

# Wen Jing Tang

according to Huang Huang



When one is busy with a clinic year after year, one's understanding of classical formulas can become myopic and limited.

**By Sharon Weizenbaum**

**W**EN JING TANG (Warm the Menses Decoction)<sup>1</sup> has always been a favourite formula of mine. I have probably prescribed it hundreds of times. A formula becomes a favourite when I begin to feel I know exactly how to use it *and* it is remarkably effective. How I have come to think of *Wen Jing Tang* over the years is probably how many of us think of it; when a patient comes in with dysmenorrhea due to cold on a background of blood deficiency I use *Wen Jing Tang*. When the diagnosis is right, the effect is rapid and almost magical. Yet, as can happen when one is busy with a clinic year after year, my understanding of the potential of this classic formula became rather myopic in that I thought of it only for painful menstruation from cold. The fact that *Formulas and Strategies* lists indications for *Wen Jing Tang* such as dry lips and mouth, low grade fever at dusk and warm palms and soles went over my head; I focused on its ability to treat pain and cold.

This past autumn I travelled to Nan Jing with a small group of practitioners to study with Dr Huang Huang. *Wen Jing Tang* is just one example of a prescription for which my limited, stuck-in-a-rut thinking was put back on the road with expanded possibilities. During the course we were impressed and inspired by the way Dr Huang opened our minds to the way of the *jing fang* 经方, or classic formulas, of Zhang Zhong-Jing. Yet this was not a simple case of “new uses

1. From here simply referred to as *Wen Jing Tang*.

for old formulas”. What Dr Huang opened us to was the logic and intelligence behind the *Shang Han Lun* (Discussion of Cold-Induced Disorders) formulas. One could say he taught us more thoroughly how to understand and utilise the old uses for the old formulas.

There have been several articles written about Huang Huang in recent issues of *The Lantern*, including one interview with Dr Huang.<sup>2</sup> Chris Eddy and Michael Max and Dr Huang himself have done a good job of describing the method of diagnosis by body type and treating by matching the presentation with the formula. In this article, I would like to continue to fill out the reader's sense of Dr Huang's teachings and perspective by looking at how he uses one particular formula, *Wen Jing Tang*. I will base this on Dr Huang's lectures, a case from Dr Huang's clinic and information from his book *Zhong Yi Shi Da Lei Fang* (The Ten Major Formula Categories in Chinese Medicine)<sup>3</sup>. Finally I will present a case from my own clinic for which I would previously have never given *Wen Jing Tang*. You will see for yourself the efficacy of this approach.

## Wen Jing Tang presentation

The *Wen Jing Tang* presentation in Dr Huang's view is a subcategory of the *Gui Zhi* presentation. In fact, *Wen Jing Tang* is made up of *Gui Zhi Tang* (Cinnamon Twig Decoction) with additions. The *Wen Jing Tang* patient will mostly appear as a *Gui Zhi* (Cinnamomi Ramulus) body type, which means they will generally be deficient and thin with finely textured skin. They will be sensitive to

2. *The Lantern*: Volume 4-1 and 4-2.

3. Huang Huang (1995) *Zhong Yi Shi Da Lei Fang* (The Ten Major Formula Categories in Chinese Medicine), Jiangsu: Science and Technology Press. (Now being translated by Michael Max to be published by Eastland Press.)

■ Sharon Weizenbaum has been practising Chinese medicine for 24 years and has lectured around the US. In 1998 she founded White Pine Healing Arts, a centre dedicated to the practice and teaching of Asian medicine. Sharon is also a Frances Perkins Scholar at Mt Holyoke College where she has been translating her teacher's book on herbal gynaecology.



