

Shēn Tòng Zhú Yū Tāng

(Drive Out Blood Stasis from a Painful Body Decoction)

身痛逐瘀湯

身痛逐瘀汤

Pinyin Name: *Shen Tong Zhu Yu Tang*

Literal Name: Drive Out Blood Stasis from a Painful Body Decoction

Alternate Name: Cnidium and Notopterygium Combination

Original Source: *Yi Lin Gai Cuo* (Corrections of Errors Among Physicians) by Wang Qing-Ren in 1830

COMPOSITION

<i>Tao Ren</i> (Semen Persicae)	9g
<i>Hong Hua</i> (Flos Carthami)	9g
<i>Dang Gui</i> (Radix Angelicae Sinensis)	9g
<i>Chuan Xiong</i> (Rhizoma Chuanxiong)	6g
<i>Mo Yao</i> (Myrrha)	6g
<i>Wu Ling Zhi</i> (Faeces Trogopteri), <i>chao</i> (dry-fried)	6g
<i>Di Long</i> (Pheretima)	6g
<i>Qin Jiao</i> (Radix Gentianae Macrophyllae)	3g
<i>Qiang Huo</i> (Rhizoma et Radix Notopterygii)	3g
<i>Xiang Fu</i> (Rhizoma Cyperi)	3g
<i>Niu Xi</i> (Radix Achyranthis Bidentatae)	9g
<i>Gan Cao</i> (Radix et Rhizoma Glycyrrhizae)	6g

DOSAGE / PREPARATION / ADMINISTRATION

Prepare as a decoction.

located in the shoulder, elbow, waist, leg, or throughout the whole body.

CHINESE THERAPEUTIC ACTIONS

1. Activates qi and blood circulation
2. Disperses blood stagnation and opens the channels and collaterals
3. Unblocks *bi zheng* (painful obstruction syndrome) and relieves pain

In this formula, *Tao Ren* (Semen Persicae) and *Hong Hua* (Flos Carthami) activate blood circulation and eliminate blood stasis. *Dang Gui* (Radix Angelicae Sinensis) and *Chuan Xiong* (Rhizoma Chuanxiong) nourish the blood and promote blood circulation. *Mo Yao* (Myrrha) relieves pain by invigorating blood circulation. *Wu Ling Zhi* (Faeces Trogopteri) and *Di Long* (Pheretima) dispel blood stasis and open the channels and collaterals. *Qin Jiao* (Radix Gentianae Macrophyllae) and *Qiang Huo* (Rhizoma et Radix Notopterygii) dispel wind-dampness to relieve pain. *Xiang Fu* (Rhizoma Cyperi) activates qi to relieve pain. *Niu Xi* (Radix Achyranthis Bidentatae) strengthens bones, tendons, and soft tissues. *Gan Cao* (Radix et Rhizoma Glycyrrhizae) harmonizes the herbs in the formula.

CLINICAL MANIFESTATIONS

Pain due to qi and blood stagnation blocking the channels and collaterals: pain in the shoulder, elbow, waist and/or leg; and persistent, generalized pain throughout the whole body that does not respond to treatment.

CLINICAL APPLICATIONS

Arthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, sciatica, pain in the lower back and legs, lumbago, neuralgia, hyperosteoegeny, and allergic purpura.

EXPLANATION

Shen Tong Zhu Yu Tang (Drive Out Blood Stasis from a Painful Body Decoction) activates qi and blood circulation, dispels blood stagnation, opens the channels and collaterals, and relieves pain. Clinically, it is often used for pain due to stagnation of qi and blood. Pain may be

MODIFICATIONS

- With pain in the upper body, add *Ge Gen* (Radix Puerariae Lobatae).
- With pain the lower body, add *Du Huo* (Radix Angelicae Pubescentis).
- With pain in the extremities, add *Sang Zhi* (Ramulus Mori) and *Gui Zhi* (Ramulus Cinnamomi).

Shēn Tòng Zhú Yū Tāng

(Drive Out Blood Stasis from a Painful Body Decoction)

Shen Tong Zhu Yu Tang (Drive Out Blood Stasis from a Painful Body Decoction)

