

# COOL ACRID HERBS THAT RELEASE THE EXTERIOR

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**Sources:**

- Bensky, D. (2004). *Chinese Herbal Medicine: Materia Medica*. Seattle, WA: Eastland Press. pp. 47-83
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## Cool Acrid Herbs that Release the Exterior

External Attack of Wind-Heat:

- Fever and chills (fever more severe; mild chills)
- Sore throat
- Cough with phlegm (thick, yellow, scanty)
- Rash
- Eye problems

## Cool Acrid Herbs that Release the Exterior

<b>Taste:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• acrid</li></ul>
<b>Temperature:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• cool</li></ul>
<b>Channels:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• LU, LV</li></ul>
<b>Cautions &amp; Contraindications:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use caution in patients with deficiency, sweating, or with long term use</li></ul>
<b>Main Action:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dispel wind-heat to release the exterior</li></ul>

## Cool Acrid Herbs that Release the Exterior

- bò hé
- niú bàng zǐ
- chán tuì
- sāng yè
- jú huā
- màn jīng zǐ
- dàn dòu chǐ
- mù zéi
- gé gèn
- shēng má
- chái hú

# bò hé

## *menthae haplocalycis herba*

**Temp:** cool

**Taste:** acrid, aromatic

**Channels:** LU, LV

**Dosage:** 3-6 grams (add last 5 minutes)

薄荷

1. expels wind-heat invasion
  - brightens eyes and benefits the throat
2. vents skin rash
  - for early stage rash, measles
3. gently moves Liver qi

# niú bàng zǐ

## *arctii fructus*

**Temp:** cold

**Taste:** acrid, bitter

**Channels:** LU, ST

**Dosage:** 6-12 grams (crush before decocting)

牛  
旁  
子

1. expels wind-heat invasion
  - benefits the throat
2. clears heat toxicity and vents rashes
  - for painful swelling, redness, sores
  - for early stage rash, measles
3. moistens Large Intestine to relieve constipation
  - for constipation due to heat
  - sometimes regarded as a side effect

# chán tuì

## *cicadae periostracum*

蝉  
蛻

**Temp:** slightly cold  
**Taste:** sweet, salty  
**Channels:** LU, LV  
**Dosage:** 3-9 grams

### 1. expels wind-heat invasion

- esp. for voice loss, hoarseness and sore throat
- vents rashes and stops itch
- brightens eyes
  - for itchy, red eyes due to wind-heat invasion

### 2. extinguishes wind and stops spasm

- for spasm and convulsion in febrile disease

Historically, Chan Tui has been used to promote labor or expel retained placenta. Therefore caution should be used during pregnancy, especially if there is a history of miscarriage.

# sāng yè

## *mori folium*

桑  
叶

**Temp:** cold  
**Taste:** sweet, bitter  
**Channels:** LU, LV  
**Dosage:** 4.5-9 grams

### 1. expels wind-heat invasion

- moistens Lung; for dry cough with thick, yellow phlegm

### 2. calms Liver and brightens eyes

- for eye problems due to excess Liver heat, wind-heat, or yin deficiency

### 3. cools blood and stops bleeding

- mild; for vomiting of blood

# jú huā

## *chrysanthemi flos*

**Temp:** slightly cold  
**Taste:** sweet, bitter  
**Channels:** LU, LV  
**Dosage:** 4.5-15 grams

菊花

1. expels wind-heat invasion
2. calms Liver and brightens eyes
  - for eye problems due to excess Liver heat, wind-heat, or yin deficiency
3. subdues Liver yang rising
  - for headache, dizziness, deafness
4. resolves toxicity to treat sores and swellings

Ju Hua can be used externally to treat eye problems.  
Ju Hua and Sang Ye are often used together as paired herbs.

