

# CINNAMON TWIG FORMULA *GUI ZHI TANG*

ORIGINS: *Shang Han Lun* by Zhang Zhong Jing, Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220 A.D.)

**Cinnamon Twig Formula (*Gui Zhi Tang*)**, is one of the most enduring and versatile formulas in the history of Chinese herbal medicine. The first appearance of **Cinnamon Twig Formula** in text dates from the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220 A.D.). The source text is the *Shang Han Lun*, written by Zhang Zhong Jing.

## GENERAL SIGNS/SYMPTOMS

**Cinnamon Twig Formula** is the quintessential formula for harmonizing the *wei* (protective) qi and the *ying* (nutritive) qi. Clinically, this includes various applications, such as skin allergies, the common cold and other respiratory issues, inability to regulate body temperature, specific types of constipation, and the initial stages of wind-cold-damp *bi* syndrome. It is the very first formula discussed in Zhang Zhong Jing's book *On Cold Damage*, which emphasizes its use as the primary formula to treat *taiyang* wind-strike pattern. The two decisive diagnostic features of *taiyang* wind-strike pattern are spontaneous sweating with aversion to wind. Other signs and symptoms may include low-grade fever and chills, headache, stiff neck, nasal congestion, dry heaves, and no thirst.

## CLASSICAL APPLICATIONS

### 1. *Taiyang* wind-strike pattern or invasion from wind-cold (with wind predominant)

- Spontaneous sweating
- Aversion to wind
- Fever, unrelieved by sweating
- Chills
- Headache
- Nasal congestion
- Neck stiffness
- Dry heaves
- Little or no thirst, or thirst for warm drinks

### 2. Loss of regulation between *wei* and *ying* after illness, childbirth, or with weak constitution

- Spontaneous sweating
- Aversion to wind
- Fever

### 3. Intermittent release of heat

- Hot flashes
- Spontaneous sweating

### 4. Mismanaged treatment of *taiyang* stage illness

- When sweating has been promoted to dispel cold, but has failed to eliminate the pathogen
- When purgation has been used to treat a *taiyang* cold pattern, but exterior signs persist
- When mild exterior signs persist after several days of illness and the pulse is floating and weak or moderate

### 5. *Taiyang* disease in which the patient is unable to defecate for 4+ days, but urine is clear and unobstructed

## INGREDIENTS

PINYIN	LATIN	ENGLISH	PERCENT OF FORMULA
Gui Zhi (Chief)	Cinnamomi (ramulus)	Cinnamon Twig	21.4%
Bai Shao (Deputy)	Paeoniae (radix), alba	Chinese White Peony	21.4%
Sheng Jiang (Assistant)	Zingiberis (rhizoma) recens	Fresh Ginger	21.4%
Da Zao (Assistant)	Jujubae (fructus)	Jujube Fruit, Chinese Red Date	21.4%
Zhi Gan Cao (Envoy)	Glycyrrhizae (radix), preparata	Chinese Licorice Root, honey-fried	14.4%

## GENERAL INDICATIONS / MODERN APPLICATIONS

With the appropriate presentation, **Cinnamon Twig Formula** may be used to treat a number of patterns involving the respiratory, integumentary, and cardiovascular systems. There are also modern studies supporting the use of **Cinnamon Twig Formula** in treating psycho-emotional disorders.

- Allergic purpura
- Allergic rhinitis
- Angioedema
- Arthritis
- Bronchial asthma
- Cardiovascular disease
- Cerebrovascular spasm
- Common cold
- Constipation
- Eczema
- Enuresis
- Frostbite
- Functional cardiac disorders
- Hyperactivity disorder
- Influenza
- Menopausal syndrome
- Post-partum or post-illness colds, flu, or fever
- Psychological boundary issues
- Sciatica
- Testicular pain
- Upper respiratory tract infection
- Urticaria

**FORMULA ACTIONS**

- Harmonizes *wei* and *ying* qi
- Releases and consolidates the exterior
- Releases the muscle layer

**TONGUE**

Normal tongue body color, with possibly thin, white, moist coat.