Diagnosis	Signs and Symptoms	Treatment	Herbs
Pain due to qi and blood stagnation	Pain in the shoulder, elbow, waist, leg and/or the whole body: qi and blood stagnation blocking the channels and collaterals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activates qi and blood circulation • Disperses blood stagnation and opens the channels and collaterals • Unblocks <i>bi zheng</i> (painful obstruction syndrome) and relieves pain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tao Ren</i> (Semen Persicae) and <i>Hong Hua</i> (Flos Carthami) activate blood circulation and eliminate blood stasis. • <i>Dang Gui</i> (Radix Angelicae Sinensis) and <i>Chuan Xiong</i> (Rhizoma Chuanxiong) nourish the blood and promote blood circulation. • <i>Mo Yao</i> (Myrrha) invigorates blood circulation and relieves pain. • <i>Wu Ling Zhi</i> (Faeces Troglodyteri) and <i>Di Long</i> (Pheretima) dispel blood stasis and open the channels and collaterals. • <i>Qin Jiao</i> (Radix Gentianae Macrophyllae) and <i>Qiang Huo</i> (Rhizoma et Radix Notopterygii) dispel wind-dampness to relieve pain. • <i>Xiang Fu</i> (Rhizoma Cyperi) activates qi circulation to relieve pain. • <i>Niu Xi</i> (Radix Achyranthis Bidentatae) strengthens bones, tendons, and soft tissues. • <i>Gan Cao</i> (Radix et Rhizoma Glycyrrhizae) harmonizes the herbs.

CAUTIONS / CONTRAINDICATIONS

Use of *Shen Tong Zhu Yu Tang* is contraindicated during pregnancy.¹

PHARMACOLOGICAL EFFECTS

Analgesic and anti-inflammatory: According to *in vitro* studies, administration of *Shen Tong Zhu Yu Tang* in tincture form was effective in relieving pain and reducing inflammation.²

CLINICAL STUDIES AND RESEARCH

1. **Bizheng (painful obstructions syndrome):** Administration of *Shen Tong Zhu Yu Tang* in 32 patients with *bi zheng* (painful obstruction syndrome) was associated with complete recovery in 12 cases, significant improvement in 10 cases, moderate improvement in 7 cases, and no improvement in 3 cases. The overall effectiveness was 90.6%. The herbal formula used *Shen Tong Zhu Yu Tang* as the base, with the addition of *Huang Qi* (Radix Astragali) and *Dang Shen* (Radix Codonopsis) for qi deficiency; *Fang Feng* (Radix Saposhnikoviae) and *Wei Ling Xian* (Radix et Rhizoma Clematidis) for wind; *Zhi Chuan Wu* (Radix Aconiti Praeparata) and *Xi Xin* (Radix et Rhizoma Asari) for cold; *Fu Ling* (Poria) and *Yi Yi Ren* (Semen Coicis) for damp; *Gui Zhi* (Ramulus Cinnamomi) and *Sang Zhi*

(Ramulus Mori) for pain in the upper limbs; *Sang Ji Sheng* (Herba Taxilli), *Xu Duan* (Radix Dipsaci), and *Gou Ji* (Rhizoma Cibotii) for pain in the lower limbs; *Ge Gen* (Radix Puerariae Lobatae) for pain in the neck; and *Feng Fang* (Nidus Vespae), *Wu Shao She* (Zaocys), *Quan Xie* (Scorpio), and dry-fried *Chuan Shan Jia* (Squama Manis) for stiff joints with deformation. For *re bi* (heat painful obstruction), *Jin Yin Hua* (Flos Lonicerae Japonicae), *Cang Zhu* (Rhizoma Atractylodis), and *Huang Bo* (Cortex Phellodendri Chinensis) were added, and *Qin Jiao* (Radix Gentianae Macrophyllae), *Qiang Huo* (Rhizoma et Radix Notopterygii), and *Chuan Xiong* (Rhizoma Chuanxiong) were removed. For *shi-re bi* (damp-heat painful obstruction), *Huang Lian* (Rhizoma Coptidis), *Jin Yin Hua* (Flos Lonicerae Japonicae), and *Yu Jin* (Radix Curcumae) were added, and *Niu Xi* (Radix Achyranthis Bidentatae), *Qin Jiao* (Radix Gentianae Macrophyllae), *Qiang Huo* (Rhizoma et Radix Notopterygii), and *Chuan Xiong* (Rhizoma Chuanxiong) were removed.³

2. **Arthritis:** Use of modified *Shen Tong Zhu Yu Tang* in 67 patients with arthritis was associated with complete recovery in 50 patients, significant improvement in 14 cases, and no effect in 3 cases. Modifications included the addition of *Fu Zi* (Radix Aconiti Lateralis Praeparata), *Xi Xin* (Radix et Rhizoma Asari), and *Wei Ling Xian*

Shēn Tòng Zhú Yū Tāng

(Drive Out Blood Stasis from a Painful Body Decoction)

