

## 52. 远志 Yuǎn Zhì

Polygala

Polygalae Radix

Bitter in flavor and warm in nature, *yuǎn zhì* (polygala) quiets the spirit and boosts the mind, dispels phlegm and opens the orifices.

This medicinal promotes heart-kidney interaction and quiets the spirit. In normal physiology, the heart yáng reaches down to interact with the kidney, and the kidney yīn ascends to interact with the heart, so that there is a regulating interaction between the two organs. For noninteraction of the heart and kidney that results in insomnia and fright palpitations, combine *yuǎn zhì* with:

*fú líng* (茯苓 *poria*, *Poria*)

*suān zāo rén* (酸枣仁 *spiny jujube*, *Ziziphi Spinosi Semen*)

*dì huáng* (地黄 *rehmannia*, *Rehmanniae Radix*)

*dāng shēn* (党参 *codonopsis*, *Codonopsis Radix*)

*yè jiāo téng* (夜交藤 *flowery knotweed stem*, *Polygoni Multiflori Caulis*)

*wǔ wèi zǐ* (五味子 *schisandra*, *Schisandrae Fructus*)

*Yuǎn zhì* boosts the memory. It is used for deteriorating memory, forgetfulness, and lack of concentration that are caused by heart-kidney insufficiency. For this purpose, *yuǎn zhì* is frequently combined with *chāng pú* (acorus), *lóng gǔ* (dragon bone), *guī bǎn* (tortoise shell), *mài dōng* (ophiopogon), *wǔ wèi zǐ* (schisandra), and *bǎi zǐ rén* (arborvitae seed).

For patterns of phlegm obstructing the orifices of the heart that gives rise to unclear spirit-mind, fright epilepsy<sup>550</sup> (惊痫 *jīng xián*), and poor hearing and vision, use *yuǎn zhì* to transform phlegm and open the orifices. For this purpose it is frequently combined with medicinals such as *tiān zhú huáng* (bamboo sugar), *yú jīn* (curcuma), *chāng pú* (acorus), and *dǎn xīng* (bile arisaema). According to modern research, *yuǎn zhì* increases bronchial secretions, makes the contents of the bronchi easier to expectorate, and has an expectorant action. It can therefore be used for bronchitis and is frequently combined with medicinals such as *xìng rén* (apricot kernel), *zǐ wǎn* (aster), *qián hú* (peucedanum), and *gān cǎo* (licorice) to dispel phlegm and suppress cough.

## DOSAGE

The dosage is generally 3-9 g/1-3 qián.

## 53. 夜交藤 Yè Jiāo Téng

Flowerly Knotweed Stem

Polygoni

Multiflori Caulis

*Yè jiāo téng* (flowerly knotweed stem), also called *shǒu wū téng* 首乌藤, is the stem of *hé shǒu wū* (flowerly knotweed). Sweet in flavor and neutral in nature, it is

commonly used as a spirit-quieting medicinal, but it also frees the channels and network vessels and eliminates impediment pain.

*Yè jiāo téng* regulates the yīn and yáng of the body. It is suitable for liver-kidney yīn vacuity with exuberant yáng that results in vacuity vexation, insomnia, and profuse dreaming. For this pattern, it is combined with medicinals such as *shēng dì huáng* (dried/fresh rehmannia), *bái sháo* (white peony), *lóng gū* (dragon bone), *mǔ li* (oyster shell), *yuān zhì* (polygala), and *xuán shēn* (scrophularia).

In addition, *yè jiāo téng* frees the channels and quickens the network vessels. Thus it is used for wind-cold-damp impediment and scurrying pain of the whole body. For this pattern it is frequently combined with medicinals such as:

*sāng jì shēng* (桑寄生 mistletoe, Taxilli Herba)

*sāng zhī* (桑枝 mulberry twig, Mori Ramulus)

*dú huó* (独活 pubescent angelica, Angelicae Pubescentis Radix)

*qiāng huó* (羌活 notopterygium, Notopterygii Rhizoma et Radix)

*guì zhī* (桂枝 cinnamon twig, Cinnamomi Ramulus)

*dāng guī* (当归 Chinese angelica, Angelicae Sinensis Radix)

*hóng huā* (红花 carthamus, Carthami Flos)

*fù zǐ* (附子 aconite, Aconiti Radix Lateralis Praeparata)

#### DOSAGE

The dosage for internal use is generally 9–30 g/3 qián–1 liǎng.