**PULSE**

Superficial or floating (external pathogen obstructing the *taiyang*)

Moderate or forceless, especially in the right *cun* position.

**CONTRAINDICATIONS / CAUTIONS CLASSICAL**

Do not use in cases of interior heat or damp-heat. Use with caution during hot weather, as reckless bleeding such as nosebleed could result.

Since the patient who is taking the formula is most likely also slightly *wei* qi deficient caution should be used not to overly induce sweat and further damage qi and bodily fluids.

Patient should avoid raw, cold, greasy, sticky, fatty, spicy, spoiled or rotten foods. Other foods such as alcohol, meat, cheese, garlic, leeks, scallions, onions, and foods that are fermented and preserved should also be avoided.

**MODERN**

Use with caution when there is hypertension or hemorrhagic disease.

Use with caution with diuretic drugs.

**DOSAGE**

Take the standard dosage of 2 tablets, 3 times a day, until the condition is resolved. Safe for long term use except as contraindicated above.

**When treating *taiyang* wind-strike:** patient should take with warm water and get under warm covers in order to preserve the qi and encourage sweating.

Dosages should be adjusted for age and weight in treating children.

**Dosages for psycho-emotional issues:**  $\frac{2}{3}$  the regular dose.

**Dosages for spiritual issues:**  $\frac{1}{3}$  the regular dose.

**SYNERGY OF INGREDIENTS**

The chief herb, cinnamon twig (*gui zhi*) is warm and acrid. It enters into the *ying* level of the vessels, strengthens the qi in the vessel walls, and expels evil qi outward from there. It circulates yang qi through the interstitial layer to help the *wei* regulate pores and sweating. This action helps to expel externally contracted wind-cold pathogens. The *wei* qi circulates through the muscle layer, and as *gui zhi* can assist the *wei* qi to warm the muscles, it can help to alleviate the stiffness associated with *taiyang* meridian wind-strike patterns.

White peony (*bai shao*) is sour; it secures the *ying* and contracts the vessels. The contraction and expansion of the *ying* level by *bai shao* and *gui zhi* respectively do not cancel each other out. Rather, the two substances work synergistically to strengthen the *ying*, expel pathogens, and invigorate the *wei*. The result of this synergy is harmonization of the *ying* and *wei*. By constraining the *ying* and contracting the vessels, *bai shao* prevents further leakage of *ying* fluids into the flesh. This means that the sweat expelled by *gui zhi* is restricted to the fluids that have already built up in the muscle layer/ interstitial area. Since not much fluid can be stored there, in an acute wind-strike pattern, usually only one or two doses of **Cinnamon Twig Formula** are needed to restore harmony. *Bai shao* also enters the muscle layer to alleviate the stiffness associated with wind-cold patterns. Additionally, *bai shao* can soothe and cool the liver to alleviate irritability.

Jujubae (*da zao*) and fresh ginger (*sheng jiang*) also work as a team to harmonize the nutritive *ying* and protective *wei* levels. *Sheng jiang* assists *gui zhi* to resolve the exterior and also brings down stomach qi, if a cold or flu is accompanied by symptoms of retching, nausea, or vomiting. *Da zao* assists *bai shao* in harmonizing the *ying* level, and along with *sheng jiang* and licorice root (*zhi gan cao*) maintains the transformation and transportation function of the spleen and harmony of the middle burner.

*Zhi gan cao* guides the formula throughout the twelve primary meridians, while *gui zhi* assists circulation in the blood vessels, channels, and collaterals by warming the yang qi. This combination serves to spread this formula's harmonizing effects throughout both the interior and exterior of the body.

**FORMULA DISCUSSION**

During the Tang Dynasty, the great Chinese physician and alchemist, Sun Si Miao, suggested that **Cinnamon Twig Formula** is one of the least understood and therefore most underestimated formulas in the standard formulary. This assessment seems not to have lost significance over the centuries. When a formula brags a long list of seemingly unrelated applications, it may strike the clinician as being too broad to be effective in specific treatments. We tend to treat such formulas as a "base formula" that requires modification before it can elicit clinical results. (Indeed, the *Shang Han Lun* lists more modifications of **Cinnamon Twig Formula** than any other base formula.) Whereas it is true that **Cinnamon**

**Twig Formula** lends itself easily to modification (and therefore a plethora of focuses) we would be guilty of the charge leveled by Sun Si Miao to assume that it is without clinical power in its unmodified form.