*Wen Jing Tang is the queen of the beauty formulas and this is because it will moisten and plump up a prematurely withered woman. It will make the skin moist and lustrous and that is good for mucous membranes, such as in the mouth and vagina, that get thin and brittle. A woman's lips become full and moist, breasts filling out, vaginal secretions start to flow, complexion becomes moist and hair becomes lustrous...*

cold and have a tendency to abdominal pain. Their abdomen tends to be flat and their abdominal muscles tight. All of these characteristics can manifest in the *Gui Zhi* (Cinnamomi Ramulus) and the *Wen Jing Tang* presentations and both are deficiency presentations. Yet there are some differences between the two types. The *Gui Zhi* (Cinnamomi Ramulus) presentation includes moist skin and a tendency to sweat spontaneously, at night or on the palms and soles. The *Wen Jing Tang* patient, on the other hand, presents with a key symptom of dryness. There are symptoms of heat associated with *Wen Jing Tang* such as afternoon feverishness and heat in the palms and soles but this heat is not generally accompanied by sweating. The only sweating symptom for *Wen Jing Tang* is spontaneous sweating but this sweat does not make the skin generally moist as in the *Gui Zhi Tang* (Cinnamon Twig Decoction) type person. The pulse for the *Gui Zhi* (Cinnamomi Ramulus) presentation is floating and large while the pulse for *Wen Jing Tang* is mostly thin and may be wiry.

#### Dryness as a key symptom

It is remarkable to me that such an important aspect of such an important formula was something I never thought of in the clinic before. To put it succinctly, I now think of *Wen Jing Tang* as primarily a *moistening* formula and secondarily as a *warming* formula. In fact, Dr Huang describes the function of *Wen Jing Tang* as nourishing the blood and enriching the yin.

The dryness seen in a *Wen Jing Tang* presentation is systemic. This means there is generally a withered, dark and lack-lustre look to the patient's face and body. The body skin will seem loose. The lips and mouth will be dry, the lips being chapped and cracked. The hands and feet may be especially dry with cracks and hang nails. On the feet it is helpful to look at the heels for dryness. Then there also may be vaginal dryness or lack of secretions and dry head hair with broken or split ends. The abdomen and breasts may deflate, become smaller and droop. Dr Huang said that sometimes women who wash a lot of dishes have dry hands but that it only gets this way easily because their constitution relates to *Wen Jing Tang*.

#### Wen Jing Tang as a beauty formula

Throughout the course, Dr Huang often spoke of formulas to help women attain their full endowment of beauty.<sup>4</sup> *Wen Jing Tang* is the queen of the beauty formulas and this is because it will mois-

ten and plump up a prematurely withered woman. He told us that *Wen Jing Tang* will make the skin moist and lustrous and that is good for mucous membranes, such as in the mouth and vagina, that get thin and brittle. With a woman's lips becoming full and moist, her breasts filling out, her vaginal secretions starting to flow, her complexion becoming moist and her hair becoming lustrous, it is easy to see why this would be considered a beauty formula. He said that even her hands will become beautiful! "Yet, one cannot make an old woman young so this formula is perfect for middle-aged women" he added.

#### Wen Jing Tang warms channels and uterus

It is interesting that during our course, Dr Huang did not talk much about *Wen Jing Tang* as a warming formula, emphasising its moistening ability. He did mention that Zhang Zhong-Jing used *Wen Jing Tang* for cold womb infertility. In addition, in his book *Zhong Yi Shi Da Lei Fang* (The Ten Major Formula Categories in Chinese Medicine) he discusses the application of *Wen Jing Tang* for warming the "jing 经" (a character that can be alternately translated as either channel or menstruation implying the womb).<sup>5</sup> By warming the channels and womb, *Wen Jing Tang* vitalises the blood, stops pain and stops bleeding. When there is pain or bleeding due to cold stagnating the blood, the signs that indicate the blood stasis are a dark pale tongue body and blood that is dark and with clots. By warming the womb, *Wen Jing Tang* vitalises the blood. By vitalising the blood, *Wen Jing Tang* can also thereby stop bleeding due to blood stasis.

My own thought is that the warming ability of *Wen Jing Tang* is related to its ability to nourish the blood and enrich the yin. Just as in the winter when the world is frozen, we feel dryness more than in the other seasons, in our bodies cold can also lead to dryness. When our moisture reserves are frozen, they are not available.

One of the ways that *Wen Jing Tang* works to nourish the blood and moisten the body is by melting what has been frozen. The moisture that spreads throughout the body is like the steaming up of the moist clouds in the spring when the sun finally warms up the earth. So, it is also by warming the womb that *Wen Jing Tang* can treat blood and yin deficiency and amenorrhoea.