(Radix et Rhizoma Clematidis) for arthritis due to cold; *Ren Dong Teng* (Caulis Lonicerae Japonicae), *Shi Gao* (Gypsum Fibrosum), *Huang Bo* (Cortex Phellodendri Chinensis), and *Yi Yi Ren* (Semen Coicis), and removal of *Qiang Huo* (Rhizoma et Radix Notopterygii), for arthritis due to heat; *Bai Shao* (Radix Paeoniae Alba) for stiffness of the tendons and ligaments; and *Jim Qian Bai Hua She* (Bungarus Parvus) and *Wu Shao She* (Zaocys) for “mobile” arthritis that affects multiple joints.⁴

- Rheumatoid arthritis:** One study of 46 patients with rheumatoid arthritis reported marked success using modified *Shen Tong Zhu Yu Tang*. Of 46 patients, the study reported recovery in 12 cases, improvement in 25 cases, slight improvement in 7 cases, and no effect in 2 cases. The duration of treatment was 2 months per course of treatment, for 3 courses total. The study also noted that the effect of the herbs was comparable to or better than that in the control group that received aspirin. The herbal formula contained *Shen Tong Zhu Yu Tang* as the base formula, and added *Gui Zhi* (Ramulus Cinnamomi), *Fang Feng* (Radix Saposhnikoviae), and *Wei Ling Xian* (Radix et Rhizoma Clematidis) for wind-dampness; *Gui Zhi* (Ramulus Cinnamomi), *Gan Jiang* (Rhizoma Zingiberis), and *Fu Ling* (Poria) for damp-cold; addition of *Cang Zhu* (Rhizoma Atractylodis), *Huang Bo* (Cortex Phellodendri Chinensis), and *Fang Feng* (Radix Saposhnikoviae), and removal of *Qiang Huo* (Rhizoma et Radix Notopterygii), for damp-heat; the addition of *Di Huang* (Radix Rehmanniae), *Gou Qi Zi* (Fructus Lycii), and *Nu Zhen Zi* (Fructus Ligustri Lucidi), and removal of *Qiang Huo* (Rhizoma et Radix Notopterygii) and *Qin Jiao* (Radix Gentianae Macrophyllae), for Kidney yin deficiency; and the addition of *Rou Gui* (Cortex Cinnamomi) and *Shan Zhu Yu* (Fructus Corni), and removal of *Qiang Huo* (Rhizoma et Radix Notopterygii) and *Qin Jiao* (Radix Gentianae Macrophyllae), for Kidney yang deficiency.⁵
- Sciatica:** Administration of *Shen Tong Zhu Yu Tang* for 7-45 days (average of 17.4 days) in 36 patients with sciatica was associated with complete recovery in 29 cases, significant improvement in 6 cases, and no effect in 1 case. The overall effectiveness was 97.2%. Furthermore, of 24 patients who returned for follow-up one year later, only 1 had recurrence.⁶
- Pain in the lower back and legs:** Administration of *Shen Tong Zhu Yu Tang* has been shown in 2 studies to effectively treat pain in the lower back and legs. Of 67 patients, the first study reported complete recovery in 53 cases, improvement in 9 cases, and no effect in 5 cases.⁷ Of 52 patients in the second study, 12 had complete

recovery, 26 had significant improvement, 9 had moderate improvement, and 5 had no effect.⁸

- Lumbago:** One study reported good results using modified *Shen Tong Zhu Yu Tang* to treat acute low back pain. Modifications included the addition of *Dang Shen* (Radix Codonopsis) and *Huang Qi* (Radix Astragali) for qi deficiency; and *Yan Hu Suo* (Rhizoma Corydalis) and *Qi Ye Lian* (Radix Schefflerae) for severe pain. The herbal treatment also was applied topically to the affected area. Of 15 patients, the study reported complete recovery in 8 cases, significant improvement in 3 cases, moderate improvement in 3 cases, and no benefit in 1 case.⁹
- Hyperosteoegeny:** Hyperosteoegeny of the lumbar spine was treated with modified *Shen Tong Zhu Yu Tang* with good results. Of 25 patients, the study reported complete relief in 18 cases, significant relief in 4 cases, and no effect in 3 cases.¹⁰
- Allergic purpura:** Use of modified *Shen Tong Zhu Yu Tang* for treatment of allergic purpura was associated with marked success in 30 patients (between 11-59 years of age with 2 days to 3 years history of illness). The herbal treatment contained *Dang Gui* (Radix Angelicae Sinensis) 15g, *Hong Hua* (Flos Carthami) 12g, *Mo Yao* (Myrrha) 12g, *Wu Ling Zhi* (Faeces Trogopteri) 12g, *Xiang Fu* (Rhizoma Cyperi) 12g, *Chuan Xiong* (Rhizoma Chuanxiong) 10g, *Tao Ren* (Semen Persicae) 10g, *Niu Xi* (Radix Achyranthis Bidentatae) 9g, *Qin Jiao* (Radix Gentianae Macrophyllae) 9g, *Di Long* (Pheretima) 9g, *Qiang Huo* (Rhizoma et Radix Notopterygii) 9g, and *Gan Cao* (Radix et Rhizoma Glycyrrhizae) 6g. Other modifications were made as needed based on the condition of the individual patients. The herbs were given in decoction daily for 5-32 days duration. Of 30 patients, the study reported complete recovery in 26 cases, significant improvement in 3 cases, and no benefit in one case.¹¹