Virtually all of the vast number of applications for **Cinnamon Twig Formula** can be explained by its essential action: “to harmonize *ying* and *wei*.” This action may appear narrow at first glance, but the *ying* and *wei* complex is the quintessential internal-external relationship in the body and a microcosm of yin-yang interactions. *Ying* and *wei* are as inextricable as any pair of polarities: one cannot exist without the other. They are formed simultaneously, and they interact without interruption.

The interdependence of *ying* and *wei* is complex, but the essential nature of their relationship is that the *wei* qi rules outward directional movement and the destination of all outward movement: the exterior; *ying* rules movement inward to the nourish all tissues and cells of the body, and is therefore identified with the interior. The exchange, like chest breathing and cellular respiration, is constant, and the two energies of inward and outward movement are completely interdependent. Life cannot be sustained without both, and health cannot be maintained unless they are harmonious. The implications of these directional movements are profound.

As is true of all yin-yang pairings, the relativity of yin and yang can be extended to within an already distinct pair. There are yin aspects to *wei* qi and yang aspects to *ying* qi. The most yin aspect of the *ying* is also the most material: the blood; but *ying* is also the energy in the blood, not merely the material nutrients. One of the functions of *ying* qi is to transform blood into other substances, like breast milk, sweat, and interstitial fluid. In the case of interstitial fluid, the *ying* makes the fluid, but the *wei* opens the vessels to release the fluid into the bloodstream.

Interstitial fluid has a dual role—one yin and one yang. Its yin function is to moisten; its yang function is to provide the medium for the *wei* qi to guide out waste material from the tissues. The *ying* qi provides the *jin* fluid of the interstitial zones, but the movement through the fluid is governed by the *wei* qi. On the outside of the skin, sweat is *ying*, but its release, the act of sweating, is *wei*. The *ying* provides the sweat from the blood, but the *wei* opens the pores to release it to the exterior. Of course, sweat is not the only substance that is released through the pores of

the skin. A high percentage of hormones and gaseous material also is vented through the skin. All of these expulsions are governed by the *wei* qi.

*Ying* and *wei* are created simultaneously by the action of the middle warmer. It is a distillation process wherein the most refined parts are vaporized upward and the turbid portions precipitate downward for further distillation. The vaporization and the drawing inward and upward is the domain of the spleen qi. Precipitation and the movement down through the intestines is the domain of the stomach qi. Some food qi is naturally refined enough to be vaporized in the stomach, but most distillation occurs in the intestines by virtue of the energy of the spleen and stomach. The intestines are the location for distillation, but the middle warmer makes it happen. Though turbid in nature, *wei* qi is not waste product. It is the qi formed from the separation process itself. According to yin-yang theory, all separations of a “whole” into parts create a pairing of opposites. There cannot be inward and nourishing without outward and eliminating in an organism. When the function of the middle warmer is weak, separation is weak and the strength of both *ying* and *wei* are necessarily compromised. There simply cannot be quality nourishment without quality in the separation process, and if the separation process is functioning efficiently then strong *ying* and *wei* are formed simultaneously.

Many of the applications of **Cinnamon Twig Formula** can be explained by its ability to regulate the levels of interstitial fluids and invigorate movement through them. Cinnamon twig (*gui zhi*) invigorates blood flow and dilates the blood vessels. This helps to expel pathogens from the blood into the interstices, but the acrid property of cinnamon twig (*gui zhi*) also invigorates the movement of *wei* qi to help guide the pathogen out. White peony (*bai shao*) nourishes the *ying* and consolidates it inside the vessels. This dual action of consolidation within the vessels and invigoration outside the vessels helps restore balance between the *ying* and *wei*.

Many of the pathologies that result when *ying* and *wei* are disharmonious occur at the level of the interstitial fluids. For instance, when wind penetrates into the interstices beneath the skin and blocks *wei* qi from moving along the interstitial fluid, the *ying* may try to remedy the situation by transforming more blood into *jin*, but if the *jin* meets the wind before it meets the *wei* qi, the combination can cause the *jin* to degrade into dampness.