#### Wen Jing Tang regulates the cycle:

Dr Huang writes that the herbs *Dang Gui* (Angelica Sinensis Radix), *Chuan Xiong* (Chuanxiong Rhizoma), *Bai Shao* (Paeoniae Radix alba) all

4. All participants in this course were women and all agreed that Dr Huang always spoke of women with the greatest respect and appreciation. Whenever he spoke of beauty formulas, it was always in the context of beauty being the natural outcome of radiant health.

5. *Zhong Yi Shi Da Lei Fang* (The Ten Major Formula Categories in Chinese Medicine) Huang Huang, Jiangsu Science and Technology Press, 1995, pp 21.

■ Dr Huang Huang will visit the United States in August 2008 to teach in Massachusetts and in Hawaii. Contact Sharon Weizenbaum at [sweiz@rcn.com](mailto:sweiz@rcn.com) for more information.

have the traditional function of regulating the menses and all of these herbs are in *Wen Jing Tang*.<sup>6</sup> Aside from having herbs that regulate the menses in it, having seen how *Wen Jing Tang* can generate blood and yin, it is clear that it treats scanty or late menstruation as well as amenorrhea.

Given how it can stop bleeding when there is too much or bleeding at the wrong time, it can treat mid-cycle bleeding, early menstruation, prolonged menstruation, menorrhagia and metrorrhagia. It is easy to see how this formula will regulate menstruation.

### Wen Jing Tang as a major fertility formula

Dr Huang emphasised that a woman must be plumpish in order to get pregnant. From our discussion of the moistening effect of *Wen Jing Tang* above, we can see how it would help a woman reach this goal. Using *Wen Jing Tang*, a woman's lips, belly and breasts all plump up with natural physiological moisture.

Dr Huang told us that Zhang Zhong-Jing wrote that cold qi in the womb was a cause of infertility and we have seen how *Wen Jing Tang* can warm the womb.

A woman must also have a rich, full and regular menstrual cycle in order to achieve pregnancy. Again, from our discussion above, we can see that *Wen Jing Tang* helps a woman achieve this. More specifically, Dr Huang told us that *Wen Jing Tang* helps ovarian function directly. He uses it when the basal body temperature is a flat line, indicating lack of ovarian function. In this kind of case the menstrual cycle can be chaotic and the menstruation itself can be scanty. In the clinic one day, while talking to us about a patient he told us that blood deficiency combined with blood stasis in a *Wen Jing Tang* patient could even cause the uterus to shrink.

When he took us back to the time of Zhang Zhong-Jing, Dr Huang said that Master Zhang was very concerned about having babies to grow up and become soldiers. He said: "In Zhang Zhong-Jing's time, *Wen Jing Tang* was the formula for helping women get pregnant, *Dang Gui Tang* (Tangkuei Decoction) was the one for helping her stay pregnant and *Gui Zhi Fu Ling Wan* (Cinnamon and Poria Pill) was the one to help the baby come out."

6. *ibid*

### Wen Jing Tang is mostly for Wen Jing Tang-type people:

Throughout our course, Dr Huang mentioned many formulas that could treat particular diseases. Yet, he also constantly reminded us that the highest form of practice for the Chinese physician is to treat the person and not the disease. Though a particular formula may be able to treat a certain disease, it can treat the disease only in a person for whom that formula's body type presentation matched. He wanted us to always keep in mind the characteristics of, first, the *Gui Zhi* (Cinnamomi Ramulus) person and then within that category, the special characteristics of the *Wen Jing Tang* person. Though *Wen Jing Tang* nourishes the blood, unless the blood deficient patient is a *Wen Jing Tang* type person, it will not work. If the person is not a *Wen Jing Tang* type then they need a different formula. The same is true for the other symptoms and diseases *Wen Jing Tang* treats, such as amenorrhea, infertility, dysmenorrhea, uterine bleeding, menstrual spotting and early or late menstruation.