# màn jīng zǐ

## *viticis fructus*

**Temp:** cool  
**Taste:** acrid, bitter  
**Channels:** UB, LV, ST  
**Dosage:** 6-12 grams

蔓荆子

1. expels wind-heat invasion in head and face
  - for headache, dizziness, red eyes, eye pain, swollen and painful gums and teeth
2. drains dampness and expels wind
  - for dampness in the channels; stiffness, numbness, heaviness
  - mild

# dàn dòu chǐ

## *sojae semen preparatum*

**Temp:** cold or warm

**Taste:** sweet, slightly bitter

**Channels:** LU, ST

**Dosage:** 6-12 grams

淡  
豆  
豉

### 1. releases the exterior

- mild; for wind-heat or wind-cold

### 2. eliminates irritability

- for shen uneasiness following febrile disease, such as irritability, insomnia, restlessness, stifling sensation in chest

# mù zéi

## *equiseti hiemalis herba*

**Temp:** neutral

**Taste:** sweet, bitter

**Channels:** LV, LU, GB

**Dosage:** 3-9 grams

木  
賊

### 1. clears wind-heat to brighten eyes

- for redness, pain, swelling, tearing, blurred vision  
due to wind-heat invasion

### 2. clears heat and cools blood to stop bleeding

- secondary herb for blood in the stool, hemorrhoids

# gé gèn

## *peurariae radix*

**Temp:** cool  
**Taste:** sweet, acrid  
**Channels:** SP, ST  
**Dosage:** 9-21 grams

葛  
根

1. releases the exterior and muscle layer
  - for fever, headache, rigid neck and upper back
2. generates body fluids
  - for thirst and irritability
3. raises yang to stop diarrhea
4. vents and discharges measles
5. treats symptoms of hypertension
  - for headache, dizziness, tinnitus, or parathesias accompanying hypertension (recently discovered)

# shēng má

## *cimicifugae rhizoma*

**Temp:** slightly cold  
**Taste:** sweet, acrid  
**Channels:** LI, LU, SP, ST  
**Dosage:** 3-9 grams

升  
麻

1. clears wind-heat to vent rash
  - for headache due to wind-heat and early-stage measles
2. clears heat and resolves toxicity
  - for toothache, swollen and painful gums, bleeding gums, canker sores
3. raises Spleen yang
  - raises yang to counter prolapse; raises clear qi of the middle jiao
  - for uterine or rectal prolapse; urinary or rectal bleeding; vaginal discharge or profuse menses, sometime accompanied by a bearing down or dragging sensation in the lower body

Sheng Ma mean "ascending hemp".

# chái hú

## *bupleuri radix*

柴  
胡

**Temp:** cool

**Taste:** bitter, acrid

**Channels:** GB, LV, PC, SJ

**Dosage:** 3-9 grams

1. releases the exterior to resolve shao-yang disorder
  - for alternating fever and chills, bitter taste in the mouth, flank pain
2. moves Liver qi
3. raises yang qi
  - raises Spleen qi to counter prolapse
  - raises Liver qi (usually considered a side-effect)



# Summary

## bo he

*menthae haplocalycis herba*

### releases the exterior

- brightens eyes, benefits throat
- vents rashes

- gently moves Liver qi

## niu bang zi

*arctii fructus*

### releases the exterior

- benefits throat
- vents rashes

- moistens Large Intestine

## chan tui

*cicadae periostracum*

### releases the exterior

- voice loss, sore throat
- itchy skin, rash, eye problems

- extinguishes wind and stops spasm

## sang ye

*mori folium*

### releases the exterior

- moistens Lung, stops cough
- brightens eyes

- cools blood to stop bleeding (LV channel)

## ju hua

*chrysanthemi flos*

### releases the exterior

- brightens eyes

- subdues Liver yang rising
- clears heat toxicity to treat skin problems

## man jing zi

*viticis fructus*

### releases the exterior

- head and face

- dampness and wind (stiffness, body ache)

## dan dou chi

*sojae semen preparatum*

### releases the exterior

- mild

- eliminates irritability

## mu zei

*equiseti hiemalis herba*

### releases the exterior

- brightens eyes

- cools blood to stop bleeding

## ge gen

*puerariae radix*

### releases the exterior

- neck and shoulders

- generates body fluid; treats thirst
- raises yang qi; treats diarrhea

## sheng ma

*cimicifugae rhizoma*

### releases the exterior

- vents rash

- clears heat (toothache, bleeding gums)
- raises yang qi (prolapse)

## chai hu

*bupleuri radix*

### releases the exterior

- for shaoyang disorder (alternating fever and chills, bitter taste, flank pain)

- moves Liver qi
- raises yang qi