

Immune Function and Chinese Medicines

A central feature of the Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is the emphasis on the role of disease prevention in living a healthy life. That is to ward off a disease before it even becomes a disease. In TCM, health is built upon the balance of Yin, Yang, Qi (Chi) etc. To maintain such balances, Chinese believe in the herbal tonics and take them regularly, much like the way Americans take vitamins.

Herbal tonics represent a major part of Chinese herbal medicines. While the terms such as Yin, Yang and Qi remain vague in the modern medicine, studies suggest many herbal tonics may modulate the function of the immune system one way or another. As we know, the immune system basically functions to distinguish parts (like proteins) of ourselves from that of the invaded (like virus) or the diseased (like cancer cells) and to eliminate the bad parts. The immune function requires immunoglobulins (Ig), T lymphocytes, microphages, cytokines like interferons etc. When the immune system gets weaker, it does not clear off the pathogens like viruses or the diseased tissues like cancer cells. When the immune system gets overactivated, it may attack the normal tissues. Thus, regulation of herbal tonics on the immune system makes sense in terms of disease prevention.

Here we briefly introduce several herbal

tonics that may boost our immune functions among the many herbal tonics we carry.

1. **Yu Ping Feng Pian (JadeDefender™, #AH080P)**. It is an ancient Chinese herbal medicine used for building up the resistance of the body against the invasion of pathogenic influences. Today it is the most recommended herbal remedy for boosting the immune defense to the infection of bacteria and viruses.† Studies consistently found that Yu Ping Feng San increases IgG and IgA production, enhances microphage function, and inhibits the growth of influenza virus H3N2.¹

Yu Ping Feng Pin was the basic herbal formula recommended by Chinese health authorities to the public for prevention of SARS two years when SARS occurred in China. In the verge of a superflu pandemic, we would recommend its use for strengthening our defense to any possible flu outbreak. (Please see more discussion on Cold, Flu, & Prevention.)

2. **Reishi (# AH751E)**. Reishi is among the rarest and most precious herbs in

traditional Chinese medicine. Reishi is symbolic of immortality in the Chinese culture. Modern studies suggest Reishi may enhance the immune function of our body and may be used as an accessory treatment of tumours after chemotherapy.†

3. **Cordyceps (#AH719E)**. Cordyceps is perhaps the rarest and most precious herb in traditional Chinese medicine. Cordyceps has been used for the general health well being by Chinese for centuries, but remained unknown for the rest of the world until in 1992 Olympics when the Chinese women's track team athletes broke multiple world records and attributed their success in part to Cordyceps they took as an herbal dietary supplement. Modern studies suggest Cordyceps may enhance the immune function of our body, may stimulate progesterone production, boost energy and endurance†.

All Chinese Herbs we carry are 100% natural herbal remedies. They are time-tested and safe, with no pharmaceuticals, no preservatives, no artificial colors.

References

1. Chen Q. Renowned Patent Traditional Chinese Medicines: Pharmacology and Clinical Applications (1998).

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