People of other body types such as *Chai Hu* (Bupleuri Radix) or *Ban Xia* (Pinelliae Rhizoma) types must have clear *Wen Jing Tang* key signs for it to be a *Wen Jing Tang* presentation. A person of another body type can develop *Wen Jing Tang* signs and symptoms and even become a *Wen Jing Tang* type over time.

Because of this it is important to review the key signs of the *Wen Jing Tang* presentation as listed in this translation of Dr Huang's section on *Wen Jing Tang* from his *Zhong Yi Shi Da Lei Fang* (The Ten Major Formula Categories in Chinese Medicine)<sup>7</sup> (see breakout box next page).

### Some special points on using Wen Jing Tang

#### **1. Rou Gui or Gui Zhi?**

Dr Huang often used *Rou Gui* (Cinnamomi Cortex) rather than *Gui Zhi* (Cinnamomi Ramulus). We asked him why he did this and he told us that *Rou Gui* (Cinnamomi Cortex) is stronger and more fragrant than *Gui Zhi* (Cinnamomi Ramulus) and that Zhang Zhong-Jing used *Rou Gui* (Cinnamomi Cortex). The only reason to use *Gui Zhi* (Cinnamomi Ramulus) instead is because it is less expensive.

7. *ibid*

#### **2. Gan Jiang or Sheng Jiang?**

Dr Huang often uses *Gan Jiang* (Zingiberis Rhizoma) rather than *Sheng Jiang* (Zingiberis Rhizoma recens). He told us that *Sheng Jiang* is more diaphoretic and *Gan Jiang* warms the interior. *Sheng Jiang* is more for vomiting while *Gan Jiang* is more for loose stool and diarrhea. The main reason he uses *Gan Jiang* more though is because the pharmacies do not tend to carry *Sheng Jiang* –the raw ginger -- and many people do not tend to cook their own herbs. Old people do tend to want to cook their own herbs and have *Sheng Jiang* at home. *Sheng Jiang* is cheaper than *Gan Jiang* and so, for these people he would use *Sheng Jiang*. He added that for patients who are perfectionists (usually *Ban Xia* types), he gives them *Sheng Jiang* because the cooking instructions are a bit more complicated and they love minute instructions on how to cook the herbs perfectly. As examples of the classical use of these two herbs, he told us that Zhang Zhong-Jing used *Sheng Jiang* (Zingiberis Rhizoma recens) in *Gui Zhi Tang* (Cinnamon Twig Decoction) and *Gan Jiang* (Zingiberis Rhizoma) in *Li Zhong Tang* (Regulate the Middle Pill). *Xiao Chai Hu Tang* (Minor Bupleurum Decoctions) uses *Sheng Jiang* but if the patient has copious cough with thin fluids one would add *Gan Jiang* and *Wu Wei Zi* (Schisandrae Fructus). *Sheng Jiang Xie Xin Tang* (Fresh Ginger Decoction to Drain the Epigastrium) uses *Sheng Jiang* (Zingiberis Rhizoma recens) and is more for borborygmus and vomiting while *Ban Xia Xie Xin Tang* (Pinellia Decoction to Drain the Epigastrium) uses *Gan Jiang* (Zingiberis Rhizoma) and is more for diarrhea.

#### **3. Adjusting doses**

Dr Huang adjusted the dose of various herbs in *Wen Jing Tang*. In one patient who was particularly dry he reduced the *Wu Zhu Yu* (Evodiae Fructus) because it is so bitter, hot and drying. In another patient who had headaches, he increased the *Wu Zhu Yu* (Evodiae Fructus).

### Wen Jing Tang Syrup

Dr Huang often has his patients cook *Wen Jing Tang* until it is very thick and concentrated. He has patients turn it into a gao (syrup) that will last a long time and can be taken every day. You make enough for a month at a time. You can add herbs such as *Long Yan Rou* (Longan Arillus), *Gan Cao* (Glycyrrhizae Radix), *He Tao Ren* (Jug-

## Wen Jing Tang

From the *Jin Gui Yao Lue* (Essentials from the Golden Cabinet).

