

SHEN LING BAI ZHU SAN BP020

Ginseng & Atractylodes Formula 参苓白术散

TCM ACTIONS

Tonifies the Spleen Qi, harmonises the middle Jiao, drains Damp and alleviates diarrhoea.

TCM SYNDROMES

Spleen-Stomach Qi deficiency

Stagnation of Damp in the middle Jiao

INDICATIONS

Chronic gastroenteritis, chronic ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease, gastritis, duodenitis, anaemia, malabsorption syndrome, malnutrition, leucorrhoea, peptic ulcer disease, chronic fatigue syndrome, general debility, diabetes mellitus, side effects of chemotherapy.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

(key clinical features in bold)

Loose stools or diarrhoea

Poor appetite and digestion

Weight loss or emaciation with inability to gain weight

Fatigue

Muscular weakness

Pale or sallow complexion with little lustre

Nausea or vomiting

Oppressive sensation in the chest

Abdominal discomfort or mild pain

White or watery leucorrhoea

Pale tongue with a greasy white coat

Weak pulse that may also be thready or moderate

DOSAGE & COURSE OF TREATMENT

8 - 12 pills, 3 times daily, half to one hour away from food.

In severe cases and in the early stages of treatment (first 2 - 4 weeks) the dosage may be increased by 50 - 100%.

Course of treatment: 3 - 6 months.

Suitable for long term use.

INGREDIENTS

Each pill contains extract equiv. to dry:

Codonopsis pilosula, root (<i>dang shen</i>)	党参	45mg
Atractylodes macrocephala, rhizome (<i>bai zhu</i>)	白术	45mg
Poria cocos, fruit. body (<i>fu ling</i>)	茯苓	45mg
Dioscorea oppositifolia, root (<i>huai shan yao</i>)	淮山藥	45mg
Nelumbo nucifera, seed (<i>lian zi</i>)	蓮子	45mg
Dolichos lablab, seed (<i>bian dou</i>)	扁豆	45mg
Coix lachryma-jobi, seed (<i>yi yi ren</i>)	薏苡仁	37.5mg
Glycyrrhiza uralensis, root (<i>gan cao</i>)	甘草	22.5mg
Platycodon grandiflorus, root (<i>jie geng</i>)	桔梗	22.5mg
Amomum villosum, fruit (<i>sha ren</i>)	砂仁	15mg
Ziziphus jujuba, fruit (<i>da zao</i>)	大棗	7.5mg

ACTIONS OF THE MAIN HERBS

Codonopsis root is used orally in formulas as a tonic to treat general debility, digestive weakness, susceptibility to infections, diabetes, memory loss and insomnia. It has been shown to strengthen the immune system and the gastrointestinal system, improve response to stress, increase red and white blood cells, lower blood pressure, improve appetite and regulate blood sugar levels.

Atractylodes rhizome is used orally as a digestive tonic and carminative. It has been shown to have hepatoprotective, anticancer, hypoglycaemic, immunostimulant and antibacterial actions.

Nelumbo seed (lotus seed) when dry fried (*chao*) is used orally in formulas to treat weak digestion with loose stools or diarrhoea, as well as leukorrhea.

CAUTIONS & CONTRAINDICATIONS

None noted.

COMBINATIONS

- Anorexia in children:
 - + Bao He Wan (Citrus & Crataegus Formula BP004)
- Early morning diarrhoea:
 - + Fu Zi Li Zhong Wan - Jia Wei (Dangshen & Ginger Formula - Modified BP070)
 - + You Gui Wan (Right Returning Formula BP066)
- Indigestion (due to Spleen Qi deficiency):
 - + Jian Pi Wan (Ginseng & Citrus Formula BP014)
 - + Bao He Wan (Citrus & Crataegus Formula BP004)

- Irritable bowel syndrome, or chronic diarrhoea:
+ Tong Xie Yao Fang – Jia Wei (Peony & Atractylodes Combination BP062)
- Irritable bowel syndrome with severe diarrhoea:
+ Tong Xie Yao Fang – Jia Wei (Peony & Atractylodes Combination BP062)
+ Bu Zhong Yi Qi Wan (Ginseng & Astragalus Combination BP005)
- Malabsorption syndrome (with turbid Damp):
+ Huo Xiang Zheng Qi Wan (Agastache Formula BP046)
+ Si Jun Zi Tang (Four Major Herbs Combination BP082)
- **Malabsorption syndrome (Spleen Qi deficiency):**
+ Si Jun Zi Tang (Four Major Herbs Combination BP082)
+ Bu Zhong Yi Qi Wan (Ginseng & Astragalus Combination BP005)

COMMENTS
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This formula was originally recorded in the Formulary of the Tai Ping Welfare Dispensary Bureau (*tai ping hui min he ji ju fang*) (1151 CE), a compilation of popular and effective formulas that were used in the public dispensaries of the Song dynastic period. It is a well designed formula with a mild and balanced action that may be taken by all age groups for prolonged periods without adverse effect. This is especially pertinent as it aims to treat retained Damp, which is a pathogen that tends to be slow to resolve.

Weakness of the Spleen Qi may lead to failure of the astringing action of the Qi, resulting in loose stools or diarrhoea. In addition, failure of the Spleen's transportation function may lead to stagnation of the fluid pathways, resulting in impaired fluid metabolism and the retention of Damp. This also manifests clinically with loose stools (together with a greasy white tongue coat). Because the Damp is generated and also retained in the middle Jiao, it causes stagnation of the Qi, both in this location and also in the Lung – as the pathology is transmitted via the promotion (*sheng*) relationship amongst the five phases. This leads to impaired digestion, a sensation of oppression in the chest (due to the stagnation of the Lung Qi), and possibly also nausea or vomiting.

In order to address these pathologies, this formula contains a mixture of Qi tonifying, Damp dispelling, astringent and Qi regulating herbal ingredients. Several of the ingredients have been specially pre-prepared to enhance their therapeutic actions: Atractylodes (*bai zhu*), Coix (*yi yi ren*), Dolichos (*bian dou*) and Dioscorea (*huai shan yao*) have been dry-fried so that they may effectively tonify the Spleen Qi while also drying Damp and astringing the Intestines.

The synergistic actions of the herbs are as follows:

- Codonopsis root (*dang shen*), Atractylodes rhizome (*bai zhu*), Poria cocos (*fu ling*), Dioscorea root (*huai shan yao*), Dolichos seed (*bian dou*), Ziziphus fruit (*da zao*): tonify the Spleen Qi
- Atractylodes rhizome (*bai zhu*), Poria cocos (*fu ling*), Coix seed (*yi yi ren*), Dolichos seed (*bian dou*): tonify the Spleen Qi and drain Damp
- Dioscorea root (*huai shan yao*), Dolichos seed (*bian dou*), Nelumbo seed (*lian zi*), Coix seed (*yi yi ren*): tonify the Spleen Qi and astringe the Intestines to stop diarrhoea
- Platycodon root (*jie geng*), Amomum fruit (*sha ren*): regulate the Qi of the Lung and middle Jiao respectively