The formation of dampness in the interstices is an example of a *ying* and *wei* disharmony from the penetration of external wind. Internal wind can also cause an acute disharmony in the interstitial zones. Hives is a good example of this. Hives is often described as “wind in the blood.” But where did this wind come from? Internal wind is qi that has become “confused” about its function, location, direction, or rate of flow. It has broken down into something else; it has become “unrighteous.” The *zheng* qi, or “righteous” qi that remains then has the job of calling upon the *wei* qi to eliminate the newly formed wind. In hives, the wind is in the blood. The *ying* can’t handle wind in the blood, it cannot transform it into a different kind of fluid because wind is yang. All the *ying* qi can do is force the pathogenic factor to the walls of the vessels or transform blood into *jin* and dump it into the interstitial zone. The need to expel the pathogenic factor from the vessels invites *wei* qi into the domain of the *ying*. When *wei* moves inward toward the domain of the *ying*, the blood overheats and the interstitial fluids dry up or degrade into dampness. Without its medium of travel, the pathogenic wind and the *wei* qi become trapped together in the interstices and wheals form where the movement of *wei* qi is stuck.

Because *ying* governs everything we make a part of us, and *wei* governs everything we return back to the world, the sphere of influence this pair has extends into the realm of an individual personality’s exchange with the world. A well-functioning *ying-wei* in a personality allows mutually nourishing interaction with others. *Cinnamon Twig Formula* (*Gui Zhi Tang*) certainly cannot rectify all improper interactions with the world, but its function to harmonize by consolidating *ying* and invigorating *wei* can help with certain psychological boundary issues. It is useful when one feels overwhelmed, as if too much is coming through without getting processed.

Think of *Cinnamon Twig Formula* whenever a clear disharmony exists between the realm of the *ying* and that of the *wei*.

## ANALYSIS OF CLASSICAL INDICATIONS

### *Taiyang* Wind-Strike Pattern

In *taiyang* wind-strike patterns, the *wei* qi is identified with the exterior, the *ying* qi with the interior. In order to be susceptible to a “strike” by exterior wind, there is a preexisting deficiency of *wei* qi, whether temporary or chronic. This weakness of *wei* qi allows the exterior wind to penetrate quickly into the muscle layer. More *wei* qi is called up to the surface

to fight off the pathogen, but the wind binds the *wei* qi in the fleshy exterior and prevents it from regulating the opening and closing of the pores.

The interstitial fluid is the medium of conveyance for the *wei* qi in the flesh, just as blood is the medium of conveyance for the *ying* qi in the vessels. When the *wei* qi is circulating properly in the interstitial areas, the force from its movement and its expansive nature help to maintain a secure barrier between the vessels and the fleshy areas outside the vessels. When exterior wind penetrates into the flesh, it binds the *wei* qi, slowing its movement and limiting its expansion. It is the nature of *ying* to support *wei* by supplying fluid to the interstices, but when the *wei* qi is bound in the flesh by exterior wind, as when there is wind-strike, the fluid supplied by the *ying* is wasted: instead of providing a medium for the *wei* qi, the fluid just leaks out the pores. The movement of the *wei* qi is insufficient to secure the vessels, so the leaking continues and the *ying* quickly becomes depleted. Thus, the harmony of the *ying* and *wei* is disrupted. *Cinnamon Twig Formula* rectifies *taiyang* wind-strike by invigorating the flow of *wei* qi, securing the *ying*, and supporting the action of the *wei* qi to expel outward.

### Loss of Regulation between *Wei* and *Ying*

When *wei* qi is slightly deficient due to constitutional weakness, or after childbirth or a long illness, there may be a loss of regulation between the *wei* and *ying* qi. Though there may be no exterior symptoms this patient may present with spontaneous sweating and aversion to wind. A feverish feeling, may also result. By restoring the harmony of the *wei* and *ying* qi, the opening and closing of the pores is properly regulated.