<i>Wu Zhu Yu</i>	3-5 g	Evodiae Fructus
<i>Dang Gui</i>	10 g	Angelica Sinensis Radix
<i>Chuan Xiong</i>	6 g	Chuanxiong Rhizoma
<i>Bai Shao</i>	10 g	Paeoniae Radix alba
<i>Ren Shen</i>	10 g	Ginseng Radix
<i>Gui Zhi</i>	6-10 g	Cinnamomi Ramulus
<i>E Jiao</i>	10 g	Asini Corii Colla
<i>Mu Dan Pi</i>	6-10 g	Moutan Cortex
<i>Sheng Jiang</i>	6 g	Zingiberis Rhizom recens
<i>Gan Cao</i>	3-6 g	Glycyrrhizae Radix
<i>Ban Xia</i>	6 g	Pinelliae Rhizoma
<i>Mai Men Dong</i>	10 g	Ophiopogonis Radix

Boil down in one measure of water and drink three doses a day, warm.

## Extract from Dr Huang's book

*Wen Jing Tang* is a famous traditional formula for women. It is made up of *Gui Zhi Tang* (Cinnamon Twig Decoction) with additional flavours. Within it, *Dang Gui* (Angelica Sinensis Radix), *Chuan Xiong* (Chuanxiong Rhizoma) and *Bai Shao* (Paeoniae Radix alba) supplement the blood and vitalise the blood. These are also the traditional herbs for regulating the menstrual cycle. *E Jiao* (Asini Corii Colla) can stop bleeding and supplement the blood and is often used to treat profuse menstruation and anaemia. *Mu Dan Pi* (Moutan Cortex) has the ability to vitalise blood, transform stasis and clear heat. *Gui Zhi* (Cinnamomi Ramulus) and *Wu Zhu Yu* (Evodiae Fructus) can warm the channels and stop pain.

This formula is altogether able to nourish blood, enrich yin, vitalise blood, transform stasis, warm the channels and stop pain.

The scope of this formula's application is quite broad: It can be considered for treating such illnesses as irregular menstruation, vaginal spotting, lower abdominal cold pain and infertility. There is a report that *Wen Jing Tang* has a regulatory effect on the hormones, that it has a positive physiological effect on the uterus and the surrounding tissues and that it stimulates the metabolism.

From my own experience I think that for the *Gui Zhi* (Cinnamomi Ramulus) body type patient, this formula is used frequently so it is important to pay attention to the formula presentation:

1. Irregular menstruation, dark blood

with clots.

2. Heat in the hands and feet with an aversion to wind, spontaneous sweating, afternoon feverishness and headache.

3. The abdominal wall is thin and without strength, the lower abdomen is tight and reactive (hypertonicity) and there is a feeling of pain or distention.

4. The mouth and lips are dry and the tongue is dark and pale.

Irregular menstruation relates to this disease presentation though it can be that the menses are early or late in an indeterminate way, the menstruation can last too long without stopping or drip continuously, come twice in one month or it can be post-menopausal irregular bleeding.

The key is in the colour and substance of the blood. For the *Wen Jing Tang* presentation, the blood will often be dark with clots. If the blood is crimson red or purple red and the substance is gluey, this is inner heat and *Wen Jing Tang* is not suitable. You can consider something like *Dan Zhi Xiao Yao Tang* (Augmented Rambling Powder).

The *Wen Jing Tang* patient can present with fever, heat in the hands and feet, dry lips and mouth and these are all signs of a heat pattern. Yet, the aversion to wind, spontaneous sweat, dark coloured tongue body and lower abdominal tightness and pain are all evidence of a cold pattern.

It is, therefore, important to really pay attention.

landis Semen), *Hei Zhi Ma* (Sesami Semen nigrum) and more *E Jiao* (Asini Corii Colla) along with honey and rock sugar until the consistency is right. This will make it thicker. Every day you put some of the syrup in hot water to drink. *Wen Jing Tang* type people will find it tastes really good. While we were in Nan Jing we took a field trip to a pharmacy where they were making a gao of *Wen Jing Tang*. Though we would have to modify these instructions for our patients, see top right for the recipe.