RELATED FORMULA

Zhú Yū Tāng (Drive Out Blood Stasis Decoction)

逐瘀湯

逐瘀汤

Pinyin Name: *Zhu Yu Tang*

Literal Name: Drive Out Blood Stasis Decoction

Original Source: *Jian Tai Zhen Suo Fang* (Herbal Prescriptions from *Jiantai* Clinic) by Chang Wei-Yen in 1981

Tao Ren (Semen Persicae)

Hong Hua (Flos Carthami)

San Leng (Rhizoma Sparganii)

E Zhu (Rhizoma Curcumae)

Chuan Xiong (Rhizoma Chuanxiong)

Shēn Tòng Zhú Yū Tāng

(Drive Out Blood Stasis from a Painful Body Decoction)

Dan Shen (Radix et Rhizoma Salviae Miltiorrhizae)

Dang Gui (Radix Angelicae Sinensis)

Bai Shao (Radix Paeoniae Alba)

Fu Ling (Poria)

Er Cha (Catechu)

Ji Xue Teng (Caulis Spatholobi)

Xue Jie (Sanguis Draconis)

Gui Zhi (Ramulus Cinnamomi)

Sang Zhi (Ramulus Mori)

Sheng Ma (Rhizoma Cimicifugae)

Ding Xiang (Flos Caryophylli)

Qiang Huo (Rhizoma et Radix Notopterygii)

Qing Pi (Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae Viride)

Xiang Fu (Rhizoma Cyperi)

Gao Liang Jiang (Rhizoma Alpiniae Officinarum)

Lu Lu Tong (Fructus Liquidambaris)

Qin Jiao (Radix Gentianae Macrophyllae)

Yan Hu Suo (Rhizoma Corydalis)

Mu Dan Pi (Cortex Moutan)

Chuan Niu Xi (Radix Cyathulae)

Da Huang (Radix et Rhizoma Rhei)

Lian Zi (Semen Nelumbinis)

Da Zao (Fructus Jujubae)

Gan Cao (Radix et Rhizoma Glycyrrhizae)

Zhu Yu Tang (Drive Out Blood Stasis Decoction) is designed to treat pain in the extremities due to blood

stagnation. It is formulated based on the principles and ingredients of three classic formulas: *Shen Tong Zhu Yu Tang* (Drive Out Blood Stasis from a Painful Body Decoction) to eliminate blood stasis from the extremities; *Dang Gui Si Ni Tang* (Tangkuei Decoction for Frigid Extremities) to warm the channels and disperse cold; and *Zheng Gu Zi Jin Dan* (Purple and Gold Pill for Righteous Bones) to activate blood circulation and dispel blood stasis. Clinical applications include peripheral neuropathy, polyneuropathy, diabetic neuropathy, distal polyneuropathy, and neuralgia.

References

1. *Zhong Yao Ming Fang Yao Li Yu Ying Yong* (Pharmacology and Applications of Famous Herbal Formulas) 1989;466-468.
2. *Zhong Yao Yan Jiu* (Research of Chinese Herbology) 1993;6(4):15.
3. *Xin Zhong Yi* (New Chinese Medicine) 1995;9:42.
4. *Yun Nan Zhong Yao Zhi* (Yunan Journal of Chinese Herbal Medicine) 1989;3:46.
5. *Bei Jing Zhong Yi Za Zhi* (Beijing Journal of Chinese Medicine) 1988;6:35.
6. *Si Chuan Zhong Yi* (Sichuan Chinese Medicine) 1985;11:50.
7. *Hu Nan Zhong Yi Za Zhi* (Hunan Journal of Chinese Medicine) 1987;1:12.
8. *Zhe Jiang Zhong Yi Za Zhi* (Zhejiang Journal of Chinese Medicine) 1987;10:452.
9. *Guang Xi Zhong Yi Yao* (Guangxi Chinese Medicine and Herbology) 1987;2:47.
10. *Gan Su Zhong Yi* (Gansu Chinese Medicine) 1993;9:46.
11. *Bei Jing Zhong Yi* (Beijing Chinese Medicine) 1995;4:43.