### Intermittent Release of Heat

*Cinnamon Twig Formula* will not only harmonize the *ying* and *wei* qi but also warm and free the heart yang to treat “running piglet qi” or hot flashes. Not all hot flashes are the result of deficiency heat. Many cases are due to yang escaping from its proper seat. This pathology is similar to running piglet qi, but without the anxiety or sense of fear that accompanies the former. Extra cinnamon twig (*gui zhi*) may need to be added to the formula to accomplish this.

### Mismanaged Treatment of *Taiyang* Illness

*Cinnamon Twig Formula* can be used when someone has been treated for a *taiyang* stage illness with either purgatives or diaphoretics, which fail to completely eliminate the illness. If the pattern has not

shifted to another stage, **Cinnamon Twig Formula** can be used to resolve the end of the *taiyang* illness.

### **Taiyang Disease with Absence of Defecation for More than Four Days**

If a patient has been sick with *taiyang* disease, if the urine is clear and uninhibited, and there has been no defecation for more than four days, **Cinnamon Twig Formula** can be used to rectify the qi in the colon.

Because the *wei* qi has a close association with muscular movement, and because it is the primary qi involved in guiding things outward to the exterior, *wei* qi plays a key role in alimentary peristalsis. Both the fleshy exterior and the colon are comprised of epithelial tissue, and when the *wei* qi becomes entangled with exterior wind, any of the realms the *wei* qi governs can become affected. If the urine is cloudy or inhibited, there is dampness; if the urine is rough or dark, there is heat. **Cinnamon Twig Formula** is contraindicated for both heat and dampness, so in order to effectively use the formula to rectify the peristalsis in the colon, the urine must remain clear and uninhibited.

### **MODERN APPLICATIONS**

Arguably the most adaptive and widely modified formula from the *Shang Han Lun*, the applications for **Cinnamon Twig Formula** have been broadening for centuries. Some of the most common modern applications follow.

#### **Upper Respiratory Conditions**

**Cinnamon Twig Formula** has the ability to treat a variety of chronic and cold type upper respiratory conditions. In vitro studies have shown that **Cinnamon Twig Formula** can inhibit *H. pylori*, *staphylococcus aureus*, *salmonella typhi*, and *mycobacterium tuberculosis*.<sup>i</sup>

Along with the traditional actions, these modern studies show that **Cinnamon Twig Formula** can be used for conditions which involve inflammation or infection such as: allergic rhinitis, influenza, upper respiratory infection, and bronchial asthma.

One study reports that **Cinnamon Twig Formula** with the simple addition of magnolia bark (*hou po*) was highly effective to treat bronchial asthma in children, ages 2-10 years. These children had exhibited symptoms for up to 6 months. The treatment course was 1-5 days for each case. Only one out of 40 children showed no improvement.<sup>ii</sup>

#### **Rheumatoid Arthritis and Sciatica**

**Cinnamon Twig Formula** can dispel wind-cold

from the muscle layer; it also has been shown to have anti-inflammatory<sup>iii</sup> and analgesic<sup>iv</sup> properties. It can therefore be useful in the initial stage of wind-cold-damp painful obstruction (*bi zheng*, or *bi* syndrome) patterns. These same actions plus the formula's affinity for the *taiyang* channel makes it an effective treatment for sciatic pain triggered by external wind-cold.<sup>v</sup> Though it is not strong enough to treat the systemic inflammation of rheumatoid arthritis, this formula can be used as the first line of defense to prevent an attack of painful *bi* syndrome sciatica. Another study showed that **Cinnamon Twig Formula** is effective in lowering "arthritic scores" and can decrease the incidence of CIA (collagen induced arthritis).<sup>vi</sup>

#### **Skin Conditions**

Because the *ying* and *wei* meet in the fleshy exterior, many skin conditions can be treated with **Cinnamon Twig Formula**. The classical action of harmonizing the *ying* and *wei* assists with resolving such integumentary conditions as eczema, urticaria, non-specific itching, angioedema, allergic purpura and even frostbite—which may be treated with **Cinnamon Twig Formula** alone or with simple modifications.<sup>vii</sup>

No modification is necessary to treat acute flare up of cold-type (white) eczema or most types of urticaria. For allergic purpura, add salvia (*dan shen*). For frostbite, add ephedra (*ma huang*), asarum (*xi xin*), plus blood invigorating substances such as salvia (*dan shen*) and carthamus (*hong hua*).<sup>viii</sup>

#### **Cardiovascular System**

**Cinnamon Twig Formula** has been shown to increase systolic blood pressure and stroke volume.<sup>ix</sup> This is due to cinnamon twig's ability to dilate vessels and boost heart yang qi.