### Gui Zhi body types in the West

Dr Huang found that in China, most patients are *Chai Hu* (Bupleuri Radix) or *Ban Xia* (Pinelliae Rhizoma) types. He thought Americans probably tended to be more *Gui Zhi* (Cinnamomi Ramulus) types. Since being home from China, the two of us in our clinic have found this to be true. Not only are there many *Gui Zhi* (Cinnamomi Ramulus) types but a lot of them are *Wen Jing Tang* types. Another practitioner in our clinic has joked that we should change the name of our clinic to the *Wen Jing Tang* clinic!

### Other modifications

- Add *Lu Jiao Jiao* (Cervi Cornus Colla) and *Fu Zi* (Aconiti Radix lateralis preparata) to increase the basal body temperature in yang deficient patients. *Lu Jiao Jiao* (Cervi Cornus Colla) is good for amenorrhea and makes a woman ovulate.
- Add *Tao Ren* (Persicae Semen) for dry stool with dry skin.
- The original formula does not have *Hong Zao* (Jujubae Fructus) but Dr Huang uses up to 30 grams per day. It is very good for hormones but does not have the side effects of synthetic hormones. In the clinic Dr Huang mostly prescribed *Da Zao* (Jujubae Fructus) and did often use quite large doses.

### Dietary considerations

Dr Huang said that to increase the effectiveness of *Wen Jing Tang* we should encourage our patients to eat beef, lamb, pork trotters, tendons and skin. These are best cooked a long time in stews. This should be eaten often, though not every day. It is a folk custom to eat a long cooked stew made with pig's trotters. Women with beautiful skin eat *Hong Shao Rou* 红烧肉 and lots of vegetables. *Hong Shao Rou* (red-cooked pork) is a very fatty sweet stew of pork meat. Dr Huang said that *Wen Jing Tang* is the herbal formula that is the same as *Hong Shao Rou*.

A recipe appears here (far right).

## Causes of the Wen Jing Tang presentation

Dr Huang told us that there used to be a lot of *Gui Zhi* (Cinnamomi Ramulus) body types in China but because these days the nutrition is better, this has changed. When patients over-work and have poor nutrition they become thin and withered, becoming *Gui Zhi* (Cinnamomi Ramulus) body types. In China and in the West, women will often go on diets, especially avoiding fats. This can greatly deplete them. Some women even go so far as to be anorexic or bulimic and lose their menstruation. In addition, serious athletes often develop into *Gui Zhi* (Cinnamomi Ramulus) types by overdoing it. Psychological stress such as in university students studying for tests can create this presentation. We also see it in patients undergoing chemotherapy who become thin and withered.

## Other diseases treated by Wen Jing Tang

Dr Huang listed the following diseases as treatable by *Wen Jing Tang*. Of course this would only be for patients who present with the *Wen Jing Tang* key signs:

- Threatened or habitual miscarriage
- Vaginitis in older women
- Vulvar pruritus
- Alopecia
- Symptoms associated with menopause (feverishness, hot soles and palms, vaginal dryness, uterine bleeding).

## Must all Wen Jing Tang signs appear?

One student reviewed a case from her own practice with Dr Huang. The patient had all of the dry symptoms, including dry lips, feet and vagina, and had cracked fingertips. Yet this patient was a large fleshy woman. The student wondered if she could still use *Wen Jing Tang*. Dr Huang assured her it was still correct. He said that the dry fingertips and lips were really key signs. In the clinic, he also combined *Wen Jing Tang* with other formulas if it was a combination presentation.

## A case from Dr Huang's *Zhong Yi Shi Da Lei Fang*

"I treated one woman whose menstruation lasted half a month. The colour was dark and clots were mixed in. The joints of her whole body were painful. Recently her usual headaches had become very frequent and she also experienced nausea and dry retching. Her lips were dry and her tongue moss was thin and yellow. The previous doctor treated her for a heat presentation, giving her *Dan Zhi Xiao Yao Tang* (Augmented Rambling Powder). This caused her to have dull aching in her lower abdomen for which she want-

ed to use a hot-water bottle. Looking at her body, her facial colour was dark yellow and although her lips were dry, the colour was dark. Although her tongue moss was yellow, under the yellow was greasy and white and the tongue body was dark. I gave her five packages of *Wen Jing Tang*, her bleeding stopped and she was better."

