

TWO VERSIONS OF GAN MAO LING

Jake Paul Fratkin, OMD

Nuherbs, in their Herbal Times line, now offers two versions of GAN MAO LING, and I wanted to talk about the differences and uses of each. Their original formula, called GAN MAO LING, is discussed in my book *Chinese Herbal Patent Medicines, the Clinical Desk Reference*, as product 1B1-1. This formula has more similarities to *Yin Qiao San* (aka YIN QIAO JIE DU WAN) than to the popular patent medicine GAN MAO LING, originally manufactured by United Pharmaceutical Manufactory, Guangzhou (product 1B3-4).

To understand Herbal Times' first GAN MAO LING formula, we should compare it to *Yin Qiao San*. The original *Yin Qiao San* was developed by Wu Jutang, and recorded in *wen bing tiao bian*, "Warm Diseases Systemic Differences" (1798), a major text in the Wen Bing organization of disease. *Yin Qiao* was recommended for illnesses attacking the blood, to help push toxins to the surface. These included febrile diseases which broke with a rash, and include what we now know to be chicken pox, measles, rubella and so on. The purpose of the formula was to go deep to the *qi* and *xue* level, and force the heat toxins out to the surface. The ingredients for *Yin Qiao Jie Du San* (using the Herbal Times formulation, 1B2-4) are:

| | |
|--|--------|
| <i>lian qiao</i> (Fructus Forsythia Suspensa) | 16.0 % |
| <i>jin yin hua</i> (Flos Lonicerae Japonicae) | 16.0 |
| <i>lu gen</i> (Rhizoma Phragmites) | 10.0 |
| <i>jie geng</i> (Radix Platycodon Grandiflorum) | 10.0 |
| <i>niu bang zi</i> (Fructus Arctii Lappae) | 10.0 |
| <i>bo he</i> (Herba Mentha Haplocalyces) | 10.0 |
| <i>dan dou chi</i> (Semen Glycine Sojae Praeparatum) | 8.0 |
| <i>gan cao</i> (Radix Glycyrrhiza Uralensis) | 7.0 |
| <i>dan zhu ye</i> (Folium Lophatherum) | 6.5 |
| <i>jing jie</i> (Herba Schizonepeta Tenuifolia) | 6.5 |

Yin Qiao San served well as a trusty and effective herbal remedy for early stage of wind-heat common cold with sore throat. In this formula, *lian qiao* and *jin yin hua* are the lead herbs to clear heat and resolve toxin (*jie re qing du*). Herbs from this category have strong anti-microbial effects, especially the ability to destroy viruses. These two herbs

have the affinity for the upper respiratory tract and the skin, because they have aromatic properties that lead it upwards and outwards. *Lu gen* reinforces the effect of clearing heat from the *qi* level. Four other herbs also have a strong ability to move to the surface, and ostensibly can reinforce the lead herbs effects in taking heat toxins to the surface. These are *niu bang zi*, *bo he*, *dan dou chi* and *jing jie*. *Niu bang zi* also has the effect of relieving sore throat. *Dan dou chi*, the fermented soybean, was basically a phenomenon in its time (late 18th century) and rarely appears in later classical formulas.

The first Herbal Times GAN MAO LING builds on the *Yin Qiao San* theme. Its ingredients are:

| | |
|---|------|
| <i>ge gen</i> (Radix Puerariae) | 20 % |
| <i>da qing ye</i> (Folium Isatidis seu Baphicacanthi) | 14 |
| <i>bo he</i> (Herba Mentha Haplocalyces) | 11 |
| <i>ju hua</i> (Flos Chrysanthemum Morifoli) | 10 |
| <i>xing ren</i> (Semen Prunus Armeniaca) | 10 |
| <i>lian qiao</i> (Fructus Forsythia Suspensa) | 10 |
| <i>jie geng</i> (Radix Platycodon Grandiflorum) | 10 |
| <i>qian hu</i> (Radix Peucedani) | 10 |
| <i>gan cao</i> (Radix Glycyrrhiza Uralensis) | 5 |

The formula follows the idea in *Yin Qiao San* to concentrate on dispelling wind heat and heat toxins to the surface. out through the surface. Of its nine ingredients, four are found in *Yin Qiao San*. These are *bo he*, *lian qiao*, *jie geng*, and *gan cao*. As for the other herbs, *ju hua* replaces *jing jie* for dispelling wind, and is a cool herb where *jing jie* was warm. *Da Qing Ye* substitutes for *jin yin hua*, with stronger anti-viral properties. Several herbs are selected for specific symptoms. *Ge gen*, at 20% of the formula, becomes a lead herb. It addresses shivering that accompanies fever, as well as trapezius muscle tension causing occipital and temporal headache. *Xing ren* and *qian hu* deal with cough, an early reaction to wind-heat in the lungs. All together, this formula is appropriate for early stage wind-heat causing fever with chills and non-productive cough. As such, it is a unique formula, standing alone in the field of available herbal products and patent medicines for common cold.