## 54. 珍珠母 Zhēn Zhū Mǔ Concha Margaritifera Mother-of-Pearl

Also called *zhēn zhū mǔ* 真珠母. *Zhēn zhū mǔ* (mother-of-pearl) is salty in flavor and cool in nature.

1. **Downbearing Heart Fire and Clearing Liver Heat:** For febrile disease in which exuberant internal phlegm-heat, heat entering the pericardium, or extreme heat engendering wind causes clouded spirit and delirious speech, fright epilepsy, and convulsions, *zhēn zhū mǔ* is combined with the following:

*yù jīn* (郁金 curcuma, Curcumae Radix)

*huáng lián* (黄连 cōptis, Coptidis Rhizoma)

*tiān zhú huáng* (天竹黄 bamboo sugar, Bambusae Concretio Silicea)

*dǎn xīng* (胆星 bile arisaema, Arisaema cum Bile)

*chāng pú* (菖蒲 acorus, Acori Tatarinowii Rhizoma)

*yuǎn zhì* (远志 polygala, Polygalae Radix)

*guǎng xī jiǎo* (广犀角 African rhinoceros horn, Rhinocerotis Cornu Africanum)

*zhū shā* (朱砂 cinnabar, Cinnabaris)

*gōu téng* (钩藤 uncaria, Uncariae Ramulus cum Uncis)

*quán xiē* (全蝎 scorpion, Scorpio)

**2. Subduing Liver Yáng and Quieting the Heart Spirit:** For patterns of heart-liver yīn vacuity with agitation of liver yáng, and unquiet heart spirit causing dizziness, tinnitus, palpitations, insomnia, vacuity vexation, and profuse dreaming, zhēn zhū mǔ is combined with the following:

- shēng bái sháo (生白芍 raw white peony, Paeoniae Radix Alba Cruda)  
 shēng dì huáng (生地黄 dried/fresh rehmannia, Rehmanniae Radix Exsiccata seu Recens)  
 bái jí lí (白蒺藜 tribulus, Tribuli Fructus)  
 yuǎn zhì (远志 polygala, Polygalae Radix)  
 huáng qín (黄芩 scutellaria, Scutellariae Radix)  
 xiāng fù (香附 cyperus, Cyperi Rhizoma)  
 gōu téng (钩藤 uncaria, Uncariae Ramulus cum Uncis)  
 shēng dài zě shí (生代赭石 crude hematite, Haematitum Crudum)

I often have satisfactory results from using medicinals of this kind to treat neurasthenia that is ascribed to yīn vacuity and exuberant yáng.

#### COMPARISONS

Zhēn zhū mǔ, yuǎn zhì (polygala), yè jiāo téng (flowery knotweed stem), suān zāo rén (spiny jujube), and bái zǐ rén (arborvitae seed) all quiet the spirit and treat insomnia. However, zhēn zhū mǔ tends to be used for insomnia from heart-liver yīn vacuity with heart channel heat; yuǎn zhì (polygala) tends to be used for insomnia from noninteraction of the heart and kidney, or phlegm obstructing the orifices of the heart; yè jiāo téng (flowery knotweed stem) tends to be used for insomnia from liver-kidney insufficiency and yīn-yáng disharmony; suān zāo rén (spiny jujube) tends to be used for insomnia from liver-gallbladder blood vacuity; and bái zǐ rén (arborvitae seed) tends to be used for insomnia from insufficiency of heart blood.

Zhēn zhū mǔ and shí jué míng (abalone shell) both subdue yáng. Nevertheless, zhēn zhū mǔ tends to downbear heart fire, whereas shí jué míng (abalone shell) tends to downbear liver fire. I often use zhēn zhū mǔ for heart channel spirit-mind diseases and shí jué míng (abalone shell) for liver channel yáng hyperactivity diseases.

Lóng chǐ (dragon tooth) effectively tranquilizes and quiets the spirit, while zhēn zhū mǔ is effective in nourishing the heart and quieting the spirit.

#### DOSAGE

The dosage is generally 9–30 g/3 qián–1 liǎng and it must be predecocted.

#### CAUTION

Inappropriate for patterns with cold in the heart channel or for water-rheum intimidating the heart.