## A case from my own practice

Soon after I arrived home, a new patient, Jan, aged 39, presented complaining of chronic fatigue. At first look I noticed that she was thin with dry damaged looking hair. Her main complaint was Epstein-Barr virus manifesting as fatigue, dizziness and exhaustion. She mentioned she had had mononucleosis as a teen and that she was in a bad car accident in 2003. At a time when she was greatly pushing herself her symptoms were greatly exacerbated. A holistic doctor put her on a thyroid supplement even though her blood work showed normal levels in order to "push her energy levels up". Her sleeping was difficult since the car accident but became worse when she became hyperthyroid on this medication! She had wanted to go to India but could not because of how ill she felt.

Jan's symptoms were fatigue, muscle fatigue, dizziness, whole body pain, heavy head, lower abdominal heaviness and bloating with a clear sensation of cold in the flesh of her lower belly. This cold area she described as feeling disconnected from the rest of her body. She also had very cold hands and feet and easily got chilled, especially after living in a damp hotel in the past. Jan experienced dysmenorrhea that was not particularly relieved by warmth. The blood was red and there were clots. She bleeds for three days, during which she has pain. She then spotted for three more days. She also had a clear vaginal discharge. Jan often had a sore, scratchy and swollen throat that was always worse when her fatigue symptoms were worse. She tended to



## Making a Gao/syrup

Cook the herbs in the pressure cooker with water that goes 5cm (2") over the herbs for four hours over high heat.

Strain and let sit for 24 hours so the sediment settles.

Run it through a filter twice.

Cook liquid slowly over low heat, covered another four hours to make it thick.

Add honey and *E Jiao* (Asini Cori Colla) and let it cool for eight hours.

## 红烧肉 Hong Shao Rou (red-cooked pork belly)

With its intense flavour and the smooth, fatty texture of the meat, *hong shao rou* is one of the most classic red-cooked dishes. Put 2 lbs boneless skinless pork belly cut into 1 1/2" chunks into a pot and cover with water; bring to a boil. Uncover and cook for 2 minutes; drain and rinse. Heat 2 tbsp. peanut oil in a 14" flat-bottomed wok over high heat. Add a 2" piece ginger cut into "coins" and 10 scallions cut into 3" pieces and stir-fry for 10 seconds. Add the pork belly and stir-fry for 1 minute. Add 1/4 cup *shaoxing jiu* (Chinese rice wine); stir-fry until it begins to brown, 2-3 minutes. Add 5 tbsp. mushroom-flavored dark soy sauce and cook until absorbed, 2-3 minutes. Add 1 tsp. salt and 2 cups water; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, covered, stirring occasionally, until pork is just tender, about 1 hour. Uncover wok, stir in 3 tbsp. sugar, and cook until liquid has thickened slightly, 12-14 minutes. Serves 4.



When patients over work and have poor nutrition they become thin and withered, becoming Gui Zhi body types. In China and in the West, women will often go on diets, especially avoiding fats. This can greatly deplete them. Some women even go so far as to be anorexic or bulimic and lose their menstruation ...

have loose stool. Her sleep was better since going off the thyroid medication but she still could not get to sleep until after midnight. She felt hot at night with night sweats and restless legs. She had a weird pain associated with the restless legs that went from her hip down to her big toe.

I observed and asked Jan about the *Wen Jing Tang* key symptoms. She did have a very dry mouth and her lips were quite chapped. She also experienced vaginal dryness and her fingers and feet, especially her heels, were quite dry. Jan's tongue was normal in size but reddish with some cracks over the tongue body and the tongue moss was thin and a bit yellow. Her pulses were generally thin. Her abdomen was flat and tense with emptiness under the tension.

From a patho-physiological point of view, my diagnosis was as follows: I knew Jan was deficient because her body was thin and her abdomen weak. This was in part Kidney yin deficiency shown by the generalised cracks on her tongue. This helped explain the heat she felt at night, the yellow tongue moss as well as the dryness. She also had Kidney yang deficiency, which I knew because of the vaginal discharge with generalised cold symptoms.

