 6 g

For gripping pain or continuous acute pain, increase the dosage of *bái sháo yào* to 35–45 g and the dosage of *yán hú suǒ* to 12 g and add the following medicinals:

*zhì fù piàn* (制附片 sliced processed aconite, *Aconiti Radix Lateralis Praeparata Secta*) 6–10 g  
*pào jiāng* (炮姜 blast-fried ginger, *Zingiberis Rhizoma Praeparatum*) 5 g  
*bái zhú* (白朮 white atractylodes, *Atractylodis Macrocephalae Rhizoma*) 9 g  
*mù xiāng* (木香 costusroot, *Aucklandiae Radix*) 9 g

For roundworms, add:

*wū méi* (乌梅 mume, *Mume Fructus*) 6 g  
*huā jiāo* (花椒 zanthoxylum, *Zanthoxyli Pericarpium*) 6 g  
*shǐ jūn zǐ* (使君子 quisqualis, *Quisqualis Fructus*) 10 g

*huáng lián* (黄连 *coptis*, *Coptidis Rhizoma*) 6 g  
*mù xiāng* (木香 *costusroot*, *Aucklandiae Radix*) 6–9 g  
*xì xīn* (细辛 *asarum*, *Asari Herba*) 3 g  
*gān jiāng* (干姜 *dried ginger*, *Zingiberis Rhizoma*) 6 g

For pain that gets worse during menstruation, add:

*táo rén* (桃仁 *peach kernel*, *Persicae Semen*) 10 g  
*hóng huā* (红花 *carthamus*, *Carthami Flos*) 10 g  
*pào jiāng* (炮姜 *blast-fried ginger*, *Zingiberis Rhizoma Praeparatum*) 6 g  
*ròu guì* (肉桂 *cinnamon bark*, *Cinnamomi Cortex*) 3–5 g  
*xiāng fù zǐ* (香附子 *cyperus*, *Cyperis Rhizoma*) 10 g  
*é zhú* (莪朮 *curcuma rhizome*, *Curcumae Rhizoma*) 6 g

For pronounced pain after menstruation, add:

*chǎo bái zhú* (炒白朮 *stir-fried white atractylodes*, *Atractylodis Macrocephalae Rhizoma Frictum*) 10 g  
*shú dì huáng* (熟地黄 *cooked rehmannia*, *Rehmanniae Radix Praeparata*) 15 g  
*wú zhū yú* (吴茱萸 *evodia*, *Evodiae Fructus*) 6 g  
*chén pí* (陈皮 *tangerine peel*, *Citri Reticulatae Pericarpium*) 10 g  
*mù xiāng* (木香 *costusroot*, *Aucklandiae Radix*) 6 g

#### CASE STUDY

I recently used this formula in a most interesting case. The patient was a robust man who was in the prime of his life, except that during the past six months he had an attack of abdominal pain about once each week. Each episode lasted 3–5 days. The pain was on the right side of the lumbus and abdomen, but at times it also referred up to the area beneath the rib-sides and toward the back. His bowel movements, urination, and appetite were all normal. Many hospitals examined him and performed many tests, but they found no abnormalities. The tongue fur was slightly white, and the pulse was sunken and slightly stringlike. The information gathered through the four examinations all suggested that this was a case of colic, so I prescribed a modification of *dāng guī sháo yào sǎn* as listed below.

*dāng guī* (当归 *Chinese angelica*, *Angelicae Sinensis Radix*) 10 g  
*bái sháo yào* (白芍药 *white peony*, *Paeoniae Radix Alba*) 35 g  
*zé xiè* (泽泻 *alismata*, *Alismatis Rhizoma*) 20 g  
*fú líng* (茯苓 *poria*, *Poria*) 12 g  
*chái hú* (柴胡 *bupleurum*, *Bupleuri Radix*) 10 g  
*chǎo huáng qín* (炒黄芩 *stir-fried scutellaria*, *Scutellariae Radix Fricta*) 10 g  
*chǎo chuān liàn zǐ* (炒川楝子 *stir-fried toosendan*, *Toosendan Fructus Frictus*) 12 g

*bái jí lí* (白蒺藜 tribulus, Tribuli Fructus) 12 g  
*zào jiǎo cì* (皂角刺 gleditsia thorn, Gleditsiae Spina) 6 g  
*hóng huā* (红花 carthamus, Carthami Flos) 10 g  
*yán hú suǒ* (延胡索 corydalis, Corydalis Rhizoma) 10 g  
*chǎo wǔ líng zhī* (炒五灵脂 stir-fried squirrel's droppings, Troglodyteri Faeces Frictum) 12 g  
*pú huáng* (蒲黄 typha pollen, Typhae Pollen) 10 g (wrapped in gauze)  
*guì zhī* (桂枝 cinnamon twig, Cinnamomi Ramulus) 12 g  
*hǎi piāo xiāo* (海螵蛸 cuttlefish bone, Sepiae Endoconcha) 6 g  
*jiāo bīng láng* (焦槟榔 scorch-fried areca, Arecae Semen Ustum) 12 g

The patient took 14 packets of this prescription and completely recovered.

My conclusion about using *dāng guī sháo yào sǎn* is that one must prescribe a high dosage of *bái sháo yào*. According to *Shén Nóng Běn Cǎo Jīng* (“Divine Husbandman’s Herbal Foundation Canon”), *bái sháo yào* governs “abdominal pain” and “relieves pain.” According to *Běn Cǎo Gāng Mù* (“Comprehensive Herbal Foundation”), “*Bái sháo yào* boosts the spleen and drains wood from within earth.” In addition, as this formula contains *bái zhú* and *fú líng*, it treats abdominal pain; however, it does not merely relieve pain, as some modern commentators say. Rather, it strengthens and fortifies the center burner and makes spleen qì sufficient and thereby achieves the goal of supporting the correct and dispelling evils.

Moreover, this formula heavily relies on *zé xiè*, which is second only to *bái sháo yào*. *Zé xiè* disinhibits water and eliminates dampness, aids splenic movement and transformation, and supports and helps the center burner. According to *Shén Nóng Běn Cǎo Jīng*, *zé xiè* “nourishes the five viscera, boosts the strength of qì, [and] fattens and fortifies; taking it for a long time brightens the eyes and sharpens the ears.” Because *zé xiè* also drains liver and kidney water-dampness evil qì and because *bái sháo yào* drains wood from within earth, we can see that this formula not only boosts the center burner, but it also regulates and harmonizes the liver and spleen.

Additionally, *dāng guī* nourishes liver blood and regulates menstruation while *chuān xiōng* moves depressed blood. According to *Shén Nóng Běn Cǎo Jīng*, *chuān xiōng* also governs “cold impediment [and] hypertonicity of the sinews.” As a result, it moves and warms blood and qì in the whole body.

Thus, *dāng guī sháo yào sǎn* is a formula that treats the root of gynecological abdominal pain, and furthermore it benefits the whole body through treating the center burner.

I have concluded that this formula is a spleen-boosting and liver-regulating medicine; therefore, I used it in the case above about the male patient with abdominal pain. Although the pain was said to be in the abdomen (which corresponds to the spleen), it was more specifically located near the liver channel (slightly above the right side of the lumbus and abdomen, and below the rib-side on the right). Furthermore, since the pain occurred at fixed times, and was therefore related to the lesser