**Temperature Regulation, Excessive Sweating**  
**Cinnamon Twig Formula** can reduce or eliminate menopausal hot flashes. Hot flashes result from the imbalance of yin and yang, interior and exterior, and disharmony between the *ying* and *wei*. A properly functioning relationship between the *ying* and *wei* levels controls the opening and closing of the pores, thus affecting the body's ability to regulate its perspiration and temperature. **Cinnamon Twig Formula** also warms the uterus and can help return the yang to its proper seat. Because of the formula's ability to regulate the heart, **Cinnamon Twig Formula** can also manage the heart palpitations that often accompany hot flashes.

## Psycho-Emotional Issues

Cinnamon Twig Formula's application to treat *shen* disturbance is based upon its ability to harmonize the interior *ying* and exterior *wei*. When treating psycho-emotional conditions with Cinnamon Twig Formula, the condition will fall under the general category of "boundary issues." These patients usually have a chronic deficiency pattern with a compromised ability to keep the exterior out or contain the interior within. Cinnamon Twig Formula can be useful, for example, in certain patterns of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). If the patient shows any of the classic signs of *ying* and *wei* imbalance such as mild sweating, poor heat regulation, catching frequent colds, or constipation with clear urine, their chronic overstimulation from the exterior may be rectified with Cinnamon Twig Formula.

A recent study which used Cinnamon Twig Formula to treat ADHD, resulted in 93% amelioration rate after a 14-21 day course of treatment. The formula was somewhat altered in that the recommended daily dose of each single herb was reduced by one third, except *bai shao*, which was increased by one third. The subjects of the study were all children, from 2-13 years old and had exhibited symptoms of ADHD for 5 days up to four years. Those that did not respond had exhibited symptoms for 3+ years.<sup>x</sup>

Some schools of thought suggest that *shen* conditions require a smaller dosage than physical/physiological conditions. The reasoning is that, the spirit, being more refined than material substance, is more easily influenced on the level of the subtle. Typically, the "spirit dose" is about 1/3 of the of the "standard dose."

## Flushing Up of Qi (*Ben Tu*, Running Piglet Disorder)

This pattern is one in which a deficiency of heart yang fails to warm kidney water: heart yang deficiency with lower burner cold. There may also be a pre-existing kidney yang qi deficiency. In any case, heart fire is unable to warm kidney water, resulting in water rebelling upwards, which is experienced as a rushing upward of energy, traditionally described in China as 'running piglet qi'. This upward rushing of energy should not be confused with menopausal hot flashes, but is more akin to heart palpitations with anxiety. In this pattern the patient presents with heart palpitations, a tendency to be easily frightened, fatigue with desire to sleep (but possibly difficulty in falling asleep,) a bright white facial

color, spontaneous sweating, aversion to cold, cold hands and feet, and a pale, moist tongue body with white coating. The pulse is usually fine, weak and slow. Cinnamon Twig Decoction is an appropriate formula for this condition.

Traditionally, extra cinnamon twig (*gui zhi*) was added to more strongly warm the heart yang. The additional cinnamon twig not only assists to release the exterior but also strengthens and moves heart yang qi. Once the heart yang qi is strong enough, it can control kidney water and subdue the upward rushing of qi.

## Postpartum Colds and Flu

Loss of mutual regulation between the *ying* and *wei* can occur after a serious illness, childbirth, or in patients with a weak constitution. In such cases, even though there may be no externally contracted wind-cold, there may still be fever, sweating, and an aversion to wind.