This part of the diagnosis helped to explain her cold belly and the cold stagnating the blood. I knew she had blood stasis because of the dysmenorrhea and clots in her blood. The prevalence of cold helped explain the blood stasis as well as the dryness of her body fluids. So, my diagnosis was Kidney yang deficiency with cold, and Kidney yin deficiency with empty heat and blood stasis.<sup>8</sup>

From a classical formula, body-type perspective, Jan had many of the key signs for *Wen Jing Tang* including a thin body with a flat, tense, empty belly, a thin pulse, aversion to cold with chilliness, blood stasis, feverishness and systemic dryness.

I gave her the following modified version of *Wen Jing Tang* (dosages are for one week):

<i>Wu Zhu Yu</i>	12g	Evodiae Fructus
<i>Dang Gui</i>	45g	Angelica Sinensis Radix
<i>Bai Shao</i>	45g	Paeoniae Radix alba
<i>Dang Shen</i>	10g	Codonopsis Radix
<i>Gui Zhi</i>	18g	Cinnamomi Ramulus
<i>Rou Gui</i>	18g	Cinnamomi Cortex
<i>E Jiao</i>	36g	Asini Corii Colla
<i>Mu Dan Pi</i>	36g	Moutan Cortex
<i>Gan Jiang</i>	6g	Zingiberis Rhizoma
<i>Gan Cao</i>	27g	Glycyrrhizae Radix
<i>Ban Xia</i>	18g	Pinelliae Rhizoma
<i>Mai Men Dong</i>	45g	Ophiopogonis Radix

8. The method I use for diagnosis is called "definitive diagnosis" which may make some of the language or the process I use unfamiliar to some of the readers. For information about definitive diagnosis go to: [www.whitepinehealingarts.com/gmp\\_about\\_2006.htm](http://www.whitepinehealingarts.com/gmp_about_2006.htm)

*Qin Jiao* 36g Gentianae macrophyllae Radix  
*Bu Gu Zhi* 36g Psoraleae Fructus

I added *Qin Jiao* (Gentianae macrophyllae Radix) for the empty heat at night and *Bu Gu Zhi* (Psoraleae Fructus) to further warm the Kidneys in a way that would stop the vaginal discharge.

Right away, within a week, Jan's energy returned like a spring and her cold belly became warm and connected feeling. Now it is December 10, 2007 and Jan has been on the same formula since she began on October 22, 2007, seven weeks. She has begun to plump up all over including her lips and breasts. Her ovulation secretions have returned though her vaginal discharge has cleared. Her hands and hair are not as dry. She has reported feeling a libido for the first time in years and her menstruation was pain free and without clots. Virtually all of her niggling symptoms had resolved. The main thing for Jan is that she has her energy back in a consistent way and because of this she will finally be travelling to India within a few months.

In the past I would not have used *Wen Jing Tang* for this person, given that she was yin deficient. I also would not have expected such direct and instantaneous results! Jan is going to continue on *Wen Jing Tang* for the rest of the winter probably or until her hair and hands and lips are thoroughly lustrous.

Dr Huang told us several times throughout the course that when the formula matches the presentation it is like an arrow hitting a bull's eye. He emphasised that this matching not only made the treatment effective but it also made it extremely safe.

When the formula matches the presentation he said you can use very strong herbs very safely, even *Ma Huang* (Ephedrae Herba) and *Fu Zi* (Aconiti Radix lateralis preparata). He said that even seemingly benign herbs can be toxic if the presentation is not matched with the right formula.

There is a lot of what Dr Huang taught that I do not feel I understand yet. Probably most of it! On the other hand, I have caught a glimpse of what the classic formulas and the way they are described by Zhang Zhong-Jing, have to offer. I am thoroughly intrigued.

Now when I look at the *Formulas and Strategies'* list of indications for *Wen Jing Tang* and see "Mild persistent uterine bleeding, irregular menstruation ... pain, distention, and cold in the lower abdomen, infertility, dry lips and mouth, low-grade fever at dusk, and warm palms and soles"<sup>9</sup> I understand at least this. ■

9. Bensky and Barolet. (1990). *Formulas and Strategies*. Seattle: Eastland Press. pp 324.