Contemporary Applications of *Shi Quan Da Bu Tang*

By John Chen, PhD, PharmD, OMD, LAc

*Shi Quan Da Bu Tang* (All-Inclusive Great Tonifying Decoction) is one of the most commonly used herbal formulas today. Historically, it was used to treat *qi* and blood accompanied by *yang* deficiency and cold manifestations. The original source is from the *Tai Ping Hui Min He Ji Ju Fang* (Imperial Grace Formulary of the Tai Ping Era). Today, the formula is used to successfully treat many disorders. To achieve optimal therapeutic outcome, it is critically important to learn beyond the traditional aspect of this formula. Understanding pharmacological effect, clinical studies and research, toxicology, and herb-drug interactions will greatly empower practitioners to select the best herbal formula for treatment.

The source text states to grind equal amounts of the ingredients into a coarse powder. Cook 6 g of the powder with three slices of *sheng jiang* (Rhizoma zingiberis recens) and two pieces of *da zao* (Fructus jujubae) in one large bowl of water until the liquid is reduced to 70 percent. Take the warm decoction any time during the day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPOSITION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>ren shen</em> (Radix et rhizoma ginseng)</td>
<td>8 g</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>bai zhu</em> (Rhizoma atractylodis macrocephalae), <em>bei</em> (stone-baked)</td>
<td>10 g</td>
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<td><em>fu ling</em> (Poria), <em>bei</em></td>
<td>8 g</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>zhì gàn cáo</em> (Radix et rhizoma glycyrrhizae praeparata cum melle)</td>
<td>5 g</td>
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<td><em>shù di huáng</em> (Radix rehmanniae praeparata), <em>xi</em> (washed) with liquor, <em>zhèng</em> (steamed) and <em>bei</em></td>
<td>8-15 g</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>dāng guì</em> (Radix angelicae sinensis), <em>xi</em></td>
<td>10 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>bái shào</em> (Radix paeoniae alba)</td>
<td>8 g</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>chüan xiong</em> (Rhizoma chuanxiong)</td>
<td>5 g</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>huáng qì</em> (Radix astragali)</td>
<td>15 g</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>rōu guì</em> (Cortex cinnamomi), do not expose to heat</td>
<td>8 g</td>
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</tbody>
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This formula treats deficiencies of *qi* and blood accompanied by *yang* deficiency and cold manifestations: lassitude, low appetite, pale face, palpitations, insomnia, dizziness and intolerance to cold. It warms and tonifies *qi* and blood. It also treats general deficiency of the body: deficient cough, poor appetite, sallow appearance, weakness of the legs and knees, chronic ulcers or prolonged healing of wounds, and seminal
emissions in men and _beng lou_ (flooding and spotting) in women.

_Ren shen, bai zhu, fu ling, and zhi gan cao_ tonify _qi_. _Shu di huang, dang gui, bai shao_ and _chuan xiong_ nourish the blood. _Huang qi_ tonifies _qi_ and lifts _yang qi_ to improve the general body condition. This herb also helps to speed wound healing. _Rou gui_ warms _yang_ and dispels cold. Because _Shi Quan Da Bu Tang_ is a warm formula, it is contraindicated in patients with heat or excess conditions.

Herbal Medicine - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark For malnutrition, and emaciation with poor appetite, add _shan yao_ (Rhizoma dioscoreae) and _qian shi_ (Semen euryales). With sores and abscesses caused by _qi_ and blood deficiencies, add _zhi qiao_ (Fructus aurantii), _xiang fu_ (Rhizoma cyperi) and _lian qiao_ (Fructus forsythiae). With fatigue and general aches and pains, add _gui zhi_ (Ramulus cinnamomi) and _ban xia_ (Rhizoma pinelliae). With general weakness and deficiency, combine with _Xiao Jian Zhong Tang_ (Minor Construct the Middle Decoction). With fatigue due to spleen deficiency, combine with _gui pi gang_ (Restore the Spleen Decoction). With palpitations, combine with _yang xin tang_ (Nourish the Heart Decoction).

**Chronic atrophic gastritis:** Modified _Shi Quan Da Bu Tang_ was used to treat 54 patients of chronic atrophic gastritis with good success. The herbs were administered in decoction twice daily in the morning and at night. The treatment period was six months for one course of treatment. The overall effectiveness rate was 98.15 percent.  

_Gastric prolapse:_ Concurrent treatment using acupuncture and herbs was found to be very effective in the treatment of gastric prolapse characterized by deficiencies of _qi_ and blood with _zhong_ (central) _qi_ collapse. The treatment protocol for herbs was to administer _Shi Quan Da Bu Tang_ for a total of 70 doses. Out of 15 patients, the study reported complete recovery in four patients, improvement in 10, and no benefit for one.  

_Post-surgical recovery:_ Administration of _Shi Quan Da Bu Tang_ has marked beneficial effects on gastric cancer patients during the postoperative recovery by improving interleukin-2 reactivity, natural killer (NK) activity, nutritional index and bone mineral indices.  

_Cancer:_ According to one report that screened and evaluated 116 herbal formulas for treatment of cancer, _Shi Quan Da Bu Tang_ was determined to be the most effective. Clinical benefits of _Shi Quan Da Bu Tang_ included extremely low toxicity, self-regulatory and synergistic actions of its components in immuno-modulatory and immuno-potentiating effects, enhanced therapeutic activity in chemotherapy and
radiotherapy, inhibited recurrence of malignancies, prolonged survival and reduced adverse toxicities of many anticancer drugs.\textsuperscript{4}

\textit{Anemia}: Administration of \textit{Shi Quan Da Bu Tang} effectively increased hemoglobin, red blood cells and platelets in 41 patients with post-surgical proteinemia.\textsuperscript{5}

\textit{Meniere’s syndrome}: In one study, 27 patients with Meniere’s syndrome were treated with modified \textit{Shi Quan Da Bu Tang}, with good results. The herbs were administered in a decoction once daily, for a total of six to 24 doses. Out of 27 patients, the study reported recovery in 23 patients (asymptomatic with no recurrences for six months), a marked effect in three patients and no benefit for one patient.\textsuperscript{6}

\textit{Sheehan’s syndrome}: Continuous administration of modified \textit{Shi Quan Da Bu Tang} for two months was effective in alleviating signs and symptoms in seven patients with Sheehan’s syndrome. The herbal treatment was based on \textit{Shi Quan Da Bu Tang}, with addition of \textit{yi mu cao} (Herba leonuri), \textit{yin yang huo} (Herba epimedii) and \textit{zi he ghe} (Placenta hominis), and the removal of \textit{huang qi} (Radix astragali).\textsuperscript{7}

\textit{Shwachman’s syndrome}: Use of \textit{Shi Quan Da Bu Tang} was associated with beneficial effects in patients with Shwachman’s syndrome, a rare disease characterized by a decreased ability to digest food because the cells of the pancreas do not work properly.\textsuperscript{8}

\textit{References}


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