Postpartum, the blood is deficient due to loss during the birthing process. The channels and collaterals are open and vulnerable. There is a great loss of qi and blood. The combination of open/vulnerable channels and deficient qi and blood compromise the *ying* and *wei* harmony, making easy for the mother to be affected by wind-strike. Cinnamon Twig Formula is administered to treat the event of wind-strike, and also as a preventative. It is the formula of choice for postpartum exterior conditions also because of its ability to warm the uterus.

## Testicular Pain

Most testicular pain is caused by cold in the urinary bladder/kidney complex. Cinnamon Twig Formula was tested to treat testicular pain because of its affinity for the urinary bladder (foot *taiyang*) channel and its ability to warm and expel pathogens from the channels and collaterals. One study treated 20 patients with a base of Cinnamon Twig Formula modified with chinaberry fruit (*chuan lian zi*) and dryopteris root (*guan zhong*). Marked relief was obtained after administering the formula for a period ranging from 6 to 32 days.<sup>xi</sup>

## Pediatric Enuresis

Most enuresis in children is due to either an insufficiency of yang qi or the presence of external cold in the urinary bladder/kidney. Cinnamon Twig Formula can be used to warm the yang and expel cold. In one study, 30 children 3-6 years old were treated with Cinnamon Twig Formula modified with black cardamom (*yi zhi*), cuscuta (*tu si zi*) and Chinese

quince fruit (*mu gua*). Fifteen cases showed significant improvement, 11 showed moderate improvement, and in 4 cases there was complete resolution.<sup>xiii</sup>

## FORMULA COMPARISONS

### Ephedra Decoction (*Ma Huang Tang*)

Ephedra Decoction is for *taiyang* cold damage, while Cinnamon Twig Formula is for *taiyang* wind-strike. The essential difference is that in *taiyang* cold damage, the *wei qi* is considered to be sufficiently strong. Some of the symptoms manifest because the struggle between the *wei qi* and the cold pathogen is fierce. This struggle cannot be fierce if the *wei qi* is insufficient. In the case of insufficient *wei qi*, wind penetrates easily to the fleshy exterior of the body, causing leaking of *jin* fluid in the form of sweat. If there is sweating, Ephedra Decoction is contraindicated. (See introduction for more details.)

### Cinnamon D Formula

#### (*Gui Zhi Jia Long Gu Mu Li Tang*)

Cinnamon D Formula is a modification of Cinnamon Twig Formula. The fresh ginger (*sheng jiang*) is replaced with dried ginger (*gan jiang*); dragon bone (*long gu*) and oyster shell (*mu li*) have been added so that the formula can harmonize heart and kidney. These modifications focus the formula on specific organs rather than upon the *ying* and *wei*. *Sheng jiang* releases the exterior, but *gan jiang* warms the interior. *Long gu* and *mu li* settle and calm the spirit, benefit heart and kidney.

### Astragalus Formula (*Huang Qi Jian Zhong Tang*)

Astragalus Formula is a modification of Cinnamon Twig Formula. The modifications focus the formula on supplementing spleen qi so that *wei qi* can be built up. Barley malt sugar (*yi tang*), white atractylodes (*bai zhu*), and astragalus (*huang qi*) are added to Cinnamon Twig Formula to accomplish this.

### Bupleurum and Cinnamon Formula

#### (*Chai Hu Gui Zhi Tang*)

Bupleurum and Cinnamon Formula is a combination of Cinnamon Twig Formula (*Gui Zhi Tang*) and Minor Bupleurum Formula (*Xiao Chai Hu Tang*). The two formulas are combined to treat concurrent *taiyang* and *shaoyang* stages of exterior invasion. In Six Stage Theory, the passage from one stage to another is not always cut and dry. There can be simultaneous manifestations. The Cinnamon Twig Formula addresses *taiyang* symptoms like chills and fever, while the Minor Bupleurum Formula addresses *shaoyang* symptoms like pain and crackling in the joints, difficulty twisting, fullness in the chest and epigastric pain.

### Jade Windscreen Formula (*Yu Ping Feng San*)

Jade Windscreen Formula strengthens the *wei qi* and consolidates the exterior. It can be taken for long periods of time to build up *wei qi*, but should be discontinued during the course of an exterior invasion. Cinnamon Twig Formula is appropriate while exterior symptoms are present and during the resolution stage.

### Gan Mao Ling Formula (*Gan Mao Ling Pian*), Viola Clear Fire Formula (*Di Ding Qing Huo Pian*), Yin Chiao Formula (*Yin Qiao San*), and Zhong Gan Ling Formula (*Zhong Gan Ling Pian*)

What all these formulas have in common is that they possess strong anti-viral actions and are therefore used to treat externally contracted pathogens. They are all cold natured and are most appropriate when used to treat warm pathogens. When used to treat a cold pathogen, these formulas can actually drive the cold deeper into the body or lock it in place. Cinnamon Twig Formula, on the other hand, is warming and therefore more effective and appropriate against cold pathogens.

## Endnotes

<sup>i</sup>Zhong Yao Yao Li Yu Ying Yong (*Pharmacology and Applications of Chinese Herbs*) 1987; 3 (3):1.

<sup>ii</sup>Si Chuan Zhong Yi (*Sichuan Chinese Medicine*) 1998; 9:42.

<sup>iii</sup>Zhong Cheng Yao Yan Jiu (*Research of Chinese Patent Medicine*) 1983; (3):25.

and Zhong Yao Yao Li Yu Ying Yong (*Pharmacology and Applications of Chinese Herbs*) 1987; 3 (2):1.

<sup>iv</sup>Jiang Xi Zhong Yi Yao (*Jiangxi Chinese Medicine and Herbol-ogy*) 1999; 6:56.

<sup>v</sup>Shan Xi Zhong Yi (*Shanxi Chinese Medicine*) 1993; 2:78.

<sup>vi</sup>Gui-Qin Zhou, Ning Zhao, Hao Zhang, Hong-Wei Jia, Wan-Dong Zhang, Lin-Hua Zhao, Cheng Lu, Ying-Hui he, Ai-Ping Lu. *Effect of Gui Zhi Decoction on enteric mucosal immune in mice with collagen-induced arthritis. World J Gastroenterol* 2005; 11(34): 5373-5376.

<sup>vii</sup>Volker Scheid, Dan Bensky, Andrew Ellis, Randall Barolet, *Formulas and Strategies*, 2nd edition, Eastland Press, 2009.

<sup>viii</sup>Zhong Cheng Yao Yan Jiu (*Research of Chinese Patent Medicine*) 1983; (3):25.

<sup>ixβ</sup>Xu FH, Uebaba K, "Effect of Kampo formulations on Circulatory Parameters", *Acupuncture and Electro-therapeutics Research* 1999;24(1):11-28.

<sup>x</sup>Hu Bei Zhong Yi Za Zhi (*Hubei Journal of Chinese Medicine*) 1994; 3:33.

<sup>xi</sup>Zhe Jiang Zhong Yi Za Zhi (*Zhejiang Journal of Chinese Medicine*) 1985;3:109

<sup>xiii</sup>Wang Wei and Wang Yei, "The Treatment of 30 Cases of Long-term Pediatric Enuresis with Gui Zhi Tang," *Ji Lin Zhong Yi Yao (Jilin Chinese Medicine and Herbol-ogy)* 1998;4:36.

## USEFUL COMBINATIONS

To reinforce immune response to viruses	Use with <b>Five Mushroom Formula</b> .
To adjust and build <i>wei qi</i>	Use alternately with <b>Jade Windscreen Formula</b> to prevent wind-strike attack, as well as after wind-strike attack has resolved to strengthen the immune system. Switch to <b>Cinnamon Twig Formula</b> if wind-strike attack occurs.
Painful <i>bi</i> syndrome: 1) painful <i>bi</i> syndrome, where cold is greater than damp, 2) early stage <i>bi</i> syndrome, as in the first season when a person feels the painful obstruction, and 3) <i>bi</i> syndrome that is triggered by wind-strike or wind-cold pathogens	Combine with <b>Du Huo and Loranthus Formula</b> .
Headache from wind-cold or wind-strike invasion	Use with <b>Head Relief Formula</b> .
Menopausal hot flashes	Use with <b>Two Immortals Formula</b> .

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