

From the *Xiu Zhen Zhong Yi Chu Fang*  
(Pocket book of Chinese herbal formulae)

## A formula for esophagitis

**THE MAIN SYMPTOMS** of esophagitis are a feeling behind the sternum of a burning sensation, acid regurgitation or pain, worse with swallowing, and the pain radiates toward the neck and shoulders; swallowing is difficult, and there may be nausea and vomiting.

Basic formula:

<i>Bei Sha Shen</i>	12g (Glehniae Radix)
<i>Zhi Ban Xia</i>	12g (Pinelliae Rhizoma preparatum)
<i>Huang Qin</i>	9g (Scutellariae Radix)
<i>Ba Yue Zha</i>	9g (Akebiae Fructus)
<i>Bai Shao</i>	12g (Paeoniae Radix alba)
<i>Gan Cao</i>	3g (Glycyrrhizae Radix)

### Alterations:

Dry throat, add:

<i>Shi Hu</i>	9g (Dendrobii Herba)
<i>Mai Men Dong</i>	9g (Ophiopogonis Radix)

Bleeding, add:

<i>Sheng Di</i>	12g (Rehmanniae Radix)
<i>Di Yu</i>	12g (Sanguisorbae Radix)

**Explanation:** *Bei Sha Shen* nourishes yin to produce fluids; *Huang Qin* cools heat and prevents more damage to fluids; *Ban Xia* directs rebellious qi downward and transforms phlegm; the combination of *Bai Shao* and *Gan Cao* reduce spasm; *Ba Yue Zha* frees qi flow and releases constraint.

**Notes:** This condition usually results from obstruction of phlegm-heat, which is itself caused by qi blockage causing phlegm to knot up, gradually turning hot.

The treatment involves cooling and dispersing of knotted phlegm-heat, while opening the flow of qi to prevent further constraint.

Other herbs that cool phlegm heat include *Zhu Ru* (*Bambusae Caulis in taeniam*), *Niu Bang Zi* (*Arctii Fructus*), *Zhe Bei Mu* (*Fritillariae thunbergii Bulbus*), *Pi Pa Ye* (*Eriobotryae Folium*), and *Xuan Fu Hua* (*Inulae Flos*); herbs that open qi flow include *Ju Ye* (*Citri reticulatae Folium*), *Zhi Ke* (*Aurantii Fructus*), and *Wei Ling Xian* (*Clematidis Radix*).

Other formulas that could be used include *Da Ban Xia Tang* (Major Pinellia Decoction) which directs rebellious qi downward and moistens to guide outward; and *Mai Men Dong Tang* (Ophiopogon Decoction), which cools heat, moistens fluids and directs qi downward.

**Reference:** *Xiu Zhen Zhong Yi Chu Fang* (Pocketbook of Chinese herbal formulae), edited by Ru Shi-Mei, Shanghai TCM College Publishing, 1987, pp. 175-176.