The name GAN MAO LING is accurate, but misleading. *Gan mao ling* literally means “Common Cold Effective-Remedy”, and this formula is indeed effective. What is

misleading is the fact that *gan mao ling* has also been applied to a popular patent medicine since the mid-1980s, which has a radically different formula. This can be confusing to both practitioner and consumer, where the name GAN MAO LING is attracting wide recognition as a phenomenal medicine for common cold. Practitioner and public should be able to distinguish these products.

Accordingly, Herbal Times has released a new product GAN MAO LING JIE DU WAN that copies the original Guangzhou formula. Whereas Herbal Times' GAN MAO LING and YIN QIAO JIE DU WAN address wind-heat and associated symptoms, GAN MAO LING JIE DU WAN concentrates on herbs that clear heat and resolve toxins, the antiviral herbs. As a comparison, the product YIN QIAO JIE DU WAN's antiviral herbs, *jin yin hua* and *lian qiao*, comprise 32% of the formula. In Herbal Times' original GAN MAO LING, the antiviral herbs *da qing ye* and *lian qiao* comprise 24%. In comparison, the new GAN MAO LING JIE DU WAN formula contains 74% anti-viral herbs. This is what makes it an extraordinary and potent formula for common cold and flu. The ingredients are:

| | |
|---|--------|
| <i>gang mei gen</i> (Radix Ilicis Asprellae) | 34.0 % |
| <i>san cha ku</i> (Radix-Ramus Evodiae Leptae) | 22.0 |
| <i>wu zhi gan</i> (Herba Viticis Negundinis) | 13.0 |
| <i>ban lan gen</i> (Radix Isatidis seu Baphicacanthi) | 13.0 |
| <i>ju hua</i> (Flos Chrysanthemum Morifoli) | 13.0 |
| <i>jin yin hua</i> (Flos Lonicerae Japonicae) | 4.9 |
| <i>bo he</i> (Herba Mentha Haplocalyces) | 0.1 |

The lead herbs, *gang mei gen* and *san cha ku* will not be familiar to practitioners and students who are only familiar with the older and traditional materia medicas. They are herbs indigenous to Taiwan, and as such, were not known or cultivated in mainland China until relations with Taiwan thawed in 1987. These two herbs have extraordinary properties for destroying respiratory viruses. *Gang mei gen* is a part of the Ilex family (holly) and is a relative of another strong antiviral herb, *mao dong qing* (Radix Ilicis Pubescendis). The cold and bitter *San cha ku*, although part of the Evodia family, has no relationship to *wu zhu yu* (Fructus Evodiae Rutaecarpae), a warm herb.

Antiviral effects are reinforced with *ban lan gen* and *jin yin hua*. *Ju hua* and *wu zhi gan* (a relative of the more commonly known *man jing zi*, Fructus Viticis) help lead the

formula to the face, specifically the sinus, and *ju hua* also has the properties of dispelling wind-heat.

Nuherbs, through its Herbal Times line, realizes the need to provide the GAN MAO LING formula that is known and valued by practitioners, and for that reason, created GAN MAO LING JIE DU WAN. My experience with this formula, based on its Guangzhou predecessor, is significant. It is without a doubt the herbal product I sell most frequently. I encourage all my patients to have it on hand for the earliest stage of a cold, with signs of sore throat, stuffy nose, or just feelings of being "off". One dose (and I recommend 8 pills for adults), if taken at the earliest sign, will prevent most colds from happening. As symptoms become more intense, it is recommended to take a dose every 3 hours, if symptoms are present. In this scenario, one, two or three doses will usually prevent the cold. Once it has settled into the chest, it is necessary to change to herbal formulas more appropriate for cough.

In cases of stronger symptoms of common cold, I recommend combining GAN MAO LING JIE DU WAN with either YIN QIAO WAN or Herbal Times' original GAN MAO LING, to enhance the effect of dispelling wind-heat to the surface.

For a further discussion on the use of Chinese herbal products for common viral infections, you can visit my article *Treating Viral Infections with Chinese Herbal Products* at <http://drjakefratkin.com/pdf/TreatingViral.pdf>

Jake Paul Fratkin, OMD, L.Ac., has been in the practice of Oriental medicine since 1978. He is the author of several books, including *Chinese Herbal Patent Medicines: The Clinical Desk Reference*, and is the editor-organizer of *Wu and Fischer's Practical Therapeutics of Traditional Chinese Medicine*.