

# Pocket Atlas of Chinese Medicine

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## Qi-rectifying Medicinals

To rectify *qi* is to correct its counterflow or stagnant movement (see p. 132). Counterflow lung *qi* manifests as cough. Counterflow stomach *qi* presents with belching, nausea, and vomiting. Because cough-suppressing medicinals are classified with the phlegm-transforming substances, medicinals in this group mainly downbear counterflow stomach *qi*. Persimmon calyx (*shi di*) treats hiccough. Its neutral temperature permits use in counterflow stomach *qi* due to heat or cold.

Qi-moving medicinals focus primarily on the stomach and spleen, or the liver. Signs of *qi* stagnation include fullness, distension, and pain. Qi-rectifying medicinals frequently have an acrid flavor, which disperses *qi*. Tangerine peel (*chen pi*) (A) moves *qi* in the spleen and stomach. Its acrid and aromatic properties move depressed *qi*. Its warmth supports the spleen and stomach. Its bitterness dries dampness and phlegm. Cyperus root (*xiang fu*) enters the liver and gallbladder and moves liver *qi*. It is used in the treatment of gynecological problems due to liver depression *qi* stagnation.

## Blood-rectifying Medicinals

To rectify blood involves staunching bleeding, or quickening, transforming, or breaking static blood (see p.132). Blood-staunching medicinals may be cool or warm. Sanguisorba root (*di yu*) is cold, bitter, and sour. It cools the blood, astringes, and stops bleeding. It

treats rectal bleeding due to damp heat in the lower burner. Mugwort leaf (*ai ye*) is bitter, acrid, and warm. When charred, it enters the spleen, liver, and kidney channels and treats gynecological bleeding due to cold. Some of these substances simultaneously quicken blood and stop bleeding. Static blood blocks the vessels and causes blood to extravasate. When the congealed blood is moved, extravasation will stop. Noto-ginseng root (*san qi*) (B) treats injuries from contusions or falls. It stops bleeding and dissipates stasis to stop pain.

Fixed and stabbing pain is a clear sign of blood stasis. Blood-quickeners are used where pain is due to blood stasis. In common with *qi*-rectifying medicinals, many blood-quickeners are acrid, bitter, and warm. Acridity moves and disperses, bitterness frees and opens the channels, and warmth invigorates *yang qi*, thus supporting movement.

The blood-quickeners vary in the areas on which they act and the strength of their stasis-dispersing effects. Chuanxiong rhizome (ligusticum) (*chuan xiong*) moves upward, and treats blood stasis in the head and chest. Cyathula root (*chuan niu xi*) descends and is used for blood stasis in the lower limbs. Salvia root (*dan shen*) is a mild quickening agent that both quickens and nourishes the blood. It is frequently used for blood stasis in the chest. Carthamus (*hong hua*) (C) and peach kernel (*tao ren*) are more forceful stasis-transforming agents often used to treat gynecological conditions.

**A Qi-rectifying medicinals either move *qi* in the middle burner or in the liver or both.** Tangerine peel is representative of the middle burner *qi*-moving substances. It also transforms phlegm and is an important ingredient in the basic phlegm-eliminating prescription Two Matured Ingredients Decoction.



**B Notoginseng root is a very special and rather expensive medicinal: it not only moves blood but it also stops bleeding.** It is a superior medicinal for the treatment of cases that present with stasis and bleeding at the same time. Because of its price, it is usually not decocted but swallowed as a powder with the decoction.



**C Carthamus flower is a typical representative of the blood-quickenning medicinal category.** It can be applied for most types of blood stasis problems, externally as well as internally.

