

JIA WEI XIAO YAO SAN

Bupleurum & Peony Formula 加味道遙丸

TCM ACTIONS

Soothes the Liver, nourishes the Liver Blood, tonifies the Spleen Qi, clears stagnant Heat.

TCM SYNDROMES

Liver Qi constraint with stagnant Heat (or Fire).
Spleen Qi deficiency.

BIOMEDICAL ACTIONS

Anxiolytic, tonic, adaptogenic, nervine, analgesic, mood stabiliser.

INDICATIONS

Stress-related disorders, depressed mood, menstrual disorders (e.g. premenstrual syndrome, irregular menstruation), mastitis, mammary dysplasia (fibrocystic breast disease), bruxism, Crohn's disease.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS (key clinical features in bold)

Irritability, emotional volatility, depressed mood

Sense of tightness or oppressive sensation in the chest, the need to make an effort to take a deep breath, sighing

One or more of: headache, sleep disturbance, red eyes, sensation of heat

Tightness of the shoulders and lower thoracic paraspinal muscles

Fatigue

Poor appetite

Menstrual irregularities

Premenstrual tension

Tongue may be red or have red tip and/or edges

Pulse is wiry and may also be rapid

INGREDIENTS Each pill contains extract equiv. to dry:

Paeonia lactiflora, root (<i>bai shao</i>)	62.5mg
Poria cocos, fruit, body (<i>fu ling</i>)	62.5mg
Bupleurum falcatum, root (<i>chai hu</i>)	46.9mg
Paeonia suffruticosa, stem bark (<i>mu dan pi</i>)	46.9mg
Gardenia florida, fruit (<i>shan zhi zi</i>)	46.9mg
Angelica polymorpha, root (<i>dang gui</i>)	31.2mg
Atractylodes macrocephala, rhizome (<i>bai zhu</i>)	31.2mg
Mentha haplocalyx, herb (<i>bo he</i>)	15.6mg
Zingiber officinale, rhizome (<i>sheng jiang</i>)	15.6mg
Glycyrrhiza uralensis, root (<i>gan cao</i>)	15.6mg

ACTIONS OF THE MAIN HERBS

- **Bupleurum root** is used orally in formulas to treat stress, liver disorders, premenstrual syndrome, dysmenorrhoea, depression, anorexia, inflammation, mild pain, muscle cramps, indigestion, ulcers, haemorrhoids, diarrhoea, constipation. It has been shown to have sedative, analgesic, immune stimulant, anticholesterolemic and antilipemic actions.
- **Paeonia bark (dry fried) used together with Gardenia fruit (roasted)** has a sedative and antispasmodic action, and enhances the stress relieving effects of the base formula Xiao Yao San (Bupleurum & Dang-gui Formula)

DOSAGE & COURSE OF TREATMENT

8 pills, 3 times daily (or 12 pills, 2 times daily), half to one hour away from food.

In severe cases and in the early stages of treatment (first 2 – 3 weeks) the dosage may be increased by 50%.

Course of treatment: 1 – 3 months. May be used for longer periods in patients with a stressful lifestyle.

Safe for long term use.

CAUTIONS & CONTRAINDICATIONS

Caution for those on anti-coagulant medications (i.e. Heparin, warfarin or aspirin).

Caution for those on any type of sedative drug.

Contraindicated for patients taking interferon.

If taking antibiotics, allow at least 90 minutes before taking this formula.

Not to be used during pregnancy.

COMBINATIONS

Chronic fatigue syndrome:

- + Sheng Mai San (Dangshen and Ophiopogon Formula)
- + Tao Hong Si Wu Wan (Persica, Carthamus & Dang-gui Combination)

Headache (stress related):

- + Chuan Xiong Cha Tiao San (Ligusticum and Tea Formula)

Insomnia due to stress:

- + An Shen Ding Zhi Wan (Zizyphus & Polygala Formula)

COMMENTS

This popular variant of Xiao Yao San (Bupleurum and Dang-gui Formula) was first recorded in the 'Summary of Internal Medicine' (*nei ke zhai yao*), edited by Wen Sheng, mid 19th century. The base formula, however is from the 'Formulary of the Tai Ping Welfare Dispensary Bureau' (*tai ping hui min he ji ju fang*), which was compiled some eight centuries previously.

The latter formula addresses Liver Qi constraint that occurs against a background of Qi and Blood deficiency. While there are several conditions that may be associated with Liver Qi constraint, there are three common ones:

- 1) Liver Blood deficiency (the Liver Qi and Liver Blood form a complementary Yin-Yang pair: the Liver Blood supports the Liver Qi. When the Liver Qi is inhibited, and hence deficient, the Liver Blood may also become consumed).

- 2) Spleen Qi deficiency (due to failure of the Liver Qi to regulate and promote Spleen function)

- 3) Heat or Fire (which develops as a result of the transformation of stagnant Qi).

While Xiao Yao San (Bupleurum and Dang-gui Formula) addresses the first two; Jia Wei Xiao Yao San (Bupleurum and Peony Formula) – with the addition of two extra herbs – addresses all three.

It should be noted that in cases with Qi and Blood deficiency, the Heat that is generated by the stagnant Liver Qi is less intense in comparison to the Heat of a pure excess Heat syndrome, such as Liver Fire. Thus, the Heat clearing action of the two additional herbs has been moderated by specific pre-processing, which also lessens their impact on an already weakened middle Jiao.

It should also be noted that this formula has a tranquilising effect, which is accomplished indirectly (i.e. none of the herbs have specific tranquilising actions) by addressing the Blood deficiency and also the Heat/Fire, both of which are important factors in adding to the mental and emotional disturbances that are associated with Liver Qi constraint.

The synergistic actions of the herbs are as follows:

- Bupleurum root (*chai hu*), Zingiber rhizome (*sheng jiang*), Mentha haplocalyx, herb (*bo he*): disperse the stagnant Liver Qi & calm the mind.
- Paeonia root (*bai shao*), Angelica root (*dang gui*): nourish the Liver Blood, protect the Liver Yin from the dispersing action of the above herbs.
- Bupleurum root (*chai hu*), Paeonia root (*bai shao*), Angelica root (*dang gui*): tonify the Liver and promote the Liver's function of maintaining the normal smooth flow of the Qi.
- Poria cocos (*fu ling*), Atractylodes rhizome (*bai zhu*), Glycyrrhiza root (*gan cao*): tonify the Spleen Qi.
- Paeonia suffruticosa bark (*mu dan pi*), Gardenia fruit (*shan zhi zi*): clear Heat that has developed from stagnant Liver Qi